



GULDAN GREETINGS

Guldan Family Farm CSA
www.GuldanFamilyFarm.com

Volume 2, Issue 11

August 2, 2010

*This week's
share ...our best
estimate ..*

Everyone can enjoy a taste of fresh tomatoes this week. This small variety called "4th of July" didn't quite make it until the 24th of July, but nevertheless, they have real tomato flavor. The full sized tomatoes are yet to ripen. It shouldn't be too long. Also new this week is a cantaloupe for everyone. They started ripening over the weekend at record speed. We harvest them when they are ripe and ready to eat. There's no need to let it sit and ripen. After a long wait, kohlrabi finally returns to everyone's share this week. We've also included summer squash with a recipe to complement it on the reversed side. Also included are cucumbers, broccoli and red potatoes.

On the Farm

Until Friday, we were planning to include sweet corn again in all the shares this week. But, it looks like our good friends, the deer, also wanted their "share." I hope they enjoyed the wonderful corn! On Friday, we were able to pick about 60 dozen ears out of a 3rd of an acre of corn. UGH! That's a pretty bad percentage. They left just enough for us for one of our Saturday markets and it will probably leave us without corn until the end of the week. Denny tells me that he noticed the deer in this planting about two weeks ago even before there was color on the kernels. As we had plots in another area that we were still picking, the deer had free range in this planting. Hopefully, as this hot weather continues and the corn ripens quickly, the deer won't have this head start on us and there will be enough corn for both us and the 4-legged creatures in the next plantings.

Onions... okay - time for me to "fess up." Some of you have been asking about sweet onions or just onions in general. For the first time in 20 years, we had a near crop failure in onions. We planted about 20,000 plants as we generally have for many years. The dreadful cut worms literally mowed off about 90% of the small growing plants in May. Replanting would have been pointless since the onions need a long growing season to develop to full size. So, we have not pulled any of the remaining onions at this point as we are waiting for them to be of mature size. We anticipate that the Walla Walla onions will have reached that point within a week or two. **Kohlrabi**—we had the same issue with kohlrabi this spring. The cut-worms continued to chew the stems off at ground level as we replanted each successive planting. Finally, we are at a planting they have left alone. So why is the insect pressure so intense this season? The professionals at the U of M tell me that it is because with all the snow cover last winter, the ground never froze. Many of these bothersome insects were actually able to overwinter. And, the fact that we experienced an early warming spring brought these hibernating insects back to life just a little bit earlier than normal. In reality, it's been a good growing season, we've had plenty for CSA members and plenty for market. It's just the little and big quirks that we need to regularly adjust our minds to. Being diversified, a bumper crop is bound to occur within another crop which makes a crop failure in the onion field a lot easier to swallow.

Your farmers, Denny, Janice, Tim, Emily & Samantha

Ideas for the Cook

Storage hints... If you don't plan to eat your melon in the next day, it would be best to store it in your fridge. We allow our melons to ripen on the vine. How do we know then they're ripe? We look for the rind to change color from green to tan. Secondly, if we gently tug on the stem and it slips from the fruit, we know it's ripe. A melon that has a greener rind rather than an orangish tan will have a crisper texture rather than a juicy texture. Some people like their melons crisp, others like them dripping like a peach. Variety ... Ahh the spice of life. Keeping the melon at room temperature will allow the melon to continue to ripen, perhaps to the point of over ripeness. So watch it carefully! I usually cut up an entire melon and store it in an airtight container in the fridge. They have been soooooo delicious. I hope you enjoy it. Try the easy sorbet recipe for a dessert that's a little more gourmet than slices of melon! The potatoes can be kept at room temperature, but take them out of the plastic so they can breathe. Tomatoes should *also* be stored at room temperature. Chilling temperatures can affect the taste of tomatoes. Everything else should be kept cold until you have time to prepare it this week. Have a great week.

-Janice

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Lemony Cucumbers

2 cucumbers, sliced
1/4 cup white wine vinegar
2 tablespoons white sugar
1 teaspoon celery seed
1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
3/4 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons chopped onion
1 tablespoon lemon juice

In a mixing bowl, combine the cucumbers, vinegar, sugar, celery seed, pepper, salt, chopped onion and lemon juice. Toss, cover and chill for 4 hours.

Adapted from Allrecipes.com

Recipes of the Week

Sausage Squash Skillet

Looking for new recipes for summer squash.? This has a new twist: combining the sautéed squash with Italian sausage

1/2 pound bulk Italian sausage
1/4 cup chopped onion
1 medium yellow summer squash, halved and sliced into pieces 1/4 inch thick and approximately 1 inch by 1 inch
1/4 cup chicken broth
salt and pepper to taste
1/3 cup seasoned salad croutons
Parmesan cheese

In a skillet over medium heat, cook sausage and onion until the meat is no longer pink; drain. Add the squash; cook for 5-8 minutes or until tender. Stir in the broth, salt and pepper. Cook 2 minutes longer or until heated through. Sprinkle with croutons and cheese if desired. Hint: If you choose to omit the croutons, you may need to season the mixture more liberally. It's delicious served over rice or pasta or on the side. Remember that all types of summer squash, (yellow, patty pan, zucchini, and cousa squash) are quite similar and can be substituted for each other in recipes. *Adapted from Allrecipes.com*

Cantaloupe Sorbet

This recipe is from one of my favorite canning books. I made this a few years back to utilize an overabundance of melons. Resist the temptation to freeze it all in one container. It freezes quite firm and it is difficult to scoop servings out of a larger sized container.

2 cups peeled, sliced cantaloupe
3/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup orange juice
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Puree cantaloupe in a food processor or blender. In a saucepan, combine sugar, orange juice and lemon juice. Stir over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat and stir in pureed cantaloupe. Pour into an 8 X pan and freeze until firm. In batches, process firm cantaloupe mixture in food processor until light and fluffy, approximately 1 minute. Fill 1 cup jars with mixture, leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Wipe jar tops and thread clean. Place lids on jars. Freeze until firm.

Guldan Family Farm



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Volume 2, Issue 12

August 9, 2010

*This week's
share ...our best
estimate...*

The meteorologists are telling us that we should be expecting a very hot, humid week: the type of weather that sometimes makes it difficult to even think about cooking a meal. "Let's just eat salad." This week's share includes produce that needs little or no cooking. With fresh tomatoes and cukes, this is the week to create a **wowza** salad that will be nearly a meal in itself. We are also planning to include those summer favorites, sweet corn, beans, and a melon again this week. New this week is a sweet Walla Walla onion and a small summer squash called cousa. Full shares also are receiving zucchini and a green pepper as well as additional amounts of the other varieties of produce.

On the Farm

Well, you caught me in a lie last week.

We rather doubted we'd have much corn to harvest last week after the deer had their dinner party at our expense. Just after we had decided what would be included in the shares and had chosen corresponding recipes, the weather pushes the corn to ripen and we end up having corn anyway. As Denny said, "You can't plan in farming, at least not a day or two in advance, the weather totally dictates what's going to happen." Saturday morning was a classic example of not being able to plan. Where did that rain come from? We faithfully watch the weather reports (as many as we can catch at one sitting) and listen to the weather radio which is the alarm clock near our bed. Not a single report mentioned a chance of rain Saturday morning. Well, well, well, I know for a fact that we stood in pouring rain for nearly two hours in Mankato and Tim, 3 hours in Hutchinson while the markets were open. Thankfully, the clouds did break, the sun eventually did shine and customers were out in droves. This past week was National Farmers Market Week and in Mankato we promoted the week with special events celebrating local food. Did you see us on KEYC news Saturday night? We were the ones looking like drowned out rats!

What did we do this week? Tractor troubles haunted Denny again as he ended up purchasing new rear tires for one of his tractors. He was a little bummed over that expense, but he got over it. Tim butchered his 19 chickens with a little help from all of us and we pulled our meager crop of Walla Walla onions. Yea... it was meager alright. We had nearly a bale rack full. Normally we have several bale racks of sweet onions curing, but you heard that story last week. Walla Walla onions are a very sweet onion. They are wonderful to eat raw and I especially like them fried with hamburgers. However, they are not good storage onions. Normally, they will stay firm until September at which time they start developing soft spots. Did you know that the sweeter an onion, the shorter it's storage capabilities? Long term storage onions are generally very strong flavored onions. Always, planning ahead, the last planting of beans were planted this week and weather permitting, fall crops of lettuce and spinach will need to be seeded soon...when it gets a little cooler.

Your farmers, Denny, Janice, Tim, Emily & Samantha

Ideas for the Cook

I love melons and so does everyone at our house. We have been devouring the cantaloupes, eating a couple melons each day. I had some leftover roast turkey breast that I fashioned into a wonderful turkey salad last week. I cut up lots of cucumbers and green pepper and added the same amount of meat, added some fresh cilantro and combined all those ingredients with miracle whip. This was a great filling for a wrap and I'm thinking that the turkey salad would also be delicious served in a cantaloupe half.

If you've never used fresh corn in a salad, this week is your opportunity to try it using the included recipe. Or, if you decided to go the trusted and true method preparing corn on the cob, please remember that it only takes a few minutes to cook. Put the corn in the boiling pot of water and cook about 5 minutes. That's really all it needs. Otherwise, you may be cooking the flavor out and allowing it to toughen. The onion may be left a room temperature. They have been allowed to dry in the field so should not need to be refrigerated. Speaking of which, keep tomatoes at room temperature also. Cold storage makes a tomato texture turn mealy. Lastly, the small zucchini shaped vegetable in your share is a type of summer squash called cousa. Sauté sliced squash in a bit of olive oil with onion until tender. Add a pinch of seasoned salt to the finished dish and top with a sprinkling of parmesan cheese. Delicious! Have a great week!

-Janice

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Recipes of the Week

Corn Cucumber and Tomato Salad

Corn, Cucumber and Tomato Salad is fresh, cool, and super easy. It's a great summer salad and goes great alongside any grilled meal and the perfect addition to any potluck.

1 or 2 ears of fresh sweet corn
1 cucumber
1 medium tomato
2 tablespoons chopped sweet onion
1 Tbsp. olive oil
1/2 Tbsp. white wine vinegar or lemon juice
1/4 tsp. salt
1 small clove garlic, chopped or garlic powder or jarred minced garlic (optional)
Fresh basil, mint, cilantro, or parsley (optional)

Shuck corn, cut off the kernels and put in a large bowl. Peel and dice the cucumbers and add to the bowl. Core and dice tomatoes and add those to the bowl. Finally add the chopped onions. In a small bowl, whisk together oil, vinegar or lemon juice, minced garlic if you like, and salt. Pour over salad and toss to combine thoroughly. Add fresh herbs if available. Makes 2 to 3 servings. *Adapted from about.com:localfood.*

Summer Balsamic Tomato Vegetable Salad

Tomatoes, sweet onions, and cucumbers shine in a balsamic vinaigrette for a cool and refreshing salad. You may serve this over greens if you wish, but it's delicious just as is. Plan ahead for the vegetables to marinate a couple of hours before serving.

2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons sweet red wine (such as Lambrusco)
1 tablespoon water
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1/8 tsp garlic powder
Pinch of salt
Pinch of sugar, optional
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 medium sized tomato cut into wedges
1 small sweet onion sliced into 1/4-inch thick rings
1 cucumber, sliced into 1/4-inch thick rounds
3 fresh basil leaves sliced into 1/8-inch ribbons
Parmesan cheese for garnish, optional

Make the vinaigrette:

Whisk together balsamic vinegar, red wine, water, olive oil, Dijon mustard, garlic powder, sugar (if using), salt and pepper until combined. Place tomatoes, onion, cucumber, and basil in a zip-top bag. Cover with vinaigrette. Squeeze out the air from the bag and seal. Toss to coat. Chill in the refrigerator at least two hours. Sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese just before serving if desired. Makes 3 servings.

Guldan Family Farm



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August 16, 2010

*This week's
share ...our best
estimate...*

As the middle of August catches up with us, it is definitely peak harvesting season on the farm. With many choices of produce available right now, this week's tote will more than likely be one of those heavier bags again. August harvesting includes those tomatoes we've been waiting for all year, eggplant, and peppers—as well as many of the vegetables that were also in season in July. This week's share is planned to include sweet corn, a cantaloupe, tomatoes, carrots, a variety of summer squash, a sweet green pepper, a hot banana pepper, eggplant, walla walla onion, and fresh basil. Full shares also are receiving cucumbers as well as additional amounts of the other varieties of produce.

On the Farm

Relief!

Finally - the heat and humidity has broke. And I can't say I have much to talk about from last week. We did our picking in the morning, cleaned and sorted produce and finished as early as possible so that we could be out of the miserable heat. The markets were hot to say the very least. Thank goodness for the wind most days. Sunday morning, Denny and I leisurely enjoyed morning coffee on the deck with a beautiful blue sky, no humidity and no bugs. We showed our age and scared the younger members of the family by enjoying a couple hours of John Denver music (on cassette in a boom box.) Yes, it was a great morning!

As I mentioned in the side column, it's peak harvest time. The best of both July and August are now available. Those that lust for their homemade salsa and dill pickles are happily "putting away" those jars of winter treats. Unfortunately, this is also the time of the year when our crew of helpers starts to dwindle off a bit. Football and volleyball practices are beginning so we're beginning to see our crew shrink a bit. School's start in two weeks will make harvesting a little more interesting... I suspect we'll begin an after school shift. Tim will be starting his first official fulltime teaching position at New Ulm Area Catholic Schools, Emily will be helping us as she can between her summer internship and whatever comes next in her life, and Samantha who has become a big help at the markets will also leave us a little short handed on those week-day markets. I guess we'll just take it one day at a time. It always works out!

Your farmers, Denny, Janice, Tim, Emily and Samantha

Back to School Time: For all Thursday Pickups in New Ulm

Beginning next week, August 26 and through the rest of the season, we need to adjust our pickup time for shares by a half hour to accommodate Tim's teaching schedule. Rather than 3:30, shares will be available at 4:00. Tim will be working in school until 3:30 and will then immediately bring the shares to town to our stand at the New Ulm Farmers' Market. Pickup times will be more similar to the beginning of the CSA season - between 4:00 and 5:30. Thank you for your cooperation in our needing to adjust this time.

Ideas for the Cook

Tim was playing with a focaccia recipe that he was attempted to mimic this past week and came up with this fantastic tasting and easy recipe for vegetable pizza. I highly recommend this easy meal. In fact the first time he made it, he had a non-veggie eating person enjoying it too! The recipe includes using a hot banana pepper. At first glance, I thought that it may be too hot for this dish, but it definitely was not. Since there's not a tomato sauce base, the combination of herbs and hot peppers make you think there is pizza sauce layered on the pizza. I know many people are not familiar with eggplant and shy around them. I don't want to hear that you left it in your fridge until you threw it out!! If the only way you've ever tried eggplant is the way your mother or Aunt Alice did frying it in eggs and cracker, I can see why you don't like eggplant. ICK! I've tried that also and don't care to again. See our easy recipe that we use on the next column for frying eggplant. It made eggplant lovers out of us. Some of you received the long Italian type of eggplant. They taste similar to the typical teardrop shaped vegetable, but have a smaller seed cavity. Our carrots will not win any beauty contest this week. That I am most sure of! I'm not sure why they are so misshaped since they were grown in sandy soil and had the moisture to grow long and straight. Like people, their beauty or lack of it is only skin deep. Till next week, have a good one!

-Janice

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Recipes of the Week

Tim's Veggie Pizza

Today's recipe is courtesy of Tim. His Veggie Pizza is so good, you won't know it's a veggie pizza!

Pizza Dough - I recommend Pillsbury's classic crust, but a homemade recipe should be fine!

Olive oil

2 tsp dried oregano

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried crushed basil

1 tsp dried parsley

Garlic powder

Seasoned Salt

1 hot banana pepper

3 small tomatoes

Few tablespoons chopped sweet onion

1 Couasa/summer squash/zucchini (any will work)

Few leaves of fresh basil

$1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 cups grated cheese

Spread the pizza dough evenly onto a greased pizza or edged baking pan and lightly brush with a couple teaspoons of olive oil. Sprinkle the dried oregano, basil, and parsley evenly over the dough, and add a "dusting" of garlic powder and seasoned salt (just enough to give the dough an orange tint). Cut the seeds out of the banana and bell peppers and discard (if you like extra heat, add the banana seeds with the herbs as well). Place thin slices of the peppers, tomatoes, and squash evenly across the dough to the amount of your liking. I like to quarter the squash and slice about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, and use about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a bell pepper. Add the onions. Top off the project with finely chopped fresh basil. I grated Colby Jack, sharp cheddar, and mozzarella cheeses and covered the veggies in style similar to Papa Murphy's Pizza, but add or subtract to your discretion. If using the Pillsbury dough, preheat your oven to 425 degrees and bake for about 17 minutes. Slice up and enjoy! Need a snack? This concoction is equally delicious served cold! *Hint: Adventurous cooks would probably enjoy diced eggplant on this pizza as well. We think the eggplant tastes like mushrooms in this type of dish.*

Guldán Eggplant Fry

1 Eggplant— peel the large ones, but no need to peel the long thin types

1 sweet onion

Slice eggplant and sauté in a tablespoon of olive oil with chopped onions. Season with garlic powder and seasoned salt. I sauté the eggplant pieces until they are soft. If you don't like the soft texture, reduce the cooking time a bit. When done to your liking, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Put the cover on for a minute and allow the cheese to melt a bit. Enjoy. Sometimes we add diced peppers and chopped tomatoes to this dish.

Guldan Family Farm



GULDAN GREETINGS

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Volume 2, Issue 14

August 23, 2010

*This week's
share ...our best
estimate...*

It looks as if we'll be in between corn plantings this week, at least for the Monday and Tuesday shares, so no sweet corn this week. At this point we are planning to include green beans again for everyone, a melon, a green bell pepper, tomatoes, eggplant, Walla walla onion, and some type of summer squash. New this week for everyone will be fingerling potatoes and ground cherries for full share members.

Thank you New Ulm Thursday pick up members for tweaking your pickup schedule a bit. We appreciate it very much!



On the Farm

The days are quickly becoming shorter. Not long ago, the house wrens living near our bedroom window became our early morning alarm clock every dawn at 4:30 as they cheerfully built nests and cared for their young. Come August, they don't seem quite as happy - they're rather quiet now. I've learned to rely on the electric type of alarm clock. Nevertheless, the first crack of dawn now occurs around 6:00 and the sunset, likewise has changed to around 8:00. Believe it or not, those few hours of less sunshine actually do make a difference in the growing pace of produce at this time of the year. A variety that normally has an 80 day maturity time may take 90 days if a large portion of the growing stage is taking place during the period of less heat or sunshine. When we're planting, we try to take that fact into consideration. It's part of the little game we play when scheduling additional plantings of specific crops. Our second planting of cucumbers has pooped out and we are waiting for the third planting to come up to speed. (That's why we've been missing cucumbers now for a couple weeks in the half shares.)

Yes, the "days to harvest" game.

We've been trying to make sense of estimated maturity dates particularly in the area of our watermelon crop this year. Our first planting in May washed away in the June storm and pretty much was a closed book. Our second planting which was planted in mid June is first beginning to blossom. The watermelons which take about 80 days to mature are located immediately beside cantaloupe with a similar maturity date. The cantaloupes are beginning to ripen and the watermelons are just starting to set fruit. Given a late frost, these watermelons may have time to mature and be harvestable in late September... but isn't that crazy? Always learning, we know that next year, we won't be planting watermelons on this particular stretch of heavy soil. They seem to do much better on sandy soil. This week seemed to hold many conversations between the farmers in the house concerning what we can do differently or improve on for next year. Already, there's a list in the back of our brains of what we need to try next year as well as ideas that will make some tasks a bit easier.

Your farmers, Denny, Janice, Tim, Emily and Samantha

Ideas for the Cook

We've indulged in a couple meals of fingerling potatoes in the last week and they are certainly a household favorite. Their yellow interiors and funky shape may seem a little foreign to those of us comfortable with an ordinary white potato, but one taste will win you over. The variety in your share is called Yellow Banana and is one of the more common of the many types of fingerling potatoes available to growers. Their waxy type texture makes them perfect for boiling, roasting or steaming. The flavor is similar to baby potatoes and fortunately as the potatoes grow to mature and dry off in the field, that same baby potato taste remains with them. We enjoy roasting them on a flat pan with a splash of olive oil and seasonings. Dried parsley, rosemary are great as is any of your favorite seasoning mixes. (We have one that Tones makes called Canadian Steak Seasoning that we prefer.) If the potatoes are larger, just slice them in half lengthwise. Roast at 425 degrees until tender. Ground cherries are the weird looking little husked berries that are included in full shares this week. They look like miniature tomatillos, but are meant to be eaten when they are yellow or orange, not green like the tomatillos. Just pop the berry out of the husk and toss into your mouth. They are sweet and might just be a new taste for many of you. Related to tomatoes, they do not need to be refrigerated and will keep well for some time they are in a container in which they can breathe. I have memories as a little girl sitting in my parents' garden collecting and eating the ground cherries. Most people just eat them as they are, but more energetic people might make jam, sauce, or pie out of them. Their season is just beginning. Hopefully we'll have some for everyone some time this fall. Have a good week!

-Janice

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Recipes of the Week

Eggplant Soufflé

This recipe was given to me by CSA member Evy last season. It's quite unique using eggs rather than the usual tomato base often found in eggplant recipes.

1 eggplant
4 eggs, beaten
1/2 cup bread crumbs
1/2 cup half and half (I used skim milk since that's what we had on hand)
1/3 cup chopped onion
1/2 teaspoon salt (less if you wish)
Sprinkle of pepper
1/4 cup melted butter
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese



Peel the eggplant and slice into 1 inch cubes. Boil in water until soft. Drain the water well. Mash eggplant with potato masher until smooth. Combine the beaten eggs, bread crumbs, half and half or milk, onion, salt and pepper. Add the mashed eggplant to the egg mixture making sure that it is cool enough that the eggs don't cook when adding the eggplant to it. Mix well and pour into a flat type casserole. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes until done. (When it stops jiggling. The time may vary depending on the size of casserole you use.) When done, sprinkle the cheese on the top. Eat!

Roasted Fingerling Potatoes

If you want a little spice, sprinkle these potatoes with a Cajun seasoning before roasting. Serve roasted fingerling potatoes with just about any main dish, along with a side vegetable or tossed salad.

1 pound fingerling potatoes
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1/4 teaspoon dried leaf thyme
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
Cajun seasoning, optional

Heat oven to 425°. Grease a large shallow baking dish with olive oil or spray with olive oil spray. Scrub potatoes and cut large ones in half. In a large bowl, combine the garlic powder, olive oil, lemon juice, thyme, pepper, and seasoning, if using. Toss potatoes with the garlic and oil mixture. Arrange the coated potatoes in a single layer in the prepared pan. Bake for about 20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.

Guldan Family Farm



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Volume 2, Issue 14

August 30, 2010

*This week's
share ...our best
estimate...*

My estimating has really been off recently. I'm not certain if it's because of the hot growing weather or rather the closing in on the end of the growing season, or just me being tired. Lately, I've been changing my newsletter mid-week to reflect what really was harvested and am being caught in saying we won't have something and then it miraculously is available anyway.. So in response to that—I'm almost ready to stop estimating!!

I'm positive you'll be receiving Kennebec (white) potatoes and Walla Walla onions this week because they're already dug. I'm also quite sure you'll be receiving a sweet red bell pepper since the plants are laden with a heavy load of beautiful red peppers. We're thinking that there will be sweet corn, cucumbers, green beans and melons again included in the shares with maybe a surprise or two.

On the Farm

Another gorgeous week has come and passed on the Guldan Farm. Wow, we just love this cooler weather as everyone does. Fall must be around the corner. I know because we've been gifted with the aroma of "skunk meeting dog" this week. The odor drifted into our house with the northwest wind during the night and was so strong that it caused sleeping to be rather difficult. A couple days of candles burning in our home has reduced the scent greatly. Thank goodness.

This has been a tough year for weed control. I can honestly say that I've not seen as healthy and large weeds in some of our fields in quite a few years. I'd be rather embarrassed to have a farm tour this time of the year. Perhaps it was because of the many rains which allowed the weed seeds laying in the soil to continue to germinate and prosper. When the days become shorter, it triggers the pigweed as well as most other weeds to produce seed to guarantee their reign for the next generation. Pigweed which can grow to be 4 to 5 feet tall (depending on what it's competing with) is notorious for developing its seed heads at 2 inches tall in the fall. So on that note, Denny's constant questions to me at this point of the year are "what can I mow off or disk under?" This is an important part of a farmer's weed control method for the next season since the seeds can lay dormant for many years. We've been working on our perennial plots during the last weeks to keep them as clean as possible. The asparagus beds, the summer raspberries, and the strawberry fields have all been on the schedule for pulling weeds or field maintenance as I like to call it. The crew started pruning the summer raspberries earlier in preparation for next summer's crop as well. We have until next spring to complete that task, but it's an easier job while they are actively growing. We need to prune out all the canes that have produced berries this year to make room for the newly growing canes which will produce the berries next season.

We've noticed some farmers selling squash already. Shame, shame. We just don't feel it's ready yet. Perhaps if one adds a cup of sugar to it, it's edible; but we'd rather wait until the squash has developed its own sweetness and flavor. (Kinda like a good wine?) Meanwhile we'll keep checking on it.

Your farmers, Denny, Janice, Jim, Emily & Samantha

Ideas for the Cook

With the cooler weather this past week, I've craved for some of those comfort type foods like potatoes, soup and the zucchini bars that we've not baked yet this summer. Hopefully those zucchini plants will hang in there for a little while yet so we can have that pleasure. Our friend Becky, visiting family in Minnesota, surprised us with some Michigan blueberries this week directly from the blueberry farm giving us a good excuse to make blueberry muffins instead. Kennebecs which are a white potato variety that commonly is grown in this area are a very versatile potato. They are superb boiled, fried, mashed or baked. Being a drier potato, they break down a little more than other varieties when cooked. So if you're boiling them, be careful not to overcook. Sweet red peppers are one of our favorite late summer/fall vegetables. They are so sweet, just like eating fruit. Did you know that a red pepper is a green pepper that has ripened and turned sweet? Specific varieties of green peppers are bred to turn yellow, orange and some other outrageous colors such as chocolate brown, ivory and purple. About 10 days after a green pepper has reached it's full size, it will start turning a brown color, then a striped red and green and eventually full red. Many times, in the ripening process, the pepper will develop a spot making it unmarketable which is why red peppers command a higher price when sold. We prefer red peppers to green when stuffing them. But most times, I just sauté strips of the red pepper with sliced onions in olive oil and seasoned with a bit of salt.

Have a great week!

– Janice

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Recipes of the Week

Green Bean and Potato Salad

This recipe was shared with us by a customer at market. The recipe makes a small batch, just enough for two or three people.. If you have fingerlings left from last week, this would be excellent using those also.

3/4 pound potatoes
1 cup cut green beans (cut into 1 inch pieces)
1/3 cup low fat mayo or Miracle Whip
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon rice vinegar
1/2 tablespoon lime juice
1/2 teaspoon honey
Dash of black pepper and salt
Minced garlic if you like
1/4 cup finely chopped sweet onion
Teaspoon of dried basil or more of fresh if available

Cook potatoes until tender. If potatoes are large, cut each into chunks that are a little more than an inch in diameter before boiling them. When done, drain the water and let them cool to room temperature. Cook the green beans 3-5 minutes just until crisp tender. Drain and let cool slightly. Cut potatoes into small bite sized pieces. Combine the mayo, mustard, vinegar, lime juice, honey, salt and pepper and garlic if using. Add the potatoes, beans, onions and basil. Toss gently and serve.

Cranberry Beans with Orange Balsamic Glaze

1 pound green beans trimmed
1 tablespoon butter
1/3 cup sliced sweet onion -more or less as you wish
2 tablespoons dried cranberries
1/2 of a medium orange, zested and juiced
2 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 1/2 tablespoon of cranberry juice, pomegranate juice or whatever you have on hand

Steam green beans until fork tender about 3- 5 minutes. In a large skillet, melt butter; add onions and cook over low heat until translucent. Turn up heat slightly and caramelize onions until golden, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. Add dried cranberries, orange zest, orange juice and additional juice. Simmer until liquid is reduced by half. Just before serving, add beans; toss to coat and heat through.