

Berries on Bryan Station CSA Farm

Newsletter #15

August 25th and
26th, 2010



“Living the good life”

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Coming up

- ⇒ tomatoes
- ⇒ peppers
- ⇒ Butternut squash
- ⇒ Acorn Squash
- ⇒ Sweet potatoes
- ⇒ White and red potatoes

"Don't eat anything your great-grandmother wouldn't recognize as food."

- Michael Pollan

Welcome to your fifteenth basket pickup! We have another outstanding basket for you:

Tomatoes

This will be another big week for tomatoes! Just like last week, each member will be able to choose from an excellent selection of wonderful tomatoes! Our tomato patch keeps on producing! We are starting to find fewer of the large beefsteak tomatoes, so enjoy them while you can!

Sweet Peppers

All peppers in your basket are sweet. Any hot peppers will be labeled as such on the choice table.

Dried Onions

We plan to give you our dried onions this week.

Greens

We plan to have Swiss chard, Pak Choi and kale this week.

Herbs

We will have Holy basil, nufar basil, oregano, rosemary, and sage. Holy basil is named after Jerusalem where it is from.

Pumpkins

Members get a pumpkin this week!

Cut Flowers

Everyone will be able to choose an arrangement of zinnias and sunflowers.

Choice Table

We plan to have eggplant, potatoes, peppers, okra, kale, Swiss chard, cucumbers, beets, sweet potatoes and summer squash on the choice table this week.

Grape Jam

Erik is still making jam and hopes to have enough ready to give you this week. The hard part is done which is separating the pits and stems from the juice.

Around the Farm

Maria Paglialungo, one of our volunteers, is also a spiritual and physical healer and therapeutic massage therapist. The combination of our veggies and her healing will make you feel like a new and livelier person again. Please see page 4 for a link to her flyer.

Robin Shliakhau plans to be present on Wednesday this week. She will have a display table showing some of her favorite Pampered Chef items. You may place your order with her and she will deliver the items to you on another pickup day. You will get many hours of enjoyment from these very useful cooking tools. Robin and her family have been loyal and enthusiastic members of our farm for all five seasons. We hope that you had a chance to try her excellent artichoke dip.

Thank you for keeping your “veggie dollars” local. Go forth and be healthy! We’ll see you this week!



(in the photo above, the words are made of herbs!)

Deb Outland's little cooking corner ...

It is going to be fall before we know it! This week I've begun to include a few recipes for fall foods that I think you might enjoy. The Gypsy Stew listed below uses both meat (either chicken or pork) and sweet potato to give us the first hints of that fall feeling. I hope you enjoy it! I've also included some recipes for all those tomatoes! I hope you enjoy your basket, and give some of these recipes a try.

Please send any recipes or comments to me at djo@insightbb.com, or reach me on Facebook at Deborah Outland. Happy cooking!



Roasted Tomato Soup



Here is a great soup with lots of deep tomato flavor. A great way to use those extra tomatoes! Although this recipe calls for ½ cup olive oil and ¼ cup butter, it is still good with much less of these. Enjoy!

- 2 1/2 pounds fresh tomatoes
- 6 cloves garlic, peeled
- 2 small yellow onions, sliced
- cherry tomatoes for garnish, optional
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 Tbsp butter
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil leaves, optional
- 3/4 cup heavy cream, optional

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Wash, core and cut the tomatoes into halves. Spread the tomatoes, garlic cloves and onions onto a baking tray. Drizzle with 1/2 cup of olive oil and season with salt and pepper and roast

for 20 to 30 minutes, or until caramelized. Remove roasted tomatoes, garlic and onion from the oven and transfer to a large stock pot. Add 3/4 of the chicken stock, bay leaves, and butter. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until liquid has reduced by a third.

Wash and dry basil leaves, if using, and add to the pot. Use an immersion blender to puree the soup until smooth. Return soup to low heat, add cream and adjust consistency with remaining chicken stock, if necessary. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Garnish in bowl with a splash of heavy cream.

Gypsy Stew



This hearty lower fat and sodium stew with Spanish flavors is perfect to put in your crock pot and forget all day. You can use chicken, pork, or go meatless as you choose. The ingredient list is long, but

the prep time is short.

Just put in the crock pot, cook, and eat! Swiss chard makes an excellent substitute for the frozen spinach in this recipe.

- 2 15 oz cans garbanzo or navy beans
- 1 10 oz box frozen spinach
- 1 lb pork tenderloin or skinless, boneless, chicken breast (opt)
- 1 quart low-sodium chicken broth,
- 1 cup water
- 4 cups diced tomatoes (fresh or canned)
- 1 lg (18 oz) sweet potato (peeled and cubed)
- 1 lg onion, chopped
- 1 red or yellow bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 tsp paprika
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1/4 tsp salt (opt)
- 8 grinds fresh ground pepper
- 8 dashes cayenne (opt)

Cube meat if using. Place all ingredients in the crock pot and cook on low for 9-11 hours or on high for 5 to 7 hours. Meat should be tender and all ingredients cooked. To further enhance flavor, 2 tsp of sugar may be added to the stew to round off the flavor. This stew is delicious with slices of hearty French or Italian Bread.

Eggplant Salad Toasts



This makes an excellent lunch or appetizer. You can also use the salad without the toast as well.

- 1 medium eggplant, about 3/4 pound, cut into ½" cubes
- 2 Tbsp olive oil plus additional for oiling baking sheet
- 1/4 tsp salt
- Black pepper
- 1 tsp red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 scallion, thinly sliced
- 8 1/2-inch slices of baguette, brushed with olive oil
- 1 small clove garlic, peeled and halved

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Lightly oil a baking sheet or roasting pan. Toss eggplant, 2 tablespoons olive oil, salt and a generous amount of black pepper together in a medium bowl until evenly coated. Spread on prepared baking sheet and roast for about 25 minutes, moving pieces around occasionally so they evenly brown. For a

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Deb Outland's little cooking corner ...

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cold salad, let the eggplant cool a bit before mixing it with red wine vinegar, feta and scallion. For a warm salad where the feta glues itself to the eggplant a bit, toss the vinegar, feta and scallion together when the eggplant just comes out of the oven.

Broil or toast baguette slices then rub them with a garlic clove before heaping on eggplant salad.

Gratin of Potatoes



This utterly simple recipe is ideal to enhance the fabulous flavor of our potatoes from the farm. Just potatoes, milk or cream, butter and cheese, with a little salt and pepper thrown in is all it takes! Enjoy the elegant simplicity of this wonderful dish and see the difference our good potatoes can make!

3 Tbsp butter, cut into pieces
 1 ½ lb potatoes, peeled
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper
 1 cup milk, half-and-half or cream (if using something richer than milk, you can skip the butter)
 2 ounces cheese, grated or crumbled (Parmesan or Gruyere are the classics, but that doesn't mean that goat cheese, blue cheese or any of your favorites won't work as well) [optional]

Preheat the oven to 350°F and grease a 9- by 12-inch gratin dish with butter. Slice the potatoes as thinly as you can and arrange a third of them in a layer, overlapping the edges slightly like shingles. Sprinkle the potatoes with salt and freshly ground black pepper. If you are using a sautéed vegetable filling as in the note below, this is where you'd want to add half of it. Add 1/3 of the cheese. Repeat layers of potatoes, salt and pepper, vegetable filling if using, and cheese. End

with a layer of potatoes seasoned with salt and pepper. Set remaining cheese aside for later use. Carefully pour the milk or cream over the potatoes. It should come up to the bottom of the top layer of potatoes. Add more if this was not enough. Dot the top of the gratin with the three tablespoons of butter and bake it for about an hour. Halfway through the baking time, take the gratin dish out of the oven and gently press the potatoes flat with a spatula to keep the top moist. Return the dish to the oven. Sprinkle the remaining cheese on top of the gratin for the last 15 minutes of baking. The gratin is done when the potatoes are soft and the top is golden brown.

More gratin ideas: Use duck fat instead of butter. Swap celery root, parsnips or turnip slices for half the potatoes. Add chopped herbs such as parsley, thyme, chives or chervil between the layers. Sauté mushrooms, sorrel, spinach or leeks, with or without a finely-chopped shallot, and layer them between the potato slices.

Essential Cooking Equipment: Utensils

Kitchen utensils are a varied lot! If you don't cut with it or cook in it, it's probably a utensil! Every cook has a different list of essential utensils but I am including the ones I like

most, and what I see around the web as considered really helpful as opposed to just another thing to keep stored in your drawer or cabinet. Tongs: I've only recently become a fan of these wonderfully handy items. They are like having heat-proof extensions of your hands! Use them on the grill to turn foods and move charcoal. Use them in the kitchen to pick up anything they can grip when it's hot or in a place you don't want to touch. Long-handled tongs (about 15 inches) are a wonderful addition to any kitchen!

Measuring Cups: Good measuring cups are essential. They come in two major types. Liquid measure cups are

usually marked off in quarter or even eighth cup units that you can see as you pour or spoon liquid into the cups. The "standard" here is glass (often Pyrex) measuring cups in 1, 2 and 4 cup sizes. I like to have all three sizes, but it's of course, a matter of choice. Dry measure cups are available in quarter, third, half and full cup sizes (as well as other less common measures in large fancy sets). These cups are intended to be used with dry products like sugar and flour. The cup of the correct size is filled completely with the ingredient, then leveled off with a knife. That way, the exact volume of the dry ingredient is obtained. Using dry measures for liquids usually results in scant measures, and using a liquid measure for a dry ingredient is very difficult to determine just how much you have, sometimes giving wildly inaccurate measurements. For accurate measurements, always use the appropriate measure type for what you are measuring!

Measuring spoons: Measuring spoons come in a vast variety of shapes and sizes, although all of them work pretty much the same way. Look for a set that is hooked together, to make it easy to keep them all in one spot and easy to find. Flat "tops" make it easy to level off powders for accurate measurement. My own favorites are stainless steel, held together with a tiny chain. Very simple and easy to clean. The standard set usually includes ¼, ½ and 1 teaspoon, plus 1 tablespoon. Some also contain 1/8 tsp and ½ Tablespoon measurements. Cutting boards: Pretty much everybody needs two or more cutting boards; one for meats and another for vegetables. This is a food safety issue, as meat can harbor organisms that are harmless once cooked, but very bad if spread to foods that are uncooked or only very lightly cooked. Plastic is a good choice, because it can be washed in the dishwasher. Wood is also good, but its maintenance is more involved. Scientific research has shown that both types of boards have their pros and cons. As long as you maintain them properly, either surface is fine. For chopping vegetables, fruits and herbs, a cutting board is an essential—trying to do these tasks without a surface to work against is dangerous and in some cases, very difficult.



Berries on Bryan Station CSA Farm USDA Certified Organic

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<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Berries-on-Bryan-Station-a-Community-Supported-Agriculture-farm/107845789237316?ref=ts>



Reduce and Reuse

Please remember to return produce containers to us each week. We reuse many items and accept the following each week: clean/rinsed pint and quart containers, egg cartons and bags of fireplace ashes.

Around the Farm

- There are plenty of toys in the barn for our younger member's entertainment. Please watch your children carefully to make sure they are safe. The concrete floor is hard so please stay close to the rocking horse.
- A rest room is available in the back corner of the barn for members. Please ask children to wash their hands if they have held our chickens.
- Pickup times are your choice of Wednesday & Thursdays from 4-8pm. You can change your day whenever you like by contacting us!
- Got stale bread? Our chickens love it! Feel free to bring yours out on pickup day and watch how excited they'll be to see you!
- Seth Hill from "Lose Your List" will be happy to deliver your basket to you whenever you are unable to come to the farm. For more information visit his website at www.loseyourlist.com.
- Licensed Massage Therapist Maria "Brij" Pagli-alungo, AMTA, provides nourishment for your body, mind and spirit. Since 1994, Maria has provided professional Intuitive Healing Touch for clients of all ages and backgrounds. You may view her flyer on our website at: <http://berriesonbryanstation.com/heartmedicine.pdf>

A little more on kitchen utensils (to be continued next week!)

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Whisk: A whisk is an excellent utensil to consider for your kitchen. It makes fast work of beating eggs and batters, stirring together dry ingredients, whipping egg whites and whipping cream and working with sauces on the stove. Look for a whisk with a sturdy handle that is easy to hold, and wires that make a large "balloon". The wires should have a bit of spring to them, without being floppy. Having both a large and small whisk may be helpful. The large one whips egg whites and cream efficiently, while the smaller one is good to use in close places.

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Cooking forks and spoons: These are useful for turning and stirring foods on the stove and sometimes for serving them as well. A long sturdy two-tined fork is ideal for the tasks that the tongs won't deal with, and a solid spoon with a long handle is great for stirring pots too deep for a normal silverware spoon. A slotted spoon is also a good thing to have, as it allows you to pick up solids out of a liquid.

Wooden spoons: Although I almost never use them, many cooks swear by wooden spoons. They are inexpensive, and are very gentle on delicate surfaces like non-stick pans. They come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes to fit just about any purpose.

Box Graters: Box graters are a must have if you prefer to purchase your cheese in blocks instead of pre-grated. They are also useful for making grated vegetables or fruits. Select a box grater that has several sizes of holes

so you can vary the texture of the things you grate. A Microplane grater is also an excellent kitchen utensil. The microplane is excellent for grating hard cheese like Parmesan, spices like nutmeg, and zesting citrus fruits.

Egg turners: These are not just for eggs! I am using this term to distinguish these items from flat spatulas used for spreading cake icing and other chores. There are many shapes on the market, from square or rectangular to round. Although the round ones are useful in some situations, the square or rectangular ones are my favorites for general purposes. They turn pancakes, flip grilled cheese sandwiches, turn hash browns or fried potatoes, and many other cooking chores. In a pinch, you can even use a really sturdy egg turner and your cooking fork to lift a turkey or roast out of its cooking vessel. I like to have a medium-sized one for general purposes, plus a larger, sturdier one for big jobs and outdoor cooking. The smaller one should have a slightly flexible blade.

More on utensils next week!