

August 29th & 30th, 2007 Newsletter: Berries on Bryan Station CSA Farm

“Lettuce Be Your Personal Farmers”

Welcome to your sixteenth basket pickup. Only four more weeks to go! We have another delightful basket for you! Here is what's in it:

Raspberries

All of our members just love these! We have picked a pint for each of you this week. You will have some of the reds and the yellows as well. As you've likely heard, we also call the yellows "champagne" since the look and taste like a good quality champagne. We have also invited each member to come and pick extra ones if you like. Last week many enjoyed picking during their normal time that they are here anyway. So if you're not in a hurry then, feel free to enjoy the tasty and fun experience. One member even suggested that we rename our farm "Berry Bliss" since she had so much fun enjoying the picking under the gorgeous sunny blue sky. There are over 3000 feet of rows of raspberry plants, which is over half a mile! Every day new berries become ripe and sometimes it seems like new ones are ready as you head back to the barn. You may also pick on weekends and we will leave the barn open for you to get picking containers. I got an I-pod for my birthday which makes picking even more fun, although Gayle and Brett do not like it when I sing off-key.

Tomatoes

We have a bounty of tomatoes in a variety of shapes, sizes and colors. Enjoy fresh or make a sauce or salsa. Recipes are on the back. A good website for recipes is www.salsa-recipes.com. Fresh sliced tomatoes with basil, mozzarella cheese balls and French bread is our favorite lunch

Peppers

We have bell and sweet banana peppers as well as some heirloom types such as "fish" (hot).

Herbs

Basil and cilantro partner well with tomatoes. Dill and fennel compliment green beans nicely. Lemon balm and swiss mint are good in iced tea and fresh lemonade.

Cut Flowers

Enjoy the gloriosa daisies and colorful zinnias. Let us know if you'd like an extra bouquet for a friend

Cucumbers

These are a welcome addition since they make an excellent easy chopped salad with tomatoes. I drizzle on my own "wash" consisting of a shaken mixture of oil, honey, water, fresh cilantro and basil.

Choice Table

The choices this week include eggplant, Joy Choi, okra, cantaloupe, and watermelon. They are taken on a first come, first served basis, but we restock them so that everyone has a selection.

Okra can be sliced and stewed with tomatoes or used in jambalaya or vegetable soup/gumbo. Members have mentioned that okra is good either sautéed, steamed or deep fried. Eggplant can be used to make Baba ganooj.

Veggie Tales

- Blackberry our cat has eaten his first mouse, so he is starting to earn his keep although his antics and purring have already endeared him to us.
- You can open up your car windows now since the zucchini are gone. The plants just gave up since they bore so prolifically.
- Member Roberta "Yoyomama" Guthrie gave an awesome cello performance at the Peace concert last Sunday. Let's all do our parts to make peace happen!
- Still to come: Edamame soybeans, sweet potatoes, and pumpkins

That's all for now, see you next week!

Erik Walles & Family (Gayle, Brett & Grant) and our adopted son Andrew English
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Freezing Notes

To store the tastes of summer for use later in the year, you can follow these steps:

Green beans:

1. snap the ends off of the beans and either leave them whole length or snap in half
2. rinse well
3. blanch by boiling for 1 minute
4. rinse the blanched green beans in cold water
5. pat them dry
6. place in plastic storage bags and freeze

Sweet Corn

1. husk the corn and pull the silk off
2. blanch by boiling for 1 minute
3. let cool
4. shave the kernels off. Typically we skewer one end and hold the ear vertically and use a knife to slice off 2-3" sections
5. place in plastic storage bags and freeze

Easy Tomato Sauce

No need for canning. We find that the easiest storage technique is to freeze the sauce in plastic freezer bags. One helpful tool you'll need is a Foley Food Mill, a hand operated device for separating out the skin and seeds from sauce.

1. Rinse the tomatoes and cut out any bad spots
2. Place in large cooking pot and start simmering
3. Place one carrot in the pot as this offsets some of the acidity of the tomatoes
4. Add a few fresh leaves of basil or oregano
5. Allow to cool enough to work with the sauce. Pour cooked tomatoes into the Food Mill and turn the crank to filter out seeds and skins
6. Pour sauce into freezer bags and freeze

Tasty, Easy Salsa

Enjoy mixing and matching different ingredients to make your own signature salsa. Simply mix them in a blender or food processor and dip bread into the mixture for lunch or dinner. Use these recommendations as a starting point:

- 2 large or 3 medium tomatoes, cubed to 1/2"
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro
- 1 medium onion, diced to 1/2" pieces
- juice from 1/2 lime
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
- 1 pepper, diced to 1/2" pieces

Alexis's Chopped Vegetable Salad Serves 10 to 12. This recipe, courtesy of Martha's daughter Alexis, takes full advantage of summer's availability of fresh vegetables. The trick is to cut all of the vegetables into similar-size pieces so that each forkful offers a mix of flavors.

- 2 teaspoons salt, plus more for water
- 2 ears fresh corn
- 1/2 pound green beans, trimmed and cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1/2 pound wax beans, trimmed and cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 4 plum tomatoes, seeded and cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1 small red bell pepper, seeded and deveined, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1 small yellow bell pepper, seeded and deveined, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1 small red onion, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1 cucumber, peeled, seeded, and cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 3/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves
- 1 medium jalapeño pepper, seeded and deveined, minced
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons rice-wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

1. Prepare an ice bath; set aside. Bring a medium saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add corn, and blanch until tender, about 6 minutes. With tongs, remove from water, and plunge immediately into ice bath. When corn is thoroughly cooled, remove from ice bath. Using a large knife, remove kernels from cobs. Transfer kernels to a large bowl. Add green and wax beans to boiling water. Blanch until tender, about 1 minute. With a slotted spoon, remove from water, and plunge immediately into ice bath. When beans are thoroughly cooled, drain in colander.
2. Add green and wax beans, tomatoes, red and yellow peppers, onion, cucumber, cilantro, and jalapeño to corn. Stir to combine. Add olive oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Stir to combine. Adjust for seasoning. Serve immediately.