



Bear Prints

Volume 12, Number 8

August 3, 2009

I've been reminding you for a few weeks now the second payment of \$265 was due 8/1.

Thank you if you paid in a timely fashion.

If you have a star next to your name this week, please talk to us or pay before next week's pickup.

Did you try your cabbage from last week? Wasn't it sweet?

Don't worry if you haven't. Cabbage keeps well in the bottom of the fridge in the hydrator. Just don't forget about it down there.

If the outer leaves get yellow or limp, just peel them off until you get to the good layers underneath.

Lots of people tell us our vegetables seem to last a long time in the fridge, probably because they are picked the day you get them. Veggies always taste best when they're fresh, though.

Farm News

Well, we've had some warm weather, but it has continued to rain or be humid. It was only a matter of time, but we now have some crop disease issues on the farm. The potato plants which were growing towards the top of the hill (and one of the few crops looking beautiful with all this rain) have gone down to blight in a matter of days. Luckily the potatoes have already formed below the plants so we'll still get a crop. The tops of carrots near them are starting to look bad, too. Even the basil has some issues. The worst news is the tomatoes, which also seem to have blight. The fruit were set back due to the cold and hail, but now the plants may die before we even get green tomatoes!

What a change from the old days of newsletters, when Mike would edit out all the bad news. Over the years we have progressed into being more and more truthful, but this is starting to sound too doom & gloom every week. So, I can't promise it will be only good news the rest of the season (otherwise the newsletters would be very short, I'm afraid), but after this I'll try to keep some of it to myself!

On the good news front, our new farm dog, Sadie, has worked out marvelously. She gets along with everyone and simply adores Mike. She is his shadow and has certainly brightened his days this summer. She keeps him company all day, even at our rented land at Nashoba where she often jumps in his lap on the tractor.

What's New In Your Share This Week

New this week are **garlic** and **carrots**. The garlic is all harvested and hung up in the barn to dry. We have quite a few batches of **carrots** this year, which is great. Some of them didn't get thinned (feast or famine—usually we have trouble getting them to come up!) So they may be small, but there are a lot of them to make up for it. Think of them as gourmet baby carrots. Maybe we'll leave the tops on, since they will be easier to bunch, but if we do, be sure to take the tops off before you store them in the fridge, or they'll get limp. I have been eating them just raw, but Mike added some of the thinnings to a boiled dinner he made with the ham steak and potatoes and cabbage. It was delicious!

You can always steam them, too, and dress them with herbs and butter, but don't overcook these lovelies. We'll have plenty more of the garlic, so don't scrimp and save. Go crazy with your basil and make pesto while you can. Saute your greens with it, add it to homemade salad dressing or roast it to make a spread for bread. Roasting or cooking garlic takes some of the punch out of it. How about pasta with garlic and olive oil? That really is an Italian dish—I didn't make it up! And if you both eat it together, neither of you will notice the garlic breath issue. I hear parsley works good for that, by the way.

Bear Hill Farm CSA

Anne & Mike Gagnon

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Phone: 978-692-4224 we have a new answering machine, but we unplug for storms

best is 978-846-4577 for now

Email: bearhillfarm@aol.com

PICK UP MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, OR
FRIDAY
3 PM UNTIL 7 PM

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

CSA Since 1998

COME ANYTIME —
THIS IS YOUR FARM!

You Are Sleeping. Wake up!

Last week a very dear friend passed along to me the news that she has breast cancer. Luckily, it's "just the garden variety" (in the words of her oncologist) and she should be free and clear after a round of chemotherapy. While this news has me fully preoccupied, it wouldn't belong in the Bear Hill Farm newsletter if it weren't for the fact that at the end of her email, my friend wrote "Eat your leafy greens!" as a friendly reminder to all of us.

Oh yes. Each of us knows what constitutes a healthy diet. Yet nutritionists report that there is a huge discrepancy between what we *know* we ought to be eating, and what we *actually* eat. As Daniel Goleman says in his book *Ecological Intelligence*, we are very good at responding to immediate threats, but we are still learning how to process and respond to the dangers that are equally profound but less direct or visible. Notice that we will strenuously avoid eating egg salad that has been left out in the heat of a summer afternoon...how useful it would be if that same sense of urgency applied to our other harmful eating habits! (It has something to do with the amygdala, the primitive core of our brains— but beyond that, I'll leave you to read the book.)

Then suddenly one of us gets a wake-up call. Good health is not an abstract concept! The food choices we make—*every* day—have a direct impact on our bodies. Of course there are other factors, I don't want to oversimplify; but it really is pretty straightforward. And I do want to thank my friend for this reminder.

Sometimes, here at the farm, I overhear people complaining about the volume of green leafy vegetables we get. We become whining toddlers. "I can't eat all this! I *won't!*" But leafy greens love the awful weather we've been having this summer; perhaps their abundance this year is a gift from nature, an opportunity to develop a closer relationship with this underappreciated vegetable category. Mike & Anne go out of their way to give us a wide variety of leafy greens; it is time to start appreciating each individually: each has its own flavor and texture, and should no more be lumped together than should all the "heat-loving veggies" like tomatoes, peppers and eggplant. Keep experimenting with recipes and cooking techniques until you discover what suits you best. Don't wait for alarm bells to start going off in your body.—Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

Recipes: Leafy Greens

The key to enjoying your leafy greens is to build up a big collection of recipes you like, so you won't get stuck in a rut. CSA member Melanie Rodrigue sent in this recipe, the result of her own experimenting. Try it with other greens, too.—AB

Stuffed Collard Greens

Collard greens, thick stems removed
1 pound ground beef or pork
2 tsp *each* salt, ground cumin, red chili flakes
1 tsp *each* garlic powder, oregano
1/8-1/4 tsp nutmeg
Tabasco, black pepper, to taste
1/2 c shredded cheese
A couple handfuls bread crumbs
1 C V-8 juice
1/2 C broth

Preheat oven to 400°F. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the collard greens 3-4 min until soft and pliable. Drain and set aside. In a large bowl, mix together all other ingredients except liquids, divide into 4-5 portions and roll into patties or logs. Wrap each patty in 3-4 collard greens. Place patties seam-side down in a glass baking dish and add enough liquids to reach 1/4 of the way up the stuffed greens. Cover with foil and bake until meat is cooked through, about 35 min.

Here is one that CSA member Kemper Garland pulled from Epicurious. She and her husband LOVE it, she says, and she suggests leaving the kale in the dressing for much longer than 20 minutes—in fact, it still tastes good the next day.

Kale Salad with Pinenuts, Currants and Parmesan

From *Bon Appetit*, February 2009

2 TBS dried currants
7 TBS white balsamic vinegar, divided
1 TBS unseasoned rice vinegar
1 TBS honey
1 TBS extra-virgin olive oil
1 tsp salt
2 bunches kale (about 1 lb.), center ribs and stems removed, leaves thinly sliced crosswise
2 TBS pine nuts, lightly toasted
Parmesan cheese shavings

Place currants in small bowl; add 5 TBS white balsamic vinegar. Let soak overnight. Drain currants. Whisk remaining 2 TBS white balsamic vinegar, rice vinegar, honey, oil, and salt in large bowl. Add kale, currants, and pine nuts; toss to coat. Let marinate 20 minutes at room temperature, tossing occasionally. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Sprinkle cheese shavings over salad and serve.