



Bear Prints

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August 25, 2008

Seth is away this week on vacation and can't post our newsletter on the website until next week, so grab a copy here at the farm. Thanks, Seth, for usually doing that!

SAVE THE DATE
PARTY
SATURDAY
OCTOBER 4, 2008
From 4 p.m. to
Potluck, barbecue,
bonfire, lots of fun!

Did you know that the hens lay about an egg a day? They won't lay in the night, though, they'll wait until the next morning. They will lay eggs whether there is a rooster with them or not. Eggs will last months in the fridge, but they taste the best when fresh. The yolks are "higher" and the whites don't spread around the pan as much. Eggs are harder to peel when super fresh, so let them sit a week in the fridge if you plan on cooking them that way.

Farm News

A sunny week finally! Just what we needed. Mike got some more peas in the ground and they transplanted more broccoli and cauliflower. He is also doing successive plantings of spinach this fall. Keep your fingers crossed. The first batch came up, so he'll try some more. We've had a lot of trouble with peas and spinach in the spring, although last year I think the spinach did o.k. Now that the cool weather will be coming back we'll try those cool weather crops again.

Unfortunately the sun came too late for the poor tomato plants, so this may be our last week for them. The plants went down in a hurry this season, due to disease from all the wet weather. We went to a twilight meeting put on by UMass extension at a conventional farm last week. He was using 3 different kinds of fungicides and his tomato plants still went down to blight and other diseases. Others are doing much worse. After hearing others farmers tell of their woes and hearing from other CSA's we feel much better that we've been doing a good job despite the weather. Hope you think so, too.

Last week was Patty's last week working on the farm. We'll miss her cheerful, helpful attitude. She is back to school this week, helping to teach kids in Lowell. Good luck to all the kids as they start back soon. Paul's back was out, so we had to take care of the critters ourselves, but he's better and 'back' at it this week.

Mike's been busy, & didn't have time to pick up more cheese last week, but he'll get some more on Tuesday.

What's New In Your Share This Week

New this week are **potatoes**. This week they will be red Norland; red on the outside, white on the inside. They are a great all-purpose potato. Store them in a paper bag in a cool dark pantry. Light will turn them green (not what you want) & they don't need to be in the crowded fridge. They are a little on the small side this year, since the weeds got a bit ahead of us. It doesn't do any good to cultivate in the rain, since the weeds just re-root themselves. They are freshly dug (thanks Paul), so the skins are very tender. Don't bother peeling them, just give them a good wash. Then you can boil them for potato salad or smash them with milk & butter (I bet Anna uses some cream). Potatoes are very versatile, so think of other ways to cook them. One of my favorites is just roasted, but you could branch out into scalloped or hash browns or even mixed

with kale or cabbage. Check out those websites or look up some new cookbooks at the library if you prefer a hard copy. You may also find some **tomatillos** now. They are pick your own on the far side of the cherry tomatoes. There are a lot of weeds, but you can sort through it all if you are patient. Tomatillos look like small tomatoes in a papery husk. They are ripe when the paper lantern thing is full, almost to bursting. Sometimes they fall off when ripe, so look on the ground as well. Some are a purple variety and some are just green. Cook them just until they get a bit tender then chop them up with some onions, hot peppers, & a little cilantro for salsa. You can puree them into a green enchilada sauce as well.

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!

"The end is near! The end is near!"

Yesterday I went on a Rail Trail bike ride with Sophie, my dear 11 yo. We went in the early evening, and we had to pedal fast to get our ride in before the sun set. It seems like one minute the sun is just heading for the horizon, then in barely the blink of an eye the mosquitoes are out in droves and it's so dark you can't see to put the bikes up on the rack.

I find the end of August to be that way, too. We are trying hard to get in our "last hurrahs" before the kids go back to school next week. (How did the whole summer go by without us getting in a kayak *once*?) Meanwhile the ducks are noisily heading south and the cicadas are virtually shrieking—"Hurry, hurry, the end of summer is near!"

The deluge of vegetables can be a lot to keep up with this time of year, too. I hate to waste a leaf when I know that all too soon I'll be pining for any fresh leafy green I can get my hands on (never mind organic and local!).

And I worry especially about our food security over the winter: it seems like the announcements of e. coli and salmonella outbreaks increase every year, while our ability to identify and contain the problem never really improves. As I've said before, I like to put up as much for winter storage as I possibly can...and in August I find myself wondering, "How did it all get away from me?"

Reminder to self: Appreciating the present is at least equally as important as preparing for the future. We have one more week of BLTs! The tomatillos are ready for picking! When I find that I've worked myself up into a frenzy, I like to spend a little extra time at the farm on my pickup day. I take in the reassuring sight of productive land that stretches way beyond the cherry tomatoes into the distant horizon. I cross the street and give the goats a good petting (and maybe a little snack, if I remember) - the goats certainly don't seem to be worried about anything! Paradoxically, it is often true that slowing down is the best way to gain a sense of having time. Another reminder: There is still plenty of time to get in that kayak!

Enjoy. — Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

Recipes: Eggs

Have you taken time to pick up a dozen or so of Bear Hill Farm's incredibly fresh eggs? If you're feeling pressed for time, there are tons of quick egg dishes you can make; and many are so versatile you can work in almost any vegetable that hasn't yet made it onto your plate. Tonight I'm going to do myself a favor and keep it really simple: scrambled eggs, a side of stir-fried greens with garlic, and some roasted potatoes. The following recipes are only slightly more elaborate. -AB

Vegetable Frittata

Adapted from The Classic Vegetarian Cookbook by Rose Eliot

1/2 C baby carrots, trimmed

1/2 C sliced red onion

1/4 C zucchini, cut into 1/4" slices

4 eggs

1/3 C freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 TBS olive oil

Pour a little water, about 2", into a saucepan and bring to a boil. Add the carrots and onion and cook for 2 min; add the zucchini and cook for another 2 min; drain. (The vegetables should be tender but still crunchy.)

Preheat the broiler. Whisk the eggs lightly, add the Parmesan, and season with salt and pepper—remembering that the cheese is fairly salty.

Heat the oil in a large frying pan over moderate heat. Add the

vegetables, using a spatula to distribute them evenly around the pan, then pour in the egg mixture, gently moving the vegetables so the egg runs through them. When the bottom of the frittata is set and golden brown (1-2 minutes), put the pan under the broiler until the top is set: 1-2 minutes. Slide it onto a plate, and serve, cut in half or in wedges. [I might top it all with some halved cherry tomatoes with oregano and/or thyme, and maybe another sprinkle of Parmesan cheese.]

Omelette Rolls

From The Essential Vegetarian Cookbook

4 eggs

2 TBS water

2 tsp soy sauce

2 tsp peanut oil

Place the eggs, water and sauce in a medium bowl. Beat with a wire whisk for 2 minutes. Brush the base of a small non-stick pan with oil. Heat pan on high. Pour 1/5 of the egg mixture into the base of the pan. Shake pan to spread mixture evenly over the base. Heat for 20 seconds, or until egg has almost set. Remove pan from heat. Using a large flat-bladed knife, roll the omelette from one end, forming a roll. Transfer to a warm plate and cover with a tea towel. Repeat the process with the remaining egg mixture, using 1/5 of the egg mixture to make each omelette. [Note: You can spread the omelettes with very finely chopped sautéed greens before rolling.]