

Two Small Farms Newsletter

Issue Number 338 October 12, 2005

In your box this week: San Marzano Tomatoes, Parsley, Eggplant, Radishes, Butternut Squash, Jack-Be-Little Pumpkins, Romaine Lettuce, Red Cabbage, Potatoes

Preliminary Vegetable Notes:

Everything but the tomatoes, pumpkins and squash should be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Tomatoes can be left on your counter and the pumpkins and squashes can be stored out of the light in relatively cool place. The Jack-Be-Little pumpkins can be used for fall decoration or for eating, or both!

To eat first: To eat first (within five days): tomatoes, eggplant, radishes and their greens, parsley, lettuce, To eat second (within 10 days): cabbage and potatoes. To eat within three weeks: squash and pumpkins (if you're eating them).

“The Farmer Article” It was way too long last week, so Zelda split it in two parts for the paper version of this newsletter that comes with the boxes. Here's a link to that article (the whole piece) for anyone who missed it last week:

Two Events:

Pumpkin Patch at High Ground Organics, this Saturday, October 15th from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Come see the farm and pick a pumpkin for carving or baking! Stephen and Jeanne will be selling Jack O' Lantern pumpkins for .25 cents a pound and Cinderella (Rouge Vif d'Etampes) pumpkins for .40 cents a pound. Non CSA members pay farmers market prices. Contact Zelda with any questions and for directions at 831-786-0625 or csa@twosmallfarms.com.

Dinner in San Francisco at Desiree is now on Friday Oct. 28th, postponed from this Thursday This is a benefit dinner for a small farm that was

devastated by Hurricane Katrina, and besides that, Anne Gingrass is a GREAT cook!

I tried to contact Jim and Gladys today but our schedules never matched, I'll try again tomorrow and post an update on the above page as soon as I hear from them. -Julia

What To Do With This Week's Box - from Julie Stultz (all around great farmer and handy woman for High Ground Organics and UCSC Farm and Garden Apprentice program. And this time she has the complete list!)

This week's box is real proof that fall has arrived. We're still lucky enough to have the bounty of summer (eggplant, tomato), but we're already receiving the wealth of autumn in pumpkins, squash, and potatoes.

Baked pumpkin is such a treat in a pasta dish or just on it's own. Cut the pumpkin into quarters, scoop out the seeds, and bake the pumpkin in its skin for 45 minutes, or until it's soft. Then I would melt butter with sage leaves, heat it to the point of browning, and drizzle it on the pumpkin. Top with walnuts and season with salt and pepper. Serve hot on its own, or cut into cubes on top of pasta before you drizzle the browned sage butter.

My favorite soup is a simple one made from butternut squash. Start by slowly sautéing one chopped onion in butter or olive oil. When the onion is starting to turn golden, add several cloves of chopped garlic and cook for a couple more minutes. Add 2 cups of water and 4 cups of broth (either veggie or chicken) and bring to a boil. Meanwhile, cut up the butternut into eight or ten pieces and, with a knife, shave the skin off of each large chunk. Cut the peeled squash into one-inch cubes and add to the boiling liquid, along with a bay leaf. Cook until the squash becomes really soft and then remove the bay leaf and puree the soup (you may need to adjust the amount of liquid, depending on the size of your squash). Add one teaspoon of thyme and enough salt to suit your own taste. Add some freshly ground black pepper and stir in a ½ cup of half and half, or low-fat yogurt. Garnish with a little parsley for color.

The eggplant, tomato, potato and parsley inspire me to make an Italian-style baked dish. I would slice the eggplant into 1/2 inch rounds, brush with olive oil, and lay in the bottom of an 8" by 8" baking dish. Sprinkle on some chopped garlic, salt, and parsley. Cut several potatoes into 1/4 inch rounds and lay them on top of the eggplant. Slice enough tomatoes to cover the potatoes with two layers of tomato slices. Grate one cup of parmesan cheese, and cover the tomatoes with cheese. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 350 degrees for an hour (remove the foil after 40 minutes). Check that the potatoes and eggplant are soft when poked with a fork.

I also might make a potato salad with a mustard vinaigrette to use up the radishes and some of the cabbage. Cook the potatoes and cut into chunks. Slice the radishes, and chop a 1/2 cup of radish greens (optional). Thinly slice one or two cups of cabbage. Finely chop 1/2 cup of parsley. Toss together the potatoes, radishes and greens, cabbage and parsley. Dress with mustard vinaigrette (1/3 cup olive oil, 3 Tablespoons rice vinegar, 1 Tablespoon grainy brown mustard, 1 clove chopped garlic, 1/2 teaspoon sugar) and salt and pepper.

Your pumpkin and butternut seeds are delicious toasted. Rinse the orange stringy squash goo off them, using a colander, and dry them on a towel. Bake them on a rimmed cookie sheet at 350 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes, until they look golden and smell toasty. After 4 or 5 minutes, stir and shake the seeds to toast them all over. Put the seeds in a bowl, drizzle with a small amount of olive oil, salt, paprika, and stir well.

Chef Andrew's Butternut Thoughts:

Butternut thoughts...

A gratin with butternut squash- cut the squash into cubes of 1/2" or larger (you want them all the same size for even cooking) and put into a bowl. Rub a gratin dish with a peeled and split

clove of garlic and allow to dry. Rub the gratin dish with some good oil on a paper towel (this will help prevent sticking and make cleaning the dish easier). Pour some oil over the squash and toss to coat, then do the same with S&P. Pour out into the gratin dish and sprinkle with 1 or 2 T of flour.

Scatter some herbs over- sage or rosemary are classic here- and bake at 425F until tender and just beginning to color, about 30 minutes. At this point, sprinkle the gratin with 2-3 minced cloves of garlic and return the dish to the oven to finish.

The squash will be tender and golden with some crispy edges and is ready to serve at this point.

Another butternut thing- cut cubes of butternut about 1/4" and drop into boiling salted water and cook just to take off the raw edge. Drain and drop into cold water to stop the cooking. Drain well and toss with oil to coat and season with S&P. Heat a large saute pan over medium-high and film with oil and a touch of butter (this "tempers" the butter- you get the flavor and color but with less likelihood of burning) and add the squash cubes, tossing to evenly coat. You want the squash to be in one layer so the cubes brown, not steam. Cook without disturbing until that side is brown, then continue to brown the rest of the way. Try to avoid pushing the cubes around too much to prevent mashing them up. Just as the cubes are about done, scatter some herbs and minced garlic or drizzle with a cumin oil and serve. This butternut "hash"

is excellent mixed with mushrooms, potatoes cooked in like fashion, or added into a stuffing. I have mixed this with braised kale to great effect as well.

Butternut soup (works for pumpkin too)

1 medium squash(2-3#)

1 onion sliced fine

1 clove of garlic minced

4 C stock - mushroom, vegetable, or chicken

S&P olive oil

2 T butter

Herbs of your choice (sage, rosemary...)

1/4 the squash and oil lightly. Roast in 400F oven until you smell the squash caramelizing.

Cool and peel.

Saute onion and garlic in butter until clear.

Add herbs of your choice.

Add squash and cook 5 minutes more.

Add stock, BTAB, reduce to a simmer and cook until everything is softened.

Season with S&P and use an immersion blender to puree.

Strain through a fine strainer (optional!).

Adjust seasonings and serve.

Options;

Use a dry Sherry to lift the flavors.

Use curry powder when sauteeing the onion and garlic.

Use other squashes such as delicata, kabocha, pumpkin, or combinations for a more complex flavor.

Serve with a crouton with melted brie floating in the soup.

Garnish with a drizzle of toasted pumpkinseed oil and crushed toasted pumpkinseeds.

Garnish with a frizz of fried onion shreds or roasted garlic chips.

Garnish with crushed Amaretti cookies.

Mix a little Amaretto in.

Garnish with yogurt or sour cream.

Recipes

CABBAGE RECIPES:

SWEET AND SOUR RED CABBAGE, *Bon*

Appetit, December 1991

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1/2 onion, sliced

1/2 apple, peeled, cored, chopped

4 cups thinly sliced red cabbage (about 3/4 pound)

1/4 cup apple cider vinegar

1/4 cup sugar

1/4 teaspoon celery seed

1/4 cup diced Canadian bacon

Heat oil in heavy large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and apple and saute until golden, about 7 minutes. Add cabbage, vinegar, sugar and celery seed and cook until cabbage is crisp-tender and liquid is reduced to glaze, about 10 minutes.

Mix in bacon. Season with salt and pepper.

Serves 4.

RED CABBAGE AND ONIONS, *Gourmet*, December 2002

1 teaspoon olive oil

1 1/2 lb red cabbage, cored, cut into 2-inch pieces, and layers separated

1/2 lb red onions, cut into 1-inch pieces and layers separated

2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh thyme

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Heat oil in a 12-inch nonstick skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then sauté cabbage, onions, thyme, salt, and pepper, stirring, 3 minutes. Cover skillet and reduce heat to moderate, then cook, stirring occasionally, until cabbage is tender, about 12 minutes more. Serve as a side dish to pork tenderloin or salmon, or alongside potato salad.

A simple Cabbage Salad:

Grate or finely slice then chop a couple of times to get slivers/shreds of red cabbage; toss in a bowl with a few roasted nuts, a favorite salad dressing (vinaigrette or creamy one), and other vegetables: grated radishes, chopped parsley (lots of it for color!), grated cheese if you like,

chopped smoked turkey or roast beef or whatever you have to make it a main dish. Leftovers can make a take-to-work/school lunch!

EGGPLANT RECIPES:

One recipe from Chef Gaby Forte in Pacific Grove: I will dice my eggplant and onions (and sweet bell peppers if I have them), and add to them walnuts and currants. Sprinkle it all with salt and pepper and extra virgin olive oil. Then bake it in the oven until the eggplant is cooked, remembering to toss them once in a while as it bakes and add little tads more of olive oil if needed. Whenever I am in a hurry I start it off on the stove, on a pan that can go straight to the oven, and finish it off there. We enjoy it on crostinis (toasted bread), alongside a giant green salad. This eggplant dish is good both hot and cold, and it makes a great sandwich for lunch on pita bread the next day.

GRILLED EGGPLANT SPREAD *Gourmet*, August 1998

2 pounds medium eggplants
1/2 small red onion
1 large garlic cloves
1/3 cup packed fresh flat-leafed parsley leaves
2 TBS cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 1/2 tablespoons white-wine vinegar
1 1/2 tablespoons mayonnaise

Prepare grill. Pierce eggplants in several places with a fork and grill on a rack set 5 to 6 inches over glowing coals, turning them occasionally, until very soft, 30 to 40 minutes. (Alternatively, broil eggplants under a preheated broiler about 6 inches from heat 30 to 40 minutes. Broiled eggplant will not have a smoky flavor.)

Transfer eggplants to a colander and, when cool enough to handle, quarter lengthwise. With a small knife remove and discard as many seeds as possible. Scrape flesh into a large sieve set over a bowl, discarding skin. Drain eggplant, covered and chilled, 1 day. Discard any juices

from eggplant. Mince onion and garlic and finely chop parsley. In a food processor pulse eggplant with onion, garlic, parsley, and remaining ingredients until coarsely puréed. Transfer spread to a bowl and season with salt and pepper. Chill spread, covered, at least 3 hours and up to 3 days. Serve spread with pita toasts. Makes about 1 1/2 cups.

POTATO RECIPES:

NEW POTATO SALAD WITH [Radishes, parsley] and SAUTEED ONION *VINAIGRETTE, Bon Appetit, June 1997*

2 1/4 pounds small thin-skinned potatoes
1 1/2 tablespoons dry white wine
3 teaspoons olive oil
2 cups chopped onions
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
1 teaspoon sugar
8 radishes, trimmed, thinly sliced
4 green onions, thinly sliced
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
1 large cucumber, peeled, halved lengthwise, seeded, thinly sliced (I would omit this during this cooler season...)

Cook potatoes in large pot of boiling salted water until tender when pierced with fork, about 15 minutes. Drain. Cool potatoes until lukewarm. Cut potatoes in half. Place in large bowl. Sprinkle wine over potatoes.

Heat 2 teaspoons oil in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onions and saute until tender, about 5 minutes. Add vinegar, mustard and sugar to skillet and stir to blend. Pour over potatoes and toss to coat. Add radishes, green onions, parsley and remaining 1 teaspoon olive oil and toss to blend. Season salad to taste with salt and pepper. Mound salad on platter. Surround with cucumber slices and serve.

MASHED POTATOES AND BUTTERNUT SQUASH, *Bon Appetit*, December 1993

2 1/2 pounds potatoes, peeled, cubed
2 1/2 pounds butternut squash, peeled, seeded, cubed
8 large garlic cloves
1/4 pound (1 stick) margarine, room temperature
Ground nutmeg

Bring 1 inch of water to boil in large pot. Set steamer rack in pot. Place potatoes, squash and garlic on rack. Cover pot and steam vegetables until tender, adding more water to pot if necessary, about 15 minutes. Transfer vegetables to large bowl. Add margarine and mash vegetables until fairly smooth. Season to taste with nutmeg, salt and pepper. (Can be prepared 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature. Reheat uncovered in 350°F oven for 30 minutes.) [may want to add a little milk or broth]

PARSLEY RECIPES:

Salsa Rustica from Chez Panisse Vegetables by A. Waters

2 shallots
2 to 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons capers
3 salt packed anchovies
3 hard cooked eggs
1 cup chopped Italian parsley
1/4 cup chopped thyme
1 cup olive oil
salt and pepper

Dice the shallots very fine, cover them with the red wine vinegar in a small bowl, and let them macerate for about 20 minutes. Rinse the capers and soak them in water for 5 minutes. Drain and chop coarsely. Rinse the anchovies well, remove their fins and backbones, and chop the fillets fine. Chop the eggs. Combine the herbs, anchovies, and the shallots and vinegar with enough olive oil so that the mixture has a saucy consistency. Season with salt and pepper and more vinegar, if necessary. gently stir in the chopped egg so as not to break up the yolk too much. Spoon over grilled vegetables or over

grilled meat or fish.

SALAD RECIPES:

SHORTCUT CAESAR SALAD, from SF Chronicle

1/4 cup mayonnaise
2 TBSP extra virgin olive oil
1 TBSP fresh lemon juice
1 1/2 tsp fish sauce, or more to taste
1 small garlic clove, minced to a paste
freshly ground black pepper
1 pound romaine, in bite-size pieces
3 TBSP freshly grated Parmesan cheese
croutons

Put the mayonnaise in a small bowl and slowly whisk in the olive oil, lemon juice, fish sauce and garlic. Add several grinds of black pepper. Taste and adjust the seasoning.

Toss the romaine with enough of the dressing to coat the leaves nicely. Add the Parmesan and croutons and toss again. Serve immediately.

SQUASH/PUMPKIN RECIPES

In case you've never tried to cook winter squash, it couldn't be simpler: Cut in half with a big sharp knife. Remove seeds. (If you've ever carved a pumpkin, these two steps should be very familiar.) Put in a baking pan (I use glass, metal or ceramic would also work) cut side down, with a little water in the pan. Or rub the cut side with a little oil first. Bake in a medium oven (325, or 350, or 400, etc.) until it's easily pierced with a fork. Remove, and eat. Possible toppings: many like maple syrup, I like salt and pepper. I've also added my cut, seeded halves of winter squash to the crockpot with some water, and let it cook that way for a few hours. This method works especially well when all you want is the cooked flesh to puree for a soup or other dish.

Gail P.'s squash soup

For the butternut squash soup, which I make a lot of, I microwave whole squashes stabbed all over, then leave out on counter until cool and either use then or refig for a day or two until I'm ready to use, doesn't matter if unevenly cooked, just makes it much easier to peel and seed. Then saute leeks or onions, add cup of raw garlic, saute in butter and olive oil, add canned chicken stock or water for vegetarians, can of coconut milk, lots of squash, chopped candied ginger, curry powder, cook a few minutes, then blend in small batches, putting into a soup tureen.

WINTER SQUASH GRATIN, adapted from *The Greens Cookbook* by D. Madison and E. Brown

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1/4 teaspoon thyme
1 bay leaf
Salt
1/2 cup dry white wine
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper or 1/2 teaspoon paprika
1 pound tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
sugar, if necessary
Pepper
1 butternut winter squash, weighing 2 1/2 to 3 pounds
4 ounces Fontina or Gruyere cheese, sliced
Freshly chopped parsley

Heat the olive oil and add the onion, garlic, thyme, bay leaf and a little salt. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until the onion is soft; then add the wine and let it reduce by half. Add the cayenne or paprika and the tomatoes. Cook slowly for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce is thick. Taste, add a pinch of sugar if the tomatoes are tart, and season with the salt and freshly ground black pepper.

While the tomatoes are cooking, prepare the squash. Cut it open, scoop out the seeds and strings, and then, with the flat cut surface resting

on the counter, shave off the skin. (The butternut can easily be peeled with a vegetable peeler before it is cut in half. Another method is to cut the squash into pieces and then remove the skin from each piece. This takes more time, but you may find it easier.)

Slice the peeled squash into large pieces about 3 inches long and 1/4 inch thick. Heat enough oil to generously coat the bottom of a large skillet, and fry the squash on both sides, so that it is browned and just tender. Remove it to some towel to drain; then season with salt and freshly ground pepper.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. To form the gratin, put a few spoonfuls of the tomato sauce on the bottom of individual gratin dishes, or use it all to cover the bottom of one large dish. Lay the squash on top in overlapping layers with slices of the cheese interspersed between the layers. Bake until the cheese is melted and the gratin is hot, about 15 minutes, and serve with the fresh parsley scattered over the surface.

From Janet Vanderhoof:

CRESPOLINI DI ZUCCA

Winter Squash Crepes

Filling:

2 c. squash puree (butternut or delicata)
1/2 c. toasted walnuts, chopped (Toast in a 350 degree oven for 5 minutes.)
1/2 c. shredded parmesan

Mix together.

Make a French crepe recipe. I use 1/2 whole wheat flour. Cook the crepes in a large, buttered, non-stick skillet. Fill and fold each crepe wedge-style. (Put about 1/3 cup of the filling on one quarter of the crepe. Fold in half and then in half again.) Keep warm in the oven. Sauce: Melt 1/4 c. butter. When it foams, add 4 fresh sage leaves per crepe. Crisp the leaves in the butter. Remove from heat before they burn. Sprinkle each crepe with parmesan cheese and pour the sage butter over.

This amount of filling and sauce makes 6

crepes. 2 crepes is a very
generous serving.

I first had these at Cafe Mare in Santa Cruz. The
waiter described the method and I figured the
amounts. Delicious.

"For pottage and puddings and custards and pies,
Our pumpkins and parsnips are common supplies,
We have pumpkins at morning and pumpkins at noon,
If it were not for pumpkins we should be undoon."

-Pilgrim verse, circa 1633

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Organically Grown Vegetables

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