

Prairieland Community Supported Agriculture
Week 8 - July 2, 2008

From the Farm:

Though we have had almost no rain of late, the Moores have picked up over 3 inches which is hampering fall plantings. With the ground too wet to plant, the Moores are continuing to seed into trays and will transplant as the fields dry. "Normally, the greenhouses would be nearly empty at this point in the season, but they are fuller than ever right now," says Diann. With the higher fuel prices, the Moores will be cutting back on their egg deliveries in the fourth quarter. They also need to get their turkey numbers locked in so they don't end up buying more gold (aka corn) than they need to. If you want a holiday bird, call 815.432.6238 for an order form.

In Your Share Today:

Late spring and summer crops have arrived. Beets, summer squash, zucchini, turnips, join lettuce, cabbage, green onions, cauliflower, and a big broccoli haul – 5 heads! Freeze part of yours now as a hedge against higher produce prices this winter. See directions below.

In the News

Prairieland CSA is supposed to be part of an article on CSAs in the Chicago Tribune over the holiday weekend.

Share the Wealth

If you would like to help distribute produce from the Champaign site to the Eastern Illinois Foodbank and other charitable food distribution organizations in our community, call 355-6279 or email info@prairielandcsa.org If you know of a pantry or organization that is in need of produce, please let us know.

Totebag Update

Totebags will be in for the July 9 pickup. If you haven't sent your money, please mail a check made out to PCSA for \$12.00 per bag to Anna Barnes, 701 W Washington St., Champaign, IL 61820. We have ordered some extras, email info@prairielandcsa.org if you missed the deadline.

Recipes, Serving and Storage Suggestions

If you missed last week's newsletter and recipes, you can access it online at <http://www.prairielandcsa.org/newsletters.html> As always, if you are stumped for how to prep, store, or cook any of your produce, or if the suggestions are more general than you feel comfortable with, don't hesitate to call 355-6279.

Broccoli

To freeze broccoli, heat a large pot of boiling water. Cut broccoli into pieces no bigger than 1 inch in any direction. Fill a bowl with ice water. Plunge broccoli into boiling water. Boil for two to four minutes. Remove from water and plunge into ice water. If you don't have ice, use several changes of cool water. After five minutes, drain in a colander. Pack cooled broccoli into freezer bags, removing any excess air.

Two Broccoli Soups

You can use the broccoli soup recipe on page 71 of Recipes from America's Small Farms for broccoli soup for the coming week..

If you would like to freeze broccoli soup in single or family sized portions, you may want to try this recipe from kitchen tyrant Gordon Ramsay. Since it has no dairy, it will not separate upon reheating and it uses a lot of broccoli—half a head per serving:

2 heads broccoli

Reserved cooking liquid from broccoli

Salt and pepper to taste

Olive oil and/or goat cheese optional, for garnish

Cut the florets off the heads of broccoli. Cut the stems into similarly sized pieces. Add all of the broccoli--florets and stems--into a pot of rapidly-boiling, salted water (2 tablespoons salt in 5 quarts of water). Cover. Cook 3.5 to 4 minutes.

Using a slotted spoon, put the cooked broccoli pieces into a blender. Fill blender about halfway with cooking liquid. Blend carefully since it's hot. Add more cooking liquid as necessary to achieve the desired consistency. Check seasonings, add salt and pepper as necessary.

If desired, add cheese (goat cheese or cheddar cheese) to the bottom of the bowl before pouring the soup in. Serve, drizzled with olive oil if desired.

Broccoli salads are another way to use up broccoli. Try one of the recipes on page 77 of Recipes from America's Small Farms.

Beets

Trim the tops (don't toss them out), rub with a little olive oil, and throw these on the grill, or cook in your microwave like baked potatoes. You can also throw a bunch of beets in a heavy skillet in your oven at 425 degrees for an hour, though this will heat up the house. Peeled, roasted beets are great cubed or sliced on salads. You can also toss them with some sautéed garlic and pasta, with a little rosemary and black pepper.

Beet greens are one of the most vitamin packed greens going. They make great additions to pasta or red soups like minestrone. Combine them with your turnip greens and steam for a vitamin-packed side. They are excellent foils for egg dishes and scrambled tofu.

Though the risotto on page 200 of Recipes from America's Small Farms calls for golden beets, you can make a ruby version with this week's crop. For truly bright color, sub a little red wine (merlot or your preference) for part of the chicken stock.

You can also put one over on the kids and your neighbors at Fourth of July get togethers with the chocolate cake recipe on page 204.

Not up for cooking your beets? Grated raw beets make a beautiful salad. Toss them with a mustardy vinaigrette, pile on top of lettuce, sprinkle with a few green onions, add a few walnuts and goat cheese if desired. Call it done.

Cabbage

Want to make your coleslaw sweeter without adding a lot of sugar? Sprinkle in some dried basil and tarragon.

If you aren't up for a creamy coleslaw, try a mixture of equal parts sugar, rice wine vinegar, and water as a dressing.

Alternatively, sprinkle your slaw with lime juice and a dash of cumin and chipotle.

Turnips & Cauliflower

Turnips are great additions to salads, simply peel and slice. Or, use with cauliflower on a crudite platter.

You can also steam and mash turnips with cauliflower. Though a bit of work, I saw a recipe that used cauliflower slices (lengthwise from top to bottom, 1/2 inch thick, including stem) brushed with olive oil and grilled. They were served individually on a base of pureed steamed cauliflower with roasted garlic. Haven't had a chance to try this, but am looking forward to it this weekend.

Don't toss your turnip greens, see Beets above for serving ideas.

Greened out? You can blanch and freeze turnip and beet greens for later. Simply follow the directions for broccoli above.

Green Onions

Don't forget about using green onions as a base for grilling fish or chicken this weekend. Or, use them to perk up your potato salad.

Squash

Baby squashes are great additions to kabobs. Or grill them by themselves. Cut in half lengthwise; toss with olive oil, salt and pepper; and grill until just tender.

Squash is also pretty on a crudite tray.

For a main dish, slice it thinly and add to pasta with chopped basil, green onion, salt, pepper, and olive oil. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese if desired.