



WELL FED

Newsletter for Wellspring Farm CSA

www.wellspringcsa.com

July 16, 2007

Farmer's Report

Hey, where did summer go?! We were cruising along with dry, warm weather for awhile there and now the rain and cool temperatures seem to have gotten lodged over central Vermont. Over 5 inches of rain in a week makes an impact on a farm. We had standing water in between the beds on Thursday I and feared that we would only be able to harvest a few crops, but miraculously all went as planned. However, as this wet weather continues, we take a hit. Fall greens seedings get delayed. The weeds, which we were so on top of, start to win the race since weeding is marginally effective, and sometimes not even possible. Tractor work like cultivating and cover cropping is not feasible because driving heavy equipment on wet soil does much more harm than good. Diseases of all kinds fester and spread in wet conditions, like early blight in tomatoes and blossom end rot in squash. Plant growth slows as oxygen becomes less available to the roots through soaking rains and compaction. All this can be very stressful for the farmer. I ask for your understanding this week as hoped-for crops may not be ready and variety is not what I had hoped. This will change when the sun and breeze come out again. Geez, what can I say that's good? The positive side is that the farmers get a slight break from the whirlwind of too much activity and a Zen lesson in acceptance. There's nothing that one can do to stop the rain. Believe me, I've tried!

In this week's share

(Subject to change, esp. with the recent weather):

- Romaine and/or salad mix
- Bulb fennel – a special treat for those who are familiar with it, and a new experience for the rest. We grow a few less-familiar crops like bulb fennel to introduce our members to new vegetables that they may not have heard of before. I also love this crop for its beauty. Fennel has a slight licorice taste. Sounds funny, I know, but try slicing the bulb thinly, sauté in butter with salt and herbs until it becomes somewhat translucent and enjoy. See our recipe too.
- Spinach- try adding raw spinach to your basil pesto recipe (half spinach half pesto)
- Purple scallions
- Cabbage – Due to the wet weather, we have bought in this certified organic cabbage from our friends at Dog River Farm in Berlin.
- Carrot and/or beet
- Pick-your-own beans, snap peas and shelling peas– This week or next there will be unlimited beans for all to pick. They freeze beautifully after blanching, or try making dilly beans.
- Flowers & herbs

Coming Soon

I'm starting to feel like a broken record, but at this point we are (still) waiting for:

- Cukes
- Summer squash & zucchini
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower

In the meantime, there will still be more delectable carrots, beets, red potatoes and all manner of greens. Thank you for your patience and understanding! This is the heart of CSA!

Seeking

Receive a discount on your share! Looking for a Harvest Working Member, Mondays, 8am-noon, September through mid-October. Lots of fun in the fields and heavy lifting (must be able to lift 40lbs).

Make you own Herb Tea

This Thursday, 4-5pm on the farm

Working Member Lu Van Zeeland will be giving out tips on how to make teas using the herbs in our new medicinal herb bed. Come sample teas and learn the uses of our herb collection

Caution!

We delight in knowing folks like to walk in the pick your own sections barefoot; however this is not safe for your tender feet! Now and then we find glass shards in our fields (they come in with compost I suspect). For your safety, shoes are required on the farm.

CREAMY FENNEL SOUP

2 cups stock (chicken, beef or vegetable)
1 bulb fennel
1 sliver garlic
2 tbsp. chopped onion
1 tbsp. lemon juice (or more to taste)
1 tsp. lemon zest
1/2 tsp. dried dill (or 1 1/2 tsp fresh)
1 tsp. ground coriander
1 quart nonfat yogurt

Clean and slice the fennel bulb, reserving any greens for garnish. Cook the fennel in the stock with the garlic and shallots until soft. Puree in a blender with the lemon juice and zest, and the spices. Strain the puree if you wish a smoother texture. Combine well with the yogurt and chill. Serve garnished with chopped fennel greens or chopped cilantro.

Fennel Salad

1 Bulb fennel
1 bunch radish
1 Cucumber
A few carrots
Rice vinegar
Dill 1-2 tsp if fresh

Thinly slice fennel, carrots and radish. Seed and chop cucumber. Mix everything into a bowl and toss with some rice vinegar and some dill to taste. This salad gets better as the days go by and it marinates in the vinegar, but it is really tasty the day of as well.

Oven Potatoes with Fennel

2 – 3 cups of potatoes, cut in 1/2" cubes
1 medium fennel bulb, trimmed and cut in 1" slices
1 medium sweet onion, diced
1 tablespoon fresh parsley, minced finely
2 teaspoons vegetable oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
freshly ground black pepper -- to taste

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray or grease with oil. In large bowl, combine potatoes, fennel, onion, parsley, oil, salt and pepper; toss gently until well coated. Arrange mixture in a single layer on a prepared baking sheet. Bake, turning occasionally, until potatoes are crisp on all sides, 30-35 minutes. Serve immediately