



Bear Prints

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September 10, 2007

Remember to save the date—Sat., 10/6 From 4 p.m. to late!

Parking—
Please don't block the driveways or "barways" as we call them. We put a cone up so people who deliver leaves and woodchips, etc can get down back to the compost piles. We also often have to bring tractors and equipment to the shop. You can park in front of the greenhouses, or in the barnyard, along the road, etc. Thanks!

The drought has taken it's toll and the cucumber plants were looking sad indeed. Hopefully they'll come back to life with the rain. The second planting of tomatoes are doing great over at Nashoba. They were still pretty green, so maybe they won't crack from all the newly found moisture. It's amazing that any of the veggies can hang in there without irrigation. Luckily we have our pond at home so we can grow lettuce!

Farm News

We survived our first week alone without college kids to help and things worked out just fine. Now it's just transplanting lettuce & maybe sowing some radishes & harvesting, harvesting. Finally we got some rain—yay! Thanks to all of you who did try the rain dance. Saturday was a tough one, though. We try to keep the newsletter on a positive note, but Sat. was overwhelming. First we had 100 degree weather at the farmer's market. Then the water pump seized on the way home and we were stranded on Route 128. Luckily, Babci came to the rescue & gave us a ride home, after it was clear the problem was more than a broken belt. On the way we received a call from Paul that the freezer on the porch was "sparking"! Once we got home we realized a close lightning strike had fried the computer again, even with a new \$75 surge protector. It also fried the answering machine & phones so you would have no way of getting in touch with us. So, we went took showers and went to bed for 12 or 13 hours & things looked better on Sunday. The freezer ended up being o.k., the Patriots won & Mike went shopping so you can at least get in touch with us via phone. Mike & Paul got the van back home from Wakefield via the trailer & hopefully Mike can use the water pump from another old van we have to replace it. Unfortunately my back went out on Sunday. The good news, though, is that the house didn't get struck by lightning and burn down and we are due to get some more much needed rain. Yes, it gets chilly picking in the cool weather after you've gotten wet, but it beats 100 degrees any day!

What's New In Your Share This Week

Was the celery worth growing? It is a long season crop that likes a lot of water. We'll have it one more week, so eat it up.

New this week are **green peppers**. They seem to have taken forever to ripen.

Luckily, the deer have left them alone so far. They have been chowing our carving pumpkins & winter squash instead. We saw two bucks in velvet at Nashoba on Friday. There is so much other stuff for them to eat, it's frustrating that they eat the stuff we plant. Mike really hates them right now.

So, **green peppers** are great raw in salad. Maggie likes to eat them right out of her hand like an apple. They are also great added to stir-fry or stuffed, with a vegetarian mixture of rice or other grains. But

any pepper would consider it heaven, I think, to be cooked up with sausage & onions.

We'll also have **beets** again. They may be white or yellow in addition to the regular red ones. Some are really big, so you may want to cut them first so they cook evenly with their smaller counterparts and won't take as long. Roasting is best, but boiling works, too. Just wait until they're cooked & the skin peels right off.

We'll also have **mizuna** again, great mixed with lettuce for salad, or lightly sauteed with soy sauce garlic & ginger. And, more **basil**. Nice big bunches while we can. You never know when the weather will get cold at night, so grind that pesto & freeze it for winter.

Bear Hill Farm CSA

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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!

In Defense of Picky Eaters

Now, I'm not talking about the typical childish picky eater whose range of "acceptable" food choices is so limited that it is a source of dismay for many parents and thoughtful hosts. OK, I admit that I indulge my own children in this area and too often allow "I don't like this" as an excuse at the dinner table. While I think a "selective palate" may be an inherited trait, I much prefer eaters like my dear husband, who have very few items on their "do not serve" list.

I also don't mean to defend food *snobs*—those ignorant enough to choose any menu item just because it's written in French, or arrogant enough to refuse traditional fare such as a lowly potato salad (no matter how well-prepared). There is such a thing as going too far, after all.

However, I do think that the food manufacturers responsible for the major part of our diet have succeeded in "dumbing down" our tastes over the past generation. This is probably just a result of trying to create large quantities of food products cheaply, while ensuring that they appeal to the broadest possible audience. But whether it's an intended consequence or not, the result is that we have been trained to accept inferior food as a matter of course.

I've noticed that after a few years of getting my vegetables from the farm, my tastes began to change. Part of this is that I've learned to make up fresh vegetable dishes with much less effort — so the "convenience" foods are not much of a draw for me now. (Why order pizza when a crust is already in the freezer?) The other part, though, is that I've become "spoiled" by such ready access to food that tastes so good. (Ha! To food that tastes *at all*.)

A few weeks ago, running errands and hungry, the kids and I stopped in at Applebees. Do you know that the fajitas I ordered was coated with a *sugar* sauce? I felt like the sugar was there as a substitute for flavor, and I could hear those restaurant food technologists agreeing, "What American doesn't like sugar?" How insulting! I want to tell them that I am *too picky* to eat something just because it's sweet, thank you very much. Next time we'll cut our errands a little short to come home and whip up a fresh omelette. — Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

Recipes: Bell Peppers

Peppers usually go pretty quickly since they fit right in with a range of dishes, from pasta to stir-fries. However, with this cool, comfortable weather we've been having, you might feel like experimenting in the kitchen. These recipes are both from The Classic Vegetarian Cookbook by Rose Elliot. — AB

Green Pepper Sauce

1 large green pepper, cored and seeded
1 1/4 C homemade vegetable stock or water
1 clove garlic, peeled
1-2 TBS butter OR olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Pinch of cayenne pepper OR chili powder, optional

Cut the pepper into even-sized chunks and place in a saucepan with the stock or water and the garlic. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, cover, and simmer until the pepper is tender: about 10 minutes. Remove the garlic clove.

Pour the pepper and stock or water into a food processor or blender, and puree. Add the butter or oil and blend again. Pass the sauce through a strainer back into the pan, and season with salt, black pepper, and, if you like, cayenne or chili powder.

Reheat gently and serve warm, or serve chilled from the refrigerator.

Tabbouleh

1 1/3 C dry, unsoaked couscous or bulgur wheat
4 large tomatoes, roughly chopped
[I think a can of diced tomatoes would also work.]
1 green pepper, cored, seeded, and roughly chopped
1/2 cucumber, roughly chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 red onion, finely chopped
Juice of 2 lemons
1/4 C olive oil
6 TBS chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
2-3 TBS chopped fresh mint
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Put the couscous or bulgur wheat into a bowl. Add all the ingredients, season with salt and pepper, cover, and refrigerate for 12-48 hours. Check and adjust seasoning before serving.

Alternatively, add the ingredients to couscous prepared from the box (e.g., Near East brand) and serve immediately. Add a can of chickpeas to make it a complete meal. This is what I mean by convenient food — it just doesn't have to be lacking in taste!