



NOTES FROM THE FARM

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This week's share... Our best guess

It has become a bit easier to read our crystal ball in the last week or two in deciding what will be included in the week's shares. Whereas there are always surprises to be had, some extra time and recent growing weather has been making these decisions a bit more predictable. We dug a few red potato plants over the weekend and decided the sizing was finally up to par for those first "new potatoes." We're also including our first cabbage for everyone and if it's as hot as it is forecasted to be, we hope that there will be lots of cucumbers for everyone to have "more than just a taste" this week. There should be lots of beans to pick for everyone this week as well as the kitchen staples of salad greens, onions and radishes. We have fresh cilantro (more about that herb elsewhere) for everyone this week and I'm thinking that there'll be a head of broccoli and cauliflower added to the full shares.

ON THE FARM

One of my favorite harvesting tasks on the farm is picking up potatoes. (This is Janice talking, no one else would make this claim at our house.) I know that I'm outnumbered in terms of anyone else in our family agreeing with me, but this mundane task usually settles my nervous stomach if I'm having issues being tightly wound with some growing problem. I don't have to think about anything. I'm just well, there. I search and pick up the potatoes and place them in my basket. I like the feel of the sandy soil running through my fingers as I crawl down the row finding the spuds in the loose soil. I've got the easy job. I'm not doing the digging. I'm just following the person who hand dug them or the tractor pulled potato digger we'll use later when the potatoes have matured. I laughed to myself as we were picking them up remembering a young boy about 5 or 6 at the time named Kyle who we introduced to potato bug larvae. These bright orange larvae can eat the foliage like starving teenage boys and cause early death for a growing potato plant. This particular year, we had quite a crop of these orange hungry critters who were causing plenty of damage. Picking them off the plants and destroying them is the most fool proof method of ridding them, so middle school -aged Tim explained to Kyle how cool it was when you squished these orange eaters. I'll stop here and let you imagine the gory details. I can't recall if Kyle was wearing gloves or not, but he sure squished an enormous number of orange larvae that day. So as I squished a few bugs of my own, I smiled thinking of Kyle's help that day a long time ago. Have a great week!



Denny, Janice, Tim, Samantha and Emily

THE GREAT CILANTRO DIVIDE - ARE YOU A LOVER OR A HATER?

A quick internet search will find a bazillion articles on the research given to the subject of the taste of cilantro. This herb most definitely has a very defined set of lovers and haters. (Similar to asparagus.) One article I've read discussed the fact that genetics are most certainly involved and that there is a group of people we'll call "supertasters" who taste something that others don't. Apparently, if you are a twin and you love cilantro, your partner at birth has the same love. As a cilantro lover, I don't taste or smell the taste these minority supertaster extremists speak of. I only taste fabulous. And to demonstrate my point, I've included a couple recipes on the back side using cilantro for those of you new to this herb used in Middle East, Texan and Latin American cooking. Enjoy!



E- Version - Scroll down for page 2!

IDEAS FOR THE COOK

New potatoes have a lot of moisture so it is important that you remove them from the plastic bag when you get home. Keep them out of direct light in a container where they can breathe but at room temperature. No need to keep them in the fridge. For some reason the term, "new potatoes" adds a touch of glamour to an ordinary vegetable. So ordinary in fact that you don't need much of a recipe to make this portion of a super quick fantastic meal. We simply wash them up and cut them into similar sized pieces. I place them in microwavable casserole with about a tablespoon of water and onions. I cut some of the green onions in half or quarter or even keep them whole depending on their size. Microwave all on high for about 5 to 8 minutes until they are fork tender. Drain the water and then season with seasoned salt, garlic powder and a bit of butter. Green and yellow beans? I steam them or boil them in salted water and when they are to our desired texture of doneness, I drain the water and season with salt, pepper and a bit of butter. The recipes on the side bar give some additional ideas for the beans if you want to add a little more pizzazz to the beans. Tim's new sandwich this season is his version of a BLT without the T which he proudly called the BLC. He's been slicing raw cucumbers and substituting them for tomatoes in a BLT sandwich. With some toasted bread, it's been a quick and tasty lunchtime treat for us. Now that you have some fresh cilantro I suggest you set aside a bit of that cilantro to make the cilantro dressing recipe included in the newsletter a couple weeks ago. The fresh cilantro should keep well in your fridge for about 10 days if you keep it in an airtight container. I'd make some fresh coleslaw with that sweet first head of cabbage. No time this week? That's okay -it will keep well in your fridge for quite a while.

RECIPE OF THE WEEK

FRESH BEAN AND ALMOND SALAD - *How about this for a hot day meal? Recipe makes at least 4 side dish servings.*

1 pound beans (green or yellow or both)
1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled
1/4 cup chopped onion
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
1/2 cup slivered almonds
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons white-wine vinegar
Salt and pepper

Wash and prepare beans, cutting them into 1 1/2-inch pieces. Steam green beans for about 5 to 7 minutes, until cooked through but still crunchy. Drain water and plunge the beans into cold water to stop the cooking process. Brown the almonds in a heavy pan over medium heat until golden brown. (Stir constantly to prevent burning.) Mix all ingredients together and toss. Refrigerate for at least two hours before serving cold. Add salt and pepper to your liking after it has sat a bit as the feta cheese will add some saltiness to the salad. *It's even better the next day after the ingredients marinate. Denny suggested that a little fried bacon would be excellent added to this salad.*

SESAME PASTA WITH CILANTRO - *4 servings.*

8 ounces fettuccine or pasta of your choice
1 teaspoon sesame seeds
1 teaspoon dark sesame oil
Chopped cilantro
Thinly sliced cucumber slices

Prepare pasta in rapidly boiling salted water until done but still firm. Rinse pasta in hot water. Add the sesame seeds, sesame oil and chopped cilantro. Top with thinly sliced cucumbers on each serving. Serve with grilled chicken!

Beans with Bacon - *4 servings*

1 pound green or yellow beans
2 bacon slices
2 tablespoons chopped onions
Salt and pepper to taste

Bring a large saucepan of water to boil and add beans. Cook 5 minutes and then drain and plunge into ice water. Cook 2 chopped bacon slices in a skillet until crisp. Remove bacon, reserving 2 tsps of the drippings in the pan. Add the chopped onions and sauté 2 minutes. Add beans and a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Cook 2 minutes and top with the bacon.