

Guldan Family Farm



NOTES FROM THE FARM

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This week's share... Our best guess

This week's share will include lots of green beans. This particular planting of beans has been less affected by the recent heat wave than many other varieties of produce and looks to give a good yield for your enjoyment this week. The final pea plantings didn't fare to well in the heat. Again, those delicious "new" red potatoes will make an appearance in the shares. The potato plants are reaching the maturity level where we can use the potato digger rather than using the old fashioned potato fork. Candy onions are new this week, a mild full season onion as well as a taste of swiss chard for all the full share members. Maybe broccoli or cauliflower for the half shares. We'll see what the land gives us this week. More than likely, cucumbers, kohlrabi and will round off this week's shares as well as some basil. This heat loving herb has enjoyed this stretch of summer temperatures. Hopefully, there will be some other surprises to add to the tote.

ON THE FARM

A year from now, two years from now, as well as five years from now, this year of extremes will be considered an "average" year. Recently, one of the weather newscasts had a story on how silly these "averages" really are. And I certainly agree. Has this year felt "average" to you? Not I. We had a winter that didn't end, a spring that didn't occur and so far, more hotter than heck days than I really want to count. But do the math. Figure in all the colder than normal days and the hotter than normal days and more than likely it will average out and the record will show this year to be no different than any other. I bet our plants don't feel like this is an "average" year! Just like people, they haven't appreciated these extreme variances either. Fortunately, we saw some growth this past week on all of the heat loving plants and that's a good thing!

Denny and I were chatting about our farm this week, our little piece of heaven hidden between a gravel pit and a quarry in the middle of the woods. Most people don't even realize we exist on this dead end road in the woods full of wildlife. Mind you, I'm talking "wild" life as in 4-legged creatures, not the wild life I read about as I think, "wow, are we ever boring!". We were discussing the pro's and con's of investing in permanent deer fencing and how and **IF** it would work for us as well as, the number of dollars it might cost. You see, we're playing this game of tag with a herd of deer since the Minnesota River is still so high and out of its banks. For about a month now, Denny's been using deer repellent on their grazing areas - our vegetables. We know that it keeps them out of the most recently treated area; but, unfortunately, simply sends them into another area to continue their munching. So, he applies the repellent to that area and then they move on to another favorite spot ... and on and on. We know very few growers that don't have these same issues. Most small farmers that we know have river bottom or marginal land for their truck farming operations and deal with similar situations. If a farmer has rich flat land, he or she is probably farming traditional row crops of corn and soybeans like nearly everyone in the Midwest. We daydreamed a little about how farming could be easier if we didn't have to plant enough to feed our customers and the resident animals, but what would be the challenge in that?

Hope you have a great week.

The Guldan's - Denny, Janice, Tim, Sam and Emily

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IDEAS FOR THE COOK

We're really trying to reduce the amount of plastic we're using when possible. Since "new" potatoes should not be kept in a bag anyway we've skipped the bag on them this week. Store them in an open container and keep at room temperature. The "Candy" onion is a mild onion which we enjoy both raw and cooked. It retains a good onion flavor when cooked. These onions are maturing and starting to dry off so they don't need to be kept in your refrigerator.

I've included an easy recipe below for those that received swiss chard this week. This cooking green can be substituted for spinach in dishes like quiches, lasagna and omelets. Just wash the leaves by swishing in a water bath. Remove the stems and sauté the wet leaves in butter with onions and garlic. Or toss steamed leaves with olive oil, lemon juice and salt and pepper. For an Asian flavor, toss with sesame oil, rice vinegar and soy sauce. No cooking needed for the cucumbers and kohlrabi - JUST EAT!

CSA member, Nancy, sent me this note last night, "You could suggest to people to make cucumber sandwiches. I slice them thin, put butter on one piece of bread, Laughing Cow lite cheese on the other piece, salt the cucumbers. So delicious! Oh, and a few thin slices of onion, too." Thanks, Nancy!

SWISS CHARD PIE

1 small onion, chopped
Garlic powder
1 tablespoon canola oil
1 bunch swiss chard
3 eggs
1/2 cup of your favorite shredded cheese
1/2 tsp salt
1 pie crust

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Brown onions in oil. Trim stems and chop the chard leaves, add to pan and cook down until wilted. Beat eggs in a bowl and mix in cheese, salt, and chard mixture. Pour into pie crust, bake until knife inserted into center comes out clean, 30 to 40 minutes.

RECIPES OF THE WEEK

WARM POTATOES WITH BASIL VINAIGRETTE

Serves 2 to 3

1 pound red potatoes
Fresh basil leaves - 6-8 leaves
1 small clove garlic or dried garlic powder
1 1/2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1/4 tsp kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1/3 cup canola or olive oil

Steam the potatoes over boiling water until tender when pierced with a paring knife, about 15 minutes. (Or alternatively, boil them in well-salted water until tender. Drain them and return them to the pot in which they were cooked and set over low heat for a few seconds to dry them.) In a food processor, combine the basil, garlic or garlic powder, vinegar, mustard, salt and pepper. With the motor running, gradually add the oil until completely incorporated. When the potatoes are cooled enough to handle, cut them into bite-sized chunks. Put them in a serving bowl and drizzle 1/4 cup of the vinaigrette. Serve warm with extra vinaigrette on the side, if you like. Suggestion: Add fresh green beans to this side dish. Steam the beans until tender crisp. Plunge into cold water to stop the cooking process. Drain water and allow the beans to slightly dry. Add to cooked potatoes and drizzle the basil vinaigrette over the vegetables.

GREEN BEANS WITH CARAMELIZED ONIONS

4 servings.

1 pound green beans, stem ends snipped off
1 tablespoon butter
1 onion, sliced as thinly as possible
1/2 cup chicken stock
2 1/2 teaspoons sugar
1 1/2 teaspoon red wine vinegar
Salt and pepper to taste

Cook beans in boiling salted water until tender crisp, about 4-5 minutes. Drain; immerse in ice water. Drain again and let stand to dry. Melt butter in skillet over medium heat. Stir in onions and cook them slowly until very wilted and deepened in color, about 10 to 15 minutes. Boil stock in a saucepan until reduced to 1/4 cup; stir in sugar and vinegar. Stir in onions. Simmer until slightly reduced. Combine onions and green beans; heat through. Season with salt and pepper.

