

Prairieland Community Supported Agriculture
Week 28 – Nov 8, 2006

LAST WEEK OF THE SEASON

From the Farm:

First the Bad News:

This will be the last week of the 2006 season. Though warmer fall temperatures finally arrived, they did it after dipping to 22 degrees F (12 F degrees with the windchill) last week. The Moores scrambled and harvested everything they could before the worst of the cold hit. Though they were able to pick the last of the eggplants, the plants themselves froze in the greenhouse, while the remaining fall greens blistered in the field. As it is next to impossible to hold tender crops like greens and eggplant in prime condition for weeks in cold storage, the Moores are opting to double up on today's share and end the season a week early. To bring the more storable portions of today's share next week would only amount to two items (peppers and potatoes) making it a costly trip for the Moores and for those PCSA shareholders who drive 25 and more miles to pick up their shares.

Now the Good News:

Jim and Diann wanted me to convey to you how much they appreciated your support of their farm through your PCSA shares, as well as the kind words you've passed along at the farmers' market, and in the notes that several of you have sent during the season and with your share renewals.

Your financial and moral support has made it possible for them to continue their dream of farming despite the most challenging weather conditions over the past few years. It also has made it possible for their oldest son, Wes, to realize his dream of farming when he joins them full-time next season!!!!

We are planning a celebration for PCSA shareholders past and present who helped to make this possible. The event is tentatively scheduled as a March potluck to be held at Alto Vineyards west of Champaign. Look for more details in emails later this winter.

On behalf of the Moores and myself, thank you, thank you, thank you. This couldn't have happened without you.

Thanks to Our Volunteers

PCSA also can't exist without our volunteers: treasurers past and present, Mary McKillip and Julie Rundell, as well as our site hosts, Lisa Treul and Sonia Newmark. Thank you for a great season. And, congratulations to Mary and her husband Tim as they start their family.

2007 Shares Update

With Wes joining the farm full-time next season, we really need to have all the 2007 shares reserved as soon as possible. If you or your friends or co-workers haven't reserved your 2007 share online or by phone yet, please do so at <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/contracts.html> or 217.355.6279, respectively.

If you won't be renewing your share, please let us know this as well so we can make marketing plans if necessary. Thanks.

Thanksgiving Turkeys

If you do not yet have a holiday turkey and want one, the Moores still have a few left. Call them at 815.432.6238 about picking one up at the Urbana Farmers' Market on Saturday.

In This Week's Share:

Carrots, 1 lb wheat berries, eggplants, peppers, sweet potatoes, potatoes, large sweet turnips, and greens.

Recipe and Storage Suggestions

Greens

Braise using the directions in Recipes from America's Small Farms.

Carrots

Easy Roasted Carrots

Slice lengthwise and into three inch pieces. Rub with olive oil, sprinkle with salt, pepper, and thyme and roast in a 425 degree F oven until tender.

Roasted Glazed Carrots

If you like your carrots glazed, try this twist on the traditional recipe.

Leave carrots whole and place in a roasting pan. Sprinkle with kosher or sea salt and pour on 1/2 T of tamarind date chutney (available at World Harvest in Champaign) per carrot. Cover pan with foil and roast 20 to 25 minutes at 400 F shaking the pan occasionally until the carrots are fork-tender. Remove from oven. Raise oven to 475 F, and return carrots uncovered to oven. Roast 5 to 10 minutes more.

Turnips

Now that they've experienced a hard freeze, the turnips couldn't be sweeter. If you didn't try it last week, try creamy turnip soup on page 189 of Recipes from America's Small Farms. Or, try peeling and cooking equal amounts of potatoes and turnips and mashing them.

Sweet Potatoes

I am sure that I had sweet potatoes growing up. Of course they were barely visible below layers of crumbled cornflakes, coconut, marshmallows, maple syrup, and whatever other sugar sources were being hawked by food manufacturers in the free recipes available in the grocery aisles of the A&P in the 1970s. Perhaps not that surprisingly, my sister prefers her sweet potatoes baked like regular potatoes, topped with a bit of butter and a dash of cinnamon. I like mine peeled and roasted with red potatoes, salt, pepper, and rosemary. However, this recipe from the Southern Living website relies on apples for part of its sweetness, and may make us drop our ban on sweetened sweet potatoes at the family holiday table.

Praline Sweet Potatoes and Apples

1/4 cup butter

2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices

2 apples, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices

1/4 c granulated sugar

1/4 c firmly packed brown sugar

1/4 c pecans, chopped

1/4 t ground cinnamon

1/8 t salt

2 T water

Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add sweet potatoes; cover and cook over medium heat 5 minutes or until golden. Turn potato slices over. Reduce heat, cover, and cook 5 more minutes. Remove potatoes from skillet. Add apples; cook 5 minutes on each side or until tender and golden. Return potatoes to skillet. Add sugars, pecans, cinnamon, and salt, tossing to coat. Add 2 tablespoons water, stirring to loosen browned particles. Cook 5 minutes or until potatoes and apples are glazed and tender.

Wheat Berries

Treat your wheat berries similarly to beans. Ideally, soak them overnight, then simmer in a pot of fresh water for 50 minutes. You can also cook them in a pressure cooker to save time. Or, take your time and throw them in the slow cooker.

This recipe comes from Alton Brown on the Food Network website
Wheat Berry Mushroom Pilaf

1 1/2 cups cooked wheat berries
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 1/2 cups onion, chopped
1/2 teaspoon salt
5 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon butter
1 pound mushrooms, sliced
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1/4 cup red wine
1/4 cup chicken broth
1 1/2 cups leftover, cooked rice
1/2 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, chopped
1 teaspoon fresh rosemary leaves, chopped
1 teaspoon lemon zest, finely chopped
pepper and additional salt

Heat olive oil in large saute pan over low heat. Add onions and salt and sweat until soft, about 10 minutes. Add garlic and continue cooking for 5 minutes. Add butter to pan and melt. Add mushrooms, and soy sauce, increase heat to medium and continue cooking for 5 to 10 minutes, until mushrooms release their liquid. Add wine and chicken broth and simmer 5 minutes, until wine begins to evaporate. Add wheat berries, rice, thyme, rosemary, and lemon rind to heat through. Adjust seasoning, to taste.

Peppers

Try pepperonata on page 178 of Recipes from America's Small Farms.

If you are looking for a change from traditional stuffed peppers, try couscous instead of rice.

Have a recipe to share? Need help with a recipe? Need info on freezing or preserving produce? Email info@prairielandcso.org or call 355-6279