

Guldan Family Farm



GULDAN GREETINGS

Guldan Family Farm CSA
www.GuldanFamilyFarm.com

Volume 2, Issue 16

September 6, 2010

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

What to put in the shares this week? Another vendor at market said it best. This time of the season is a "foodie's paradise" - the best of both worlds. Many summer crops are still coming in strong and the fall crops are beginning their reign. That is except for the tomatoes which have died a slow death. The wet weather was tough on them and then to be followed by the hot weather created a rather ugly mess of tomatoes that would rather rot than ripen. This week's share includes green or yellow beans, cucumbers, a Walla Walla onion, perhaps the last of the cantaloupe, a red pepper as well as a green pepper. Full shares also are receiving a head of cabbage, a yellow pepper as well as a yellow watermelon. New to the shares this week is a daikon radish for everyone.

On the Farm

We've been doing a little autumn cleaning and sprucing up in our yard this past week in between work. My parents, Don and Delores Helget are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary in a few days and we are having a party on the farm to celebrate the special event. For the last couple weeks, each time I walked out my door, I made it a point to pull some unsightly weed in my flower bed or prune an unruly branch from a shrub. Quite a few years ago, I made it a point to not let myself become stressed out over the landscaping or should I say "lack of landscaping" in our yard. With the vegetable fields always being priority, weeds quickly would outgrow my planned flower beds. Quickly, my well thought out plans would succumb to lack of time to care for the landscaping around our home. So.... I basically gave up and decided that simple was much better. A few purchased pots of cushion mums and blazing orange pumpkins from Sam's pumpkin patch will add some color and a splash of life to my yard. On Saturday after market, we spent an hour cleaning up the garage. The famous shoe and boot pile was the main obstacle. I would guess that we moved out at least 30 pairs of mud caked shoes, boots, sandals and whatever else can be attached to a foot. Why so many pairs? Well, you need a pair of tennis shoes for dry days, boots for muddy days, warmer boots for cooler days, another pair of shoes if the first pair is all wet or you can't locate them, work boots or rain boots for other conditions, and then there are the other shoes that we can show ourselves in public with. Quickly, the numbers add up. When you're changing clothes or shoes on the hour for whatever the conditions warrant, there's no reason to regularly clean up the mess. Then it was onto the hat, glove, and jacket pile. (I know—if you don't live on a farm or work outdoors a lot, you might think we're nuts or slob, but that's the way it really is when you're working in the dirt really.)

The fingerling potatoes seemed to be quite a hit with many of you. We heard lots of good comments on them and hope to be able dig potatoes again real soon once this mud dries out. Look for them making another appearance in the shares real soon. We've been trying the acorn squash and hopefully you'll be finding them in next week's share.

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

Ideas for the Cook

I hope the daikon radish doesn't scare any of you. Most assume that since they are large in size, their taste will be hot. Not so, generally they are a very mild radish, becoming milder the larger they grow; and obviously, they get rather huge in our sandy soil. We have pulled some that are about 2 feet long. That's a lot of radish. How do you eat them? Well, eat them as you would any typical red radish since they taste quite similar. You can use them in a radish sandwich on pumpnickel bread with butter, add them to a potato salad or a fresh vegetable pasta salad or just them as is. Simply slice off a piece and store the rest in a plastic bag in your refrigerator. They will keep very well if wrapped in plastic wrap. If you're a little more daring, I have included a couple recipes using this wacky daikon radish. Most recipes on recipe sites are Asian since this radish originated in that part of the world using a few ingredients not always found in some of our pantries. I doubt that the Asians make radish sandwiches with Pumpnickel or rye bread, but leave it to us Germans to come up with something a little off the wall. The pickled radish recipe is easy and is often talked about at the market as people buy these radishes. Hopefully, you're enjoying the peppers which are in full swing right now. How I wish we could have them early in the season with the lettuce and spinach! Time to make stuffed peppers or fajitas. Full shares have a watermelon included this week. We are beginning to pick a few. We don't see a huge crop out there, but a few for starters. This personal sized watermelon is yellow in color with a fantastic refreshing taste. Maybe something totally new for some of you! Have a great week!

— Janice

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Recipes of the Week

Radish and Feta Salad

From Asparagus to Zucchini—A Guide to Cooking Farm-Fresh Seasonal Produce is a great book to use for new ideas in cooking local produce. The book was compiled by the Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition and includes this recipe.

4 cups thinly sliced radishes
1/2 pound crumbled feta cheese
Sliced black olives
Chopped sweet onions or fresh mint
Lemon vinaigrette

Combine the sliced radishes, feta cheese, olives, onions or fresh mint. Dress with a lemony vinaigrette and marinate for at least 30 minutes. Makes 4 servings.

Tsukemono (Pickled Radishes)

1 long white daikon radish
Salt
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 white vinegar

Peel the radish if desired and cut into thin slices. Put into a bowl in layers and coat liberally with salt as you build up the layers. The slices will sweat and become limp. After an hour, drain and place in dish towel and squeeze out liquid (or squeeze in colander). If using the dish towel method, do not overdo it! Put back in dry bowl, add sugar and vinegar and stir to dissolve. They will be ready in about 6 hours and hold for at least 2 to 3 days in the refrigerator.

Beef Fajitas

1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 pound thinly sliced beef
1 cup thinly sliced onions
1 cup thinly sliced red bell pepper
1 cup thinly sliced green bell pepper
1 (14.5 ounce) can beef broth french onion style (if available)
1 (1.27 ounce) packet fajita seasoning

In a skillet over medium-high heat, heat oil. Add beef and sauté until no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Add onions and peppers and cook until peppers are tender, about 3 minutes. Add broth and heat to boil, simmer uncovered 15 minutes to reduce. Stir in fajita seasoning, mixing well. Bring to a boil. Serve over rice or in a warmed flour tortilla

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September 13, 2010

*This week's
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This week's share is beginning to say "Fall." The cool temperatures this week have nearly shut down most of the heat loving crops. It seems so bizarre that within a few days' time, cool days and nights will trigger some of the plants to stop production. The shorter days also tip off the pepper plants to quickly ripen since the growing season is coming to an end. This week's share includes carrots, and as I had hoped, another helping of fingerling potatoes. Broccoli, kohlrabi and red peppers return to the shares as well as perhaps the last of our onions. New this week is celery and either an acorn or buttercup squash. Full shares will also receive jalapeno peppers and red potatoes .

On the Farm

We have been preparing squash for taste testing for a couple weeks, and decided last weekend, that the buttercups and acorn squash were definitely ready. If you were with us last year, you may recall that our squash crop was quite short and for some unknown reason most of the squash never did ripen before the killing frost. The squash are liking the piece of land they were planted on this year and despite the fact that we've had some flooding in that area this summer, in return, it looks like the plants are paying us favor and gifting us with a nice crop of squash. We planted about a half dozen types of squash. They look rather different from each other. Everyone seems to have their favorite, but in reality, they're all pretty similar. Some years the buttercups are our favorite and other years, it is the acorn. So far this year, we've been quite happy with both of them. The acorns and buttercups are generally the first to ripen and this year is no exception. One of the best characteristics of squash is that the cool nights create a sweeter tasting squash. Squash gets better tasting with a very light frost. Sometimes, letting a squash "cure" or sit for 2 weeks at room temperature will increase the sweetness of the flavor. We'll pick squash as we need it and when a hard killing frost is in the forecast, we'll pick like crazy people harvesting as much as humanly possible in a short period of time. Some squash can handle a slight frost, but continuous hard frosts spoil the storage qualities of a squash. Finding the broccoli crop was a nice surprise. I really didn't think that this planting was going to turn out. Earlier the insect pressure was quite intense in this planting, but they seem to have eased out of that phase very well. The hot peppers are REALLY hot this year. Tim made jalapeño poppers last week (see last year's newsletter on our website for that recipe) and they were quite warm. Perhaps we should have scraped out more of the membrane. Did you know that there is more heat in the seeds and membrane than the actual pepper? Remember that tidbit when adding diced jalapeños in your recipes. For more heat, include some of the seeds and membrane with the chopped jalapeños. For less, scrape it out of the pepper and use only the actual pepper. When I make salsa, I retain some of the seeds rather than throwing them away. If I decide there's not enough heat, I just quickly add some of the seeds and white membrane.

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

Ideas for the Cook

Roasted Fingerlings? Roasted Peppers? Roasted Squash? Roasting vegetables brings out the sweetness in many vegetables especially peppers. To roast peppers, I quarter them, remove the seeds and place them flat on a cookie sheet. Drizzle a bit of olive oil over the peppers and roast in a 450 degree oven for about 25 minutes till slightly blackened and blistered. Use the roasted peppers in a homemade vinaigrette, on pasta, or just eat them as they are. You've never baked squash? This comfort food is easily and quickly prepared in the microwave oven, but if you have time, instead roast it in the oven for a less watery and a more caramelized flavor. Cut the squash in half and clean out the seeds. Place the squash halves, cut-side up, on a rimmed baking sheet. Rub the flesh with softened butter or oil, season with salt and pepper and drizzle with brown sugar, maple syrup or orange juice if desired. Cover each half with aluminum foil and bake the squash halves 40 to 45 minutes in a preheated 400 degrees F oven. Adjust the time accordingly for a smaller or larger sized squash. Roast the squash until the skin is blistered, browned and the flesh tender. Insert a fork or knife under the skin to test that the flesh is tender. When the squash has cooled, the skin should peel off easily. Roasting squash helps to maintain squash's delicate flavor. Once roasted and cooled, there are a plethora of cooking options available. Obviously, just eat it as is or add a little butter and brown sugar if you want extra sweetness. Another option is to mash the squash and use it in any recipe calling for squash purée. Roasted squash freezes extremely well and reheats easily. Don't be afraid to roast several squash at once and freeze it for later use. And how convenient is that? Have a great week!

— Janice

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Recipes of the Week

Stir Fried Vegetables— *Be flexible and use vegetables that are available to you. Shredded cabbage, celery, kohlrabi, chunks of tomatoes or summer squash can also be added.*

1 medium green pepper, julienned
1 medium sweet red pepper, julienned
1 medium carrot, julienned
1 cup broccoli florets
1 1/2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 tablespoon light soy sauce
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1 small onion diced
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1/2 cup low-sodium chicken broth
1/8 cup cold water

In a large skillet or wok, sauté the peppers, carrots and broccoli in oil until crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Combine soy sauce and ginger; add to pan with onion. Cook and stir for 1 minute. Combine cornstarch, broth and water until smooth; gradually stir into vegetables. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Serve with rice or other grain such as quinoa.

Acorn Squash Soup

The original recipe called for acorn squash, but I see no reason why you couldn't substitute buttercup or butternut squash in its place. Acorn squash is a bit lighter in color than other squashes, but you'll have a great soup, no matter which type of squash you have on hand.

1 small onion
1/4 cup chopped celery
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon chicken bouillon granules
1/2 teaspoon dill weed
1/4 teaspoon curry powder
dash cayenne pepper
2 cups chicken broth
1 (12 ounce) can evaporated milk
3 cups mashed cooked acorn squash
salt and pepper to taste
5 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled

In a large saucepan, sauté the onion and celery in butter. Stir in flour, bouillon, dill, curry and cayenne until blended. Gradually add broth and milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Add the squash, salt and pepper; heat through.

In a blender, process the soup in batches until smooth. Pour into bowls; garnish with bacon.

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September 20, 2010

*This week's
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This week's share looks to be one of those heavier totes again. Fall produce is not only beautiful, but bulky. During, this past week, we have gathered enough ripe watermelons from our very short watermelon crop to provide all of you with a taste. Full share members received a cute little yellow watermelon earlier—this week the half share members get a taste. Full share members will receive a larger red watermelon this week. Everyone will receive butternut squash, a head of cabbage, a daikon radish, red pepper, and beans. Full share members will also receive grape tomatoes, green peppers, and additional amounts of the other produce.

On the Farm

Rain, rain, go away. We're rather weary of working in rain and muck. The rain is certainly helpful in adding to the subsoil moisture for next year, but really has no huge benefit to this season any longer. On the bright side, the root crops are easier to pull out of the wet soil, peppers and beans are in no danger of dehydrating on the plants, and it sure does beat the many 90 degree days we worked through this summer. So, we carry on through the mud, making the best of it, wearing raingear while washing the produce in the cooler parts of the day to stay warm and remembering how much we love fall. Late last week, rains were forecasted again for this week, so we dug potatoes with the tractor on Saturday afternoon hoping to get some harvested between the rains. And it worked! Yay, that 100 year old potato digger did it's job without hesitating.

For those of you wondering, the season has two more weeks of shares after this week and as of this writing, fortunately, there is still not a killing frost in the forecast. We've been eying the fall crops in order to determine what is going to "make it" before a frost and what just may not. The sweet potato and brussels sprouts both appear to have some issues at this point and I'm not sure why. The brussels sprouts are first beginning to show growth of little sprouts and the sweet potatoes have vines crawling yards across the soil into other rows but very few orange tubers growing underneath. With two weeks left for them to show their stuff, I'm rather concerned that even with all the heat this summer, they may not mature. Last year, during a cool summer, they both produced beautiful crops. Figure that one out! Cole crops such as cabbage, broccoli and kohlrabi have enjoyed this cool growing weather. The sweet corn, on the other hand, has not. The last plantings are always planted at a risk not knowing how bad the critter pressure will be or if they will mature in time. The lack of heat has caused the corn to mature incredibly slow, allowing the resident coyotes, raccoons and deer to have one heck of a party in these last plantings. They've devoured or mangled nearly every ear leaving us very little. Frustrating as that is, we've become a little more immune to their destroying habits with time. It's part of the game and that's why we're diversified. All in all, it's been a good growing season; and if at times we sound pessimistic, it's just the realization and keeping a reality check in place that there is never a guarantee of a specific crop until it's actually harvested and practically on your plate. There are way too many obstacles that have been known to show their unpleasant face. However, on second thought, it's really been a great year. We're certainly looking forward to sharing the last couple weeks of the season with your families!

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

Ideas for the Cook

If you haven't roasted vegetables yet this season, this is definitely the time to give it a whirl. I've said it before, but it bears repeating. Roasting vegetables concentrates the flavor and brings out additional sweetness with the caramelizing of the juices. I would prepare a fantastic beef roast meal (or pork for that matter) with roasted vegetables. Peel the squash and cut the desired amount into 3/4 inch cubes. Wrap the remaining portion in plastic wrap and save for a meal later this week. Dice the radish into similar sized cubes and slice the red pepper into strips. (We're quite fond of radishes baked with a beef roast.) If you have carrots, onions, or potatoes left from last week, cube them and add them to the mix. Put the roast into a large roaster with a cover. Add a little water to the bottom. Season with garlic powder, rosemary, salt and pepper. About an hour before the roast is done, add the vegetables to the roaster, allowing them to roast in the meat's natural juices. Add a sprinkling of the seasonings to the vegetables. Bake until the vegetables are easily pricked with a fork. I'd make a big batch since leftovers are always appreciated. I've include several easy recipes using butternut squash. If you're feeling like you have more time on your hands than I do right now, there's a lot of recipes out there for squash risotto, soup as well as lasagna. For me, that may be a November meal because currently roasted squash sounds quite easy and delicious with the included variations. Enjoy the watermelon, I like to think of pineapple when enjoying the yellow crisp flesh. Delicious! Have a great week!

– Janice

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Recipes of the Week

Ginger Orange Squash— *This is a delicious way to prepare squash besides the typical brown sugar and butter method.*

2 pounds butternut squash
2 tablespoons frozen orange juice concentrate
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 tablespoon butter or margarine
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

Puncture squash several times with a knife or fork; place on a microwave-safe plate. Cook on high for 5 minutes. Cut into quarters; remove seeds and pulp. Return to plate, cut side down, and cover with waxed paper; microwave on high for 7 minutes. Turn over; microwave on high for 6-8 minutes or until soft. Scoop out squash and place in bowl; mash and add remaining ingredients and mix well. Serves 4.

Baked Squash and Apples *Found in an old St. John's of Searles church cookbook, you generally can't go wrong with the time tested recipes found in community cookbooks.*

2 apples (preferable type that stays solid when baked such as Haralson)
2 pounds of butternut squash
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup butter
1 tablespoon flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon

Peel and slice apples. Peel the squash. Cut in half lengthwise and take out the seeds and pulp. Cut into 1/2 inch cubes. Arranged in an ungreased baking dish. Stir together remaining ingredients and sprinkle on top of squash. Cover with foil and bake for 50-60 minutes at 350 degrees. (I use less sugar and butter than recipe suggests.)

Roasted Butternut Squash with Lime Juice

1 2-pound butternut squash, peeled, cut crosswise into 1/2-inch-thick slices
1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon butter, melted
2 tps fresh lime juice plus 1 lime cut into wedges for garnish
1 tsp chopped fresh rosemary or 1/2 tsp dried

Preheat oven to 400°F. Place squash rounds in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet; toss with oil, butter, and lime juice. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast 20 minutes. Turn squash over; roast until soft and golden brown, about 20 minutes longer. Cut into wedges. **DO AHEAD:** *Can be made 4 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature. Rewarm in 400°F oven until hot, about 10 minutes.* Season squash to taste with salt and pepper; sprinkle with rosemary. Serve warm with lime wedges.