

Prairieland CSA 2009 - Week 5 Transitioning to Summer

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.

New This Week

Today is the first day of a new experiment for PCSA, however, it will take everyone's cooperation and consideration to make it a success. Summer crops are coming in, but they are not yet in great enough supply to put through the CSA as individual items. The Moores must have 150 of any one item to do this. But, to make sure that PCSA shareholders get the first shot at these crops, the Moores are initiating "Not enough for all, but something for everyone" aka "Pick One." At pickup today there will be a crate with cucumbers, eggplant, and zucchini. Please choose whether you want a cucumber, eggplant, or zucchini and take only ONE item from this crate.

Produce Exchange 101

If there is something in your share that you don't want, please do not take something else from the other crates. This shorts your fellow shareholders. Please use the exchange crate for this. Simply put what you don't want in the exchange crate. If there is something in the crate that you want, take it with you in the other item's place.

From the Farm

In any other year, the Moores would have passed on planting on Monday. However, looking at another week of rain, they went for it. Diann spent 14 hours on the transplanter. You can see the transplanter here: <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/tourthefarm.html> Yesterday, she handled all of the PCSA work while Jim planted and Wes moved animals in the pasture.

Today's Haul

Green onions, 1 head of lettuce, beets with tops, spinach (sizes vary), 1 kohlrabi with top, and one item of your choice from the "Not enough for all, but something for everyone / Pick One" crate.

Recipe and Storage Suggestions

Lettuce

You know the drill.

Green Onions

You can substitute green onions for onions in most recipes. They are a great addition to egg and tofu salad.

Here is a great dressing that uses green onions that you can use on salads with ingredients from your share.

1/4 c red wine vinegar
2 1/2 T minced green onion bottoms
2 t Dijon mustard

1 large garlic clove, minced, and mashed to a paste with 1/2 t salt
1 c extra virgin olive oil
1 1/2 t fresh thyme, minced, or 1/2 t dried
1 1/2 t finely chopped fresh basil or parsley (if you don't have it, leave it out)
2 t thinly sliced green onion tops

Whisk together ingredients through oil. Add oil in a slow stream to maintain emulsion. Add spices and herbs.

Spinach

Again, use this within three days to get the maximum nutritional value. If this week's dreary weather has you looking for comfort food, top steamed spinach with a basic white sauce made with whole or skim milk. Melt 2 T butter in a skillet. Stir in 2 T flour to make a paste. Whisk in 1 cup of milk until thickened. For a thinner sauce, reduce butter and flour to 1 T each.

Beets

Because of the cool weather you can throw the tops of these in your salad. You can also steam them. Grate smaller beet roots onto salad. For larger beets, cook as you would baked potatoes and throw on top of salads with goat cheese and walnuts, or pasta with sautéed garlic and rosemary, a little olive oil, and Parmesan. You can prick the beets with a fork and microwave, or throw them in the oven.

Kohlrabi

This is another crop that you can eat the roots and leaves of. In a normal year, heat would have made the leaves tough to help the plant hold moisture. However, the cool, wet weather has produced kohlrabies with leaves as tender as cabbage. So, stack the leaves and slice them into thin ribbons aka chiffonade, and throw them on your salad.

Early kohlrabies can be sliced or grated for salads. Peel the outer green layer off with a knife. The variety the Moores grow was bred to be tender instead of woody even as the crop gets larger later in the season.

Radishes

These are not in your share this week, but if you haven't gotten around to using them, take a tip from Gourmet and braise them. Bring 1/2 pound of radishes washed and halved, 1/2 cup of water, 1 T butter, 1/8 t salt, and 1/8 t pepper to a boil in a large skillet. Cover and reduce heat to simmer until most of liquid has evaporated and radishes are tender – about 10 to 12 minutes. If the skillet lid doesn't fit tightly, check them half way through and a bit more water. After 10 to 12 minutes, Whisk in 1 t whole grain or Dijon mustard and 1/2 t dried tarragon.

Questions, comments, suggestions? Don't hesitate to email info at prairielandcsa.org or call 355-6279. Recipes also are on the Prairieland CSA website at www.prairielandcsa.org. Missed last week's newsletter? Find it at www.prairielandcsa.org/newsletters.html