

Prairieland CSA 2009 - Week 5

Pickup begins at 4 pm and runs through 7 pm. Pickup is in the garages at 714 W Iowa in Urbana and 701 W Washington in Champaign.

From the Farm

This is make or break week for the Moores' grain farming neighbors. Any soybeans not planted by week's end likely will get killed by frost before they mature. Signs of the cool and wet weather are evident on the Moore farm, as well, in the giant heads of lettuce that might ordinarily have bolted by now. Though we are still in the heart of spring crops in the shares, the Moores have been busy planting fall crops these last two weeks. See Diann's note at pickup for more info.

Produce Prep Tip

If you didn't realize it before last week, the Moore's soil is very sandy. It is great for produce growing as it drains well which tends to result in fewer soil pathogens. However, it can make for some challenging vegetable washing. The most reliable way is to simply fill a sink with water and let the greens have a bath. Run your hands through the water to knock off any residual sand and dry the greens in a colander or salad spinner.

Today's Haul

Green onions, radishes, red and green leaf lettuce, spinach, and the last of the greenhouse mixed greens.

Recipe and Storage Suggestions

Lettuce

If you can't keep up with your lettuce in salad, you can always cut it down to size by sautéing it like greens. It is more delicate than spinach, so you'll want to cut cooking times. You also can turn lettuce into soup as on page 46 of Recipes from America's Small Farms. There's also this option:

Green and Goat Cheese Pudding

This is a fallen soufflé in the guise of a savory pudding, which takes the stress out of trying to time it for when everyone is around the table. You can use goat cheese or substitute cream cheese. You can make it in under an hour and use different vegetables throughout the season.

- 1 1/2 c chopped cooked greens
- 3 green onions
- 1 T vegetable oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 T chopped fresh thyme or 1 t dried
- 2 T unsalted butter (or use salted and cut back on salt above)
- 2 T flour
- 1 c milk

Pinch cayenne
2 eggs separated
4 to 6 ounces of mild goat cheese or cream cheese
3 T Parmesan, grated

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a 1 quart casserole dish. In a large skillet, saute greens and measure 1 1/2 cups. Saute onion in 1 T vegetable oil until softened and pour into a small bowl or cup. Add butter to skillet. When melted, add flour to make a paste. Slowly add milk and cook for about 5 minutes until smooth and thick. Cook for 5 minutes more. Add salt, pepper, and cayenne to taste. Stir in thyme. Allow to cool for a few minutes. Beat in egg yolks one at a time. Stir in greens and onions. Stir in goat cheese and Parmesan. In a clean bowl, beat egg whites. Quickly fold egg whites into goat cheese mixture and pour mixture into casserole. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes until a knife comes out clean. Variation: When sweet corn season arrives, substitute 2 c corn and 2 c of corn and sweet red pepper for cooked greens.

Green Onions

You can use green onions in place of regular onions in most dishes. They can also be used as a bed for grilled meats, poultry, fish, or marinated tofu slices. Cut them into 2-inch lengths and thread them onto skewers for kabobs with chicken, tofu, or seitan. Marinate your kabob ingredients in a bowl or zipper bag with 3 T soy sauce, 3 T dry sherry, 2 t sugar, and 1 clove chopped garlic.

Spinach

Use your spinach within three days to get the maximum amount of vitamins out of it, which should tell you something about the nutritional value of bagged spinach. You can leave the stems on or trim them for vegetable stock.

Use your spinach fresh in salads or add it to the Basic Pilaf on page 35 or the Frittata on page 24 of Recipes from America's Small Farms. You can make your spinach into a main dish salad with this recipe: <http://tinyurl.com/canf7z> Just substitute spinach for the Swiss chard.

Radishes

Radish leaves add a nice bite to a mixed greens sauté.

Questions, comments, suggestions? Don't hesitate to email info at prairielandcsa.org or call 355-6279.