



Bear Prints

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It's that time of year again when I start reminding you that the second payments are due by August 1st. That's if you've chosen to pay in two installments. It's \$225 and you can make your checks out to Bear Hill Farm. We really appreciate timely payments. Thanks!

So, has anyone else been brave enough to try green smoothies or popsicles? Did you try them as described, or come up with your own twist? How about any of the other recipes? By the way, thanks to whomever gave Mike the scones a while back. He did share and they were fantastic! Let us know if you try something and like it (or don't). We are always looking for new recipes, so if you've found something good, email us.

Now there's no more room and no more time. Time to get picking!

Farm News

We have been busy little beavers this past week. Annie and Emily put the second string on a couple thousand tomato plants last week. Patrick mowed the grass in between the rows and it looks beautiful down in Westford. We also transplanted another thousand tomatoes for the fall over in Nashoba. We finished transplanting the last of the winter squash over there as well as all the pumpkins. Hopefully the deer will leave them alone. The little pumpkins are for you guys and the big pumpkins are for the big end of the year party (October 6 this year—save the date).

Mike & Michalle & Erin transplanted the last batch of corn at Nashoba. It is back breaking work, but it grows so evenly it's worth it. They also direct-seeded more cucumbers, zucchini & summer squash. The weeding has been a gigantic task as well. When the conditions are right, everything grows. They rescued most of the eggplant in Westford and two sets of beans. Patrick got the stakes in for the cherry tomatoes at home. This week we plan on stringing them up.

Mike fixed the transmission in the green truck by "transplanting" one from a truck down back. For three days all the tractors were stuck in the other fields with no way to get them home. We're back in business now, though, and it's not in the way when you go to pick up anymore. Mike has been sore and went on Saturday to the chiropractor that fixed Michalle & Paul. It always hurts more at first, but I think he feels a little better. She told him to take it easy (ha!), so he only tilled the garden next to the farm stand on Sunday, then planted some of the new herb bed, then came to Shirley to load hay to mulch the potatoes with. Busy, busy, busy.

What's New In Your Share This Week

I think there may be a lot new this week. We try to spread things out so that your weeks are even and we don't inundate you. It's also easier on us, not to have to pick a gazillion things in one day. But alas, the best laid plans of mice & men. Some of you got **beans** last week. The first planting had been in the ground for so long, we didn't think they'd produce anything, but Mike discovered them in the weeds Just in time. You know what to do with them—eat raw on the way home, or briefly steam and add butter. New this week is **bok choy**. This veggie comes in 3 sizes and you get the mid size. You can chop it up and use the whole thing in stir-fry with ginger, garlic, soy sauce and sesame oil. We'll also have **beets**. The ones in front of the farm stand are really sizing up. To store, cut off the greens a couple inches above the root. Store the greens in a separate bag in the fridge. They are great sautéed with garlic (yeah, you've heard that before but it's true!). The beet roots are fantastic roasted, but can also be boiled. Usually we

cook them whole, but if they are big, chunk them up first, or they'll take forever. Once cooked, the skins slip off. Be careful since they stain. The color stays with you (so to speak) so don't be alarmed. They're really sweet when fresh, so try them even if you think you don't like beets. You can always pickle them with boiled eggs. That turns the eggs a pretty pink. Also new may be **haikurei turnips**. They are a summer turnip that are wonderfully mild. Again, cut off the tops or they will turn your roots limp. The turnip greens are mild and good just steamed until wilted. Remember, you can cook your greens and store them in the fridge to add to recipes later to keep them from sliming out. We'll definitely have **broccoli**. Use the stems, too, after peeling them. Blanch in boiling water for 2-3 minutes until bright green, then rinse in cold water. Great for pasta salad or dips. Also, **corn!** We don't spray it, so cut off the bugs here. You can peel it here, too.

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PICK UP MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, OR
FRIDAY
3 PM UNTIL 7 PM (but you can come late)

(Please make arrangements at least one week
in advance to switch your pick-up day.)

CSA Since 1998

COME ANYTIME —
THIS IS YOUR FARM!

From Nuts To Soup

With all of my enthusiastic essays aimed at helping you to get the most out of your Bear Hill Farm share, I don't want to mislead anyone into thinking that I actually have a handle on life. So as a sort of disclaimer, I'll confess that I found a bag of Swiss chard in the back of the car early last week, wilted and turning yellow. (If a vegetable can be described as forlorn, this was my chard.) Maybe it got buried under all the items coming back from the Cape? I was going nuts last week! I really shouldn't bother with vacations, I guess.

Well, no matter. Our food from the farm is so fresh to start with that I got away with having produce that only looked forlorn — if it had been from the supermarket (i.e., California or Mexico), it would have completely rotted. It was past its prime, it's true, and no longer fit to go directly to the dinner table. But this chard's condition was *perfect* for going into soup stock.

I picked out the few really yucky leaves and washed the remainder thoroughly. Then I put the chard in my 6-quart slow cooker along with some garlic cloves, onion quarters, and a little chopped carrot. Next I added my freezer bag of produce trimmings. (Here is today's big tip! Keep a 1-gallon bag in your freezer. Every time you prepare vegetables, add the trimmings to your bag: onion peels minus the paper, green bean tips, carrot peel, zucchini ends, etc. The only produce you shouldn't put in is potatoes, which can make the stock murky, as well as anything that's so far gone it's inedible. When your bag is full, you have enough veggie scraps to make stock.) I cooked those vegetables in the slow cooker all day; then when it was time to make dinner, I used a sieve to strain them out. Using the slow cooker, you can also make your stock overnight; strain out the veggies in the morning and refrigerate the stock until you get home from work.

In the end, my stock made a really yummy soup that also featured the *fresh* Swiss chard from the week's share. I doubt I'll ever learn to go out and double-check the car after a road trip... and I'm eternally kicking myself for such oversights, but at least I got a nice soup out of it this time. — Anna Barker

Recipes: Summer Soups

If you think of soup as limited to the colder seasons, you can always freeze your homemade stock for use starting in October. But making soup is such a practical and tasteful use of our share ingredients that I encourage you to think of it for the summer months as well. I tend to think of a summer soup as a little lighter — perhaps a puree, or a broth with limited ingredients. The heavier recipes with lots of beans and large vegetable chunks can come out when the pumpkins do. — AB

Post-Road-Trip Swiss Chard Soup

3 TBS butter
1 large onion, peeled and finely minced
3 cloves minced garlic
3 medium all purpose potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 bunch Swiss chard, washed and chopped
(stems chopped separately)
6-8 cups homemade vegetable stock (see above)
1/2 C sour cream
1/2 C dry red wine
Salt and freshly ground white pepper
Lemon juice to taste

In a heavy soup pot, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, and chard stems and cook until soft but not browned.

Add the potatoes, chard leaves, and 6 cups of the stock. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer covered, for 10-15 minutes or until the vegetables are very soft. (Larger potato pieces will take longer.) Meanwhile, simmer the 1/2 C dry red wine in a small saucepan until it has reduced to about 1/4 cup — it will become the consistency of maple syrup.

Puree the vegetables in a food processor until smooth and return to the pot. If the soup is too thick, add some of the remaining broth. Whisk in the sour cream and then the reduced red wine and heat just through (do not let it boil). Add salt, pepper and lemon juice to taste. Serve hot, or chilled slightly with a dollop of sour cream on top.

Other Summer Favorite

Borscht
Gazpacho
Corn Chowda'
Tomato & Basil



Soups:

Shredded Zucchini
...what's *your* favorite recipe?