



WELL FED

Newsletter for Wellspring Farm CSA

www.wellspringcsa.com

August 18, 2008

Peddle Your Wares to Support More Shares!

Announcing Silent Auction at Wellspring's Harvest Fest Sunday, Sept 14 from 2-5pm

Harvest Fest is our annual celebration of the season for our CSA members, friends and farmers. This year we are excited to add a Silent Auction to support our subsidized CSA share program (half-priced shares for low income families. For info see <http://www.wellspringcsa.com/membership.html>). Our goal is to raise \$750 which NOFA-VT will match for a total of \$1500 to support 10 local families' CSA shares in 2009. In addition to raising funds, we hope our fundraiser will also build connections between CSA members!

How can I participate?

1. Donate a service, experience or craft item to be bid on at the auction. We ask that items/services are no less than \$15 in value.
2. Bid during Harvest Fest. Forms describing the service and/or items will be displayed at the event.

Examples of Services or Experiences: bike maintenance, music lessons, wild edibles walk, baby sitting, housecleaning, massage. Be creative!

Examples of Craft Items: baked goods, pottery, photographs, paintings, canned salsa.

How do I sign up?: See sign-up form attached here or get a form during pick-up hours. Please return forms by September 10.

Pick Your Own

- **Flowers**
- **Hot peppers** – Back in May, our original hot pepper plants got killed by an unexpectedly harsh late frost. Fellow farmer Paul Betz from High Ledge Farm in Woodbury came to the rescue with organic replacement plants. The varieties are extensive – 18 in all including names like Matchbox, Prairie Fire and Pretty in Purple. We didn't mark the plants by variety because there are so many. Now you have an adventure in hot pepper picking. Most are medium-hot, and in general the seeds are hotter than the flesh so be careful. We recommend using a little at a time in your cooking, and adjust according to your taste buds.
- **Cherry tomatoes**
- **Basil** – Four varieties to pick: traditional Italian, lemon, thai & purple

Coming Next Week:

- More corn, melons, tomatoes
- More roots like beets, carrots, potatoes, onions
- Cabbage and winter squash likely the week after next

In this week's share:

- **Sweet corn** – Have you tried raw corn yet? We love introducing it to our young members especially. We pick your corn just a few hours before you get it, so enjoy the rare treat of biting right in and tasting the sweetness of fresh corn. You won't find this flavor in the supermarket. There's a bear or two that feels the same way about our corn field. They've been helping themselves recently!
- **Melons** – Muskmelons (aka cantaloupes) are a favorite crop. We have good fruit set this year, but the plants have died back due to alternaria, a disease spread in the rain. This means they won't vine ripen. While we try to harvest them ready to eat, this season you may need to let the melons sit on your counter for a few days so they sweeten just a bit more. If the rind is buff to yellow color, and the melon smells sweet you know it's ready. If it is a bit green, the flesh won't be as sweet, but it is still a treat to eat Vermont grown melons. Don't refrigerate melons until you open them because they will lose flavor. As for our watermelons, the plants are more resistant to disease, though they are showing signs of succumbing soon. The dark green skins are pink inside; the striped rinds are yellow-fleshed. Both taste delicious.
- **Tomatoes** – Still pumping out of the greenhouse.
- **Cukes** – Starting to wind down after a good crop of 'em despite the weather.
- **Patty pan squash** – Shaped like a flying saucer, these summer squash are a favorite of many. Great stuffed or sliced thinly for grilling or sautéing.
- **Pepper and eggplant choice** – Both key ingredients along with squash in ratatouille, which freezes wonderfully.
- **Potatoes & leeks** – Are you ready for soup yet? Storing tip: never refrigerate potatoes. Keep out of direct sunlight or they'll green up.
- **Garlic** – Our crop is drying nicely in the barn. These are the largest bulbs we've ever grown. Store in a cool, dry place out of direct sun at home. Never refrigerate.

Farmer's Report:

What a difference the sun makes! I'm sure we are all grateful to feel the warmth this week. I had previously begun to announce to the crew that the summer was pretty much over, but then – what's this! – sweat on my brow? It was hot and humid this past Friday as we got the tractors and seeders going again in the fields. It felt like a summer reprise, and it felt great. I've taken stock of the casualties from the wettest July ever, and here is the report:

- Onions took it the hardest. Last week we brought in the entire crop to dry in the greenhouse and barn, and the bulbs are small. It's a real killer because an enormous amount of time, money and love went into these onions. They're the first crop we seed in the greenhouse in early March, painstakingly placing thousands of seeds into soil while it snows outside. Add lots of heat to keep them above 60 degrees, then days to plant them out in the field come late May, and then the weeding (over and over) begins. The botrytis started in the sweet Walla Walla onions, knocking them down completely and then began to spread to the tops of our red and yellow storage onions. All 2,500 linear feet of them. Well, anyway, I won't bore you with a long(er) sob story. Small is beautiful, and these onions still taste great. Enjoy!
- Second bean planting bit the dust with poor germination and then set fruit at a mere 7" tall. However, we've got a third planting coming for late summer so you'll get a chance to pick 'em again.
- Broccoli did fairly well all things considered, but as they grew in size black specks of head rot became rampant. Members still got a few heads, so I can't complain. And the cauliflower looked darned nice. Plus there's more broccoli and cauliflower coming for fall and the young plants look good.

You know, as I mentally review our crop list, I've got to feel grateful. Sure, we had a greens slow down, and the melons won't be as ripe as I really (and I mean *really*) want them to be, but we have plenty of beets, carrots, potatoes, winter squash, garlic (whew!) and later plantings coming along for fall. Thanks again for your support

Question for the Week

Question: *Is greens season over?*

Answer: The record breaking rain we had in July and August thus far has put a real damper on our mid-season greens. Baby salad mix rotted, and our head lettuce suffered from bottom rot, while spinach growth simply halted completely. With the coming sunny weather and the side dressing of nitrogen we applied last week, we hope the greens will pick up the pace in the coming weeks.

Labor Day Weekend Schedule

No CSA pick-up on Monday, September 1.
Instead it will be on Tuesday, September 2.
Thursday pick-up remains the same.



Roasted eggplant, zucchini and onion with pasta and parmesan

No reminders are needed to eat your veggies when you pair savory roasted veggies with pasta. And the high temperature of roasting really brings out eggplant's sweetness.

- 1 eggplant, cut into 2" pieces
- 3 small zucchini or summer squash, also cut into 2" pieces
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 small onions, sliced
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 3 Chopped tomatoes
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- 10 oz. fettuccine or other pasta
- 1/2 C grated fresh Parmesan cheese

Heat oven to 425 degrees F. Toss veggies, onion and garlic with olive oil until well coated then spread on a large baking pan. Bake until vegetables have softened, about 15 minutes, tossing once during baking. Add tomatoes; roast 10 more minutes.

Meanwhile, prepare pasta according to package directions; drain. Toss vegetables with pasta. Top with 1/4 C of the Parmesan; pass remaining cheese at the table.

What is your Favorite CSA Recipe?

Share your creative share concoctions with fellow members. Submit your recipes to Pam Quinn at pambrendan@fairpoint.net.