

Prairieland Community Supported Agriculture
Week 9 – June 28, 2006

From the Farm:

Rain is skipping the farm lately, so the irrigation pumps are running once again. Keep your fingers crossed that one of the isolated thunderstorms forecast for the Watseka area over the weekend finds the farm.

Today's share contains the last of the sugar snap peas. Unfortunately, the shelling peas didn't make it this year. In any given year as many as half the crops the Moores plant may not make it into the share. However, they don't go to waste. The peas are being tilled under as green manure. Green manures are an important part of maintaining and improving soil structure on the farm. Unlike grain fields which are on two-year corn-soybean rotations, the Moores use a 7 to 8 year rotation with a succession of pastured grazing animals breaking up 2 to 3 years of produce production. The Tamworth hogs are the last animals in the rotation. Descended from European forest pigs, the Tamworths "pre-till" the soil prior to its returning to pasture, as the pigs search for stray turnips and other crops caught by fall freezes.

In Your Share Today:

Broccoli (2 heads), arrowhead cabbage, kohlrabi, green onions, cucumber, sugar snap peas, and Tuscano kale. Arrowhead is a very mild cabbage that is great for summer salads. Tuscano kale, also known as lacinato kale, is a very tender variety of kale. You can tell by its deep color that it contains the most vitamins of the members of the kale family.

Recipe and Storage suggestions:

Tuscano kale

This is nothing short of an amazing green—mild, packed with vitamins, AND it can be cooked in nothing flat. The less you do to it, the better it will be. Wash greens. Remove bottom stems and save for soup. Do not remove excess moisture from leaves. Slice 1 clove of garlic thinly. Heat a heavy lidded skillet on moderate heat. Add 1 to 2 T of olive oil to skillet. Add garlic, stirring until it begins to give off its aroma. Add kale. Stir to coat with oil. Place lid on pan. Check at one minute. Greens should be just limp/softened. Serve warm.

Kohlrabi

Those of you who tried your kohlrabi last week know that we weren't pulling your leg. You don't get better weather than this year for this crop. So, if you didn't slice your kohlrabi and use it on salad last week, take advantage of the below average temperatures to use your kohlrabi in a gratin this week (page 25 of Recipes from America's Small Farms). You also can use the leaves in stir-fry. Kohlrabi is also good on a vegetable tray for picnics.

Arrowhead Cabbage

This is great on a hot day with bbq:

Cabbage Salad with Lime and Cumin from Teri Valenzuela

1 head cabbage, cored

juice from 3 limes

1/4 t ground cumin (or to taste)

dash of cayenne (optional)

salt to taste

Slice cabbage into 1/4 to 1/2-inch strips. Add rest of ingredients. Toss. Marinate 2 hours in refrigerator. Add cilantro and/or tomato wedges if desired.

Always popular at neighborhood potlucks:

Crunchy Ramen Cabbage Salad from Norrita Hammond

1 head cabbage

1/ 2 large bunch of green onions thinly sliced (equivalent of one of those puny grocery store bunches)

1/ 3 - 3/ 4 c slivered almonds (your preference)

1/ 4 -1/ 2 c sesame seeds (your preference)

1 pkg ramen noodles broken into bite-size pieces (oriental or chicken flavor works best)

Toast almonds and sesame seeds for 15 minutes at 350 degrees F. Cool. Combine with above ingredients. Chill.

Just before serving, combine dressing ingredients in a separate lidded container:

1/ 2 c canola oil

1/ 4 c sugar

1/ 4 c white or red wine vinegar

1/ 2 t salt

1 pkg of flavoring from ramen noodles

Mix. Pour over salad ingredients. Toss. Serve.

Green Onion

Use in cabbage ramen salad above. Instead of foil, you can also use soaked green onion tops under fish or other fragile grilled items like marinated tofu steaks on the grill.

Cucumber

Slice and use fresh on salad or as a vegetable dipper. Or if you want to wax nostalgic for the 4th of July try:

Grandma's Refrigerator Bread and Butter Pickles (no canning required)

1 small cucumber

1 T kosher salt

1/ 4 cup water

1/ 4 cup rice vinegar

2 T sugar

3/ 4 t coriander seed

3/ 4 t mustard seed

3/ 4 t whole allspice

1/ 4 of a cinnamon stick

1 small clove

1 small bay leaf

Wash and dry cucumber. Slice thinly and place in a colander. Sprinkle with kosher salt. Toss to coat. Allow to drain in sink for 1 hour. Rinse off salt. Pat dry with paper toweling. Place in a clean glass quart jar.

In a small saucepan, add the remaining ingredients. Stir to dissolve sugar and bring to a boil. Remove from heat and allow it to cool. Pour the brine over the cucumbers in jar. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours, preferably overnight. Will keep, refrigerated, for about 2 weeks. For larger batches of pickles, increase ingredients proportionally with the exception of bayleaf. One regular sized bay leaf will season up to 2 large cucumbers.

Turnips and Greens

Prepare like Tuscano greens above. These are the greens to serve with cornbread and black-eyed peas. Sliced small turnips can be used on salads or as vegetable dippers. Roast larger turnips unpeeled like potatoes on the grill or in the oven. Remove skin after roasting and mash with a little butter or olive and salt and pepper for a flavorful alternative to mashed potatoes. Great in gratins.

Sugar Snap Peas

Stem and string. Do not shell or you will miss the sweet pod. Steam or blanch whole. Serve as a side or add to salads. Sugar snap peas also are good in pasta dishes or pasta salads. Add a few to crunchy ramen cabbage salad above.

Broccoli

Both the stem and florets of the broccoli are edible. Peel any fibrous layers from the stem prior to slicing. Recipes from America's Small Farms has no less than easy broccoli salads on page 77, all of which use 1 1/2 pounds of broccoli.

Need a recipe?

Check the PCSA website at <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/recipes.htm> You can also find recipes in previous year's newsletters at <http://www.prairielandcsa.org/newsletters.html> Or call 217.355.6279

Have question about a recipe or PCSA?

Email info@prairielandcsa.org or call 217.355.6279

Want eggs?

Call 815.432.6238