

Four Friends' CSA News

The Bean Pole

July 8, 2008

2008 Season

Issue No. 24

Dear Shareholders and Friends,

This week's harvest contains the following: Summer Squash, cucumbers, mixed lettuce, peas, fennel and potatoes.

Here's a great Summer squash recipe from www.southernfood.about.com:

Summer Squash Casserole

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup chopped onions
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 hard cooked eggs, chopped
- 3 summer squash, diced, about 3 cups
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/3 cup half-and-half
- 1/4 cup soft bread crumbs tossed with 1 tablespoons melted butter

Preparation:

In a saucepan, sauté onion in butter. In a large bowl, combine onions and butter with summer squash and chopped hard cooked eggs. Place squash mixture in a greased 1 1/2-quart casserole. Mix beaten eggs with half-and-half; pour over squash in casserole. Sprinkle top with buttered bread crumbs. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Recipe for summer squash casserole serves 6.

FARMER UPDATES

All goes well in the fields...we had a brief thunderstorm roll in last week. Some plants were knocked down but no major damage happened. It is still on the dry side but the small thunderstorms are providing enough rain where we only turned on the irrigation once last week (instead of twice). With diesel fuel at \$5.00 a gallon, we are very happy for the rain, plus rain water is better for the plants!

The following farmers also sell their items at farmers markets:

Big Train: Thursday at the Armory Park Market and Friday at the Downtown Market.

Pak Express, Zephyr Farm and Blues Skys Flower Farm can be found at the Pawtuxet Village Farmers Market on Saturday.

For a complete listing of all farmers markets throughout Rhode Island, please visit www.farmfreshri.org.

VEGETABLE OF THE WEEK: SUMMER SQUASH

Summer squash is an excellent source of manganese and vitamin C. It is also a very good source of magnesium, vitamin A, dietary fiber, potassium, copper, folate, and phosphorus. In addition, summer squash is a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin B1, vitamin B2, vitamin B6, calcium, zinc, niacin, and protein.

Summer squash, members of the *Cucurbitaceae* family and relatives of both the melon and the cucumber, come in many different varieties. While each type varies in shape, color, size and flavor, they all share some common characteristics. The entire vegetable, including its flesh, seeds and skin, is edible. In addition, some varieties of the squash plant produce edible flowers. Unlike winter squash, summer squash are more fragile and cannot be stored for long periods of time.

TO WASH OR NOT TO WASH?

Even the experts disagree when giving advice on washing garden produce. Some tell you not to wash before storage and some will tell you to wash off any garden dirt before even bringing the produce into the home. If you bring in garden dirt on your fresh produce, you may be introducing pathogenic microorganisms into your kitchen...while, if you wash your produce before storage, you run the risk of increasing the likelihood that your fresh produce will mold and rot more quickly. Four Friends CSA washes all produce right after picking. The following chart comes from a project done at the Universities of Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire & Vermont funded by SCREES/USDA:

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| Bean, Green or Yellow | Refrigerator crisper | Store in plastic bags. Do not wash before storing. Wet beans will develop black spots and decay quickly. Wash before preparation. |
| Beets, Carrots, Parsnips, Radish, Turnips | Refrigerator crisper | Remove green tops and store in plastic bags. Trim the taproots from radishes before storing. Wash before using. |
| Cabbage | Refrigerator for up to two weeks | Store, after removing outer leaves in perforated plastic bag |
| Chard | Refrigerator crisper | Store leaves in plastic bags. Wash before using. |
| Collards | Refrigerator crisper | Collards store better than most greens. Wrap leaves in moist paper towels and place in sealed plastic bag. When ready to use wash thoroughly. |
| Corn | Refrigerator crisper | For best flavor, use corn immediately. Corn in husks can be stored in plastic bags for 1 to 2 days. |
| Cucumbers | Refrigerator crisper | Wipe clean and store in plastic bags. Do not store with apples or tomatoes. Wash before using. |
| Herbs | Refrigerator crisper | Herbs may be stored in plastic bags or place upright in a glass of water (stems down). |

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| Eggplant | Refrigerator | Eggplants do not like cool temperatures so they do not store well. Use immediately for best flavor. Use while stem and cap are still <u>greenish and fresh looking</u> |
| Lettuce, spinach and other delicate greens | Refrigerator crisper | Discard outer or wilted leaves; store in plastic bags; wash before using |
| Melons | At room temperature until ripe | For best flavor, store melons at room temperature. Store ripe, cut melon covered in refrigerator. <u>Wash rind before cutting</u> |
| Onions | Room temperature | Store dry onions at room temp. <u>Wash before eating.</u> |
| Peas | Refrigerator | The sugar in peas quickly begins to turn to starch even while under refrigeration, so eat quickly after harvesting. Wash before <u>shelling</u> |
| Peppers | Refrigerator | <u>Wipe clean and wash before using</u> |
| Potatoes | Room Temperature | Store in cool, dry, well ventilated area away from light. <u>Scrub well before cooking.</u> |
| Summer Squash, Zucchini, Patty Pan | Refrigerator | <u>Wipe clean and wash before cooking.</u> |
| Tomatoes | Room Temperature, once cut, refrigerator crisper | Fresh ripe tomatoes should not be stored in the refrigerator as it makes them tasteless and <u>mealy. Wash before eating.</u> |
| Winter Squash | Cool dry storage | Store in cool, dry place |

Nature News: The baby Kildare birds left the nest before I could get a picture. They can still be seen running around the fields but they move so fast that I still could not get a picture!