



# Bear Prints

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## Sign up for Pork

We'll have pork available soon for purchase, in little white packages in the freezer like before.

If you are interested please write your name, email and phone number down on our list and we'll let you know when it's ready.

If you need to reach us my cell is 978-846-4577.

### Work Day

We always have one volunteer work day a season, usually to take down the cherry tomato strings and clean up. Next week end is Columbus Day week-end. We scheduled this year's for next Sunday from 1 until 4. Come on down in your crummy clothes and meet some members!

## Farm News

The party's over, in more ways than one. **This is the last week of pick up for the season.** It certainly was challenging with all the rain, but we think it turned out OK despite it. We were down in terms of the farmers' market, but the melons, corn, cauliflower and broccoli were great this season. Hope you were happy.

People often ask what we do in the off season. Although pick up was 17 weeks (like last year), our season is much longer than that. We start early in the spring, cleaning the greenhouse and seeding. Mike starts now even, planting cover crops and deciding where things will get planted next season. As a matter of fact, we'll be planting next year's garlic next week. It will go in front of the shop, where the party was. Then he'll start ordering seeds. Come March, we're off to the races again, with the greenhouse planting in full swing. In the middle of the winter, Mike will plow for the town and work on fixing equipment. Paul & I will take care of the new chicks we'll raise up to laying hens and all the pigs and sheep & goats. I work year-round 20 hours a week to keep health insurance. I tend to work more hours in the off season for obvious reasons!

Another question I get a lot is when will sign up be and can my friends join. We give renewing members (notice I didn't say old) first dibs and to be honest, we're not sure if we'll have many open slots. We'll send out a letter in February or so to let you know, though. In the meantime, feel free to visit anytime. Visit your farm in the off season to see the animals and the fields. Feel free to walk the woods. See you!

## What's New In Your Share This Week

New this week is **butternut squash**. It is piled up in front of the farm stand. It was growing in the field where we had the party. **Butternut** is my favorite, and the only kind my Mom, Babci, grows. It can last all winter. If you get a big one, cooked squash can be frozen as is. Keep them in a cool dry place and check them once a week or so to make sure no soft spots appear. If they do, just cut that part off and use the rest in a timely manner. You can also make recipes (such as squash muffins, cakes, casseroles, etc.) and then freeze them. It should last longer than the acorn you got last week, so use the acorn first. A few members must have cooked it already, since we had some great food at the party that people brought that had squash as a

major component. All the food was great, for that matter.

Mike actually got to see some of that food when he got a break from manning the grills. My brother mentioned that he thought it was the best variety of any party, and I have to say, it all looked fantastic and there were very few leftovers.

Thanks to everyone who brought food and who helped out. I did more delegating this year, from my nephews scooping out pumpkins for kids to carve to people helping set up hay bale benches to "the lighter guy" who lit pumpkins and the ladies that handed out smores fixins. Thanks again everyone! It was great weather and lots of fun.

## 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!

## Until next year...

How quickly the end of the season has snuck up on me. I can't believe that I'm looking out the window at a Dogwood tree that has only a few remaining red berries, when it seems like only a few days ago it was covered with lovely white blossoms. Well, it is probably good for the season to end. Even bounty can get a little monotonous after a while. When I lived in California it was — actually it was terrific fun! But I did eventually come to miss the change in seasons. We all need a rest (Mike, Anne & Paul most of all, I expect), and the coming shorter days will give us a chance to contemplate, with luck, and return in the Spring with renewed vigor. That at least is the way it works in the rest of the natural world, and I think we humans would be wise to treat ourselves the same way.

On the other hand, in my mind our food system is currently in great peril, and I can't let myself spend the winter in hibernation ignoring it. I don't feel confident that we will get through the end of 2008 without another food contamination scare, or that the world financial crisis won't end up with groceries being outrageously expensive, or that our food transportation system is reliable enough to even deliver.

So this winter I will be doing some projects to increase my own self-sufficiency. I want to make a set of shelves that have plant lights built in so that I can get seeds started early in the season and grow a few foods (especially herbs) indoors. I also plan to get some cold frames built and get things started outdoors as early as possible. I do wish I had done a better job of preparing this summer's harvest for winter storage, so in the rare quiet times I will try to think through ways to become more organized & efficient with those summer activities. This will give me some reassurance, even if it won't make a dent in the system! And the butter-nut squash in the basement will remind me for months to come how lucky we are that we can count on Bear Hill Farm all summer long. Many thanks to all who are a part of it.—Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

## Recipes: Onions

*Who doesn't love those gorgeous yellow storage onions? They keep for a good long time, but they do eventually get soft, so don't try to hold onto them for too long. If time goes by and you haven't used them all up in soups & sauces (etc.), here are some recipes that will use up every last one of them.—AB*

### Roasted Onions with Balsamic Vinegar

The Yellow Farmhouse Cookbook by Christopher Kimball

4 large onions, peeled and quartered pole to pole  
(so that each piece has a bit of root end, to keep intact)  
2 TBS olive oil  
2 TBS balsamic vinegar  
1/2 tsp salt  
Freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat oven to 450 degrees. Toss all ingredients in a roasting pan. Cover pan tightly with aluminum foil and place in oven for 20 minutes. Remove foil, toss mixture, and cook uncovered for another 10 minutes or until onions are browned but not burned. (Serves 4 to 6 as a side dish.)

*Don't forget about **French Onion Soup**. Good recipes can be found on [foodnetwork.com](http://foodnetwork.com), [cookography.com](http://cookography.com), [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com) and [epicurious.com](http://epicurious.com). If you find a favorite, send it to us for next year!*

### Smothered Pork Chops

The Garden-Fresh Vegetable Cookbook by Andrea Chesman

2 TBS extra-virgin olive oil  
4 bell peppers of various colors, cut into strips  
2 onions, halved and cut into slivers  
1 fresh chile, seeded and cut into thin strips (optional)  
3 garlic cloves, minced  
6 pork chops, cut 1 inch thick  
1 TBS sherry vinegar

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the bell peppers, onions, chile, if using, and garlic and sauté until softened, about 8 minutes. Remove from the pan and set aside. Reheat the same skillet over high heat. Add the pork chops and season with the salt and pepper. Sear on both sides, about 4 min per side. Spoon the pepper mixture over the pork chops, reduce the heat to medium, and let the pork cook until tender, no longer pink, and the juices run clear, about 30 minutes. Drizzle in the vinegar and serve, spooning the pepper mixture and pan juices over each chop. (Serves 6.)

Keep in touch over the winter,  
send us your recipes, and we'll  
see you next year!