

GRINNELL HERITAGE FARM

CSA NEWSLETTER

November 2nd, 2010
Volume 3, Issue 25



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Winter farm prep

The first week of winter share feels like it is still late September. Unusually for November, much of the box this week still comes from outside. Janet, Angel, and I harvested the cauliflower, beets, cabbage, fennel, rosemary, and salad mix out in the field the past two days. We have had a few good frosts now but not a killing frost so many things continue to grow, like the salad mix which is some of the best we've had all season, hence the two bags in the box. The remainder of the box has come out of cold storage. Our potatoes and carrots are storage varieties that are meant to be in storage for a few months and all taste great. We have two varieties of carrots this week. The very large, and sometimes misshapen, carrots are a variety called nectar which we are calling soup carrots because of their size. The other smaller carrots are a variety called bolero, which are our winter storage carrots. Both varieties are very tasty and work well either raw or cooked. The Gilfeather turnip is an heirloom variety that resembles a green-tinted rutabaga. They are on the Slow Food USA Ark, meaning they are a variety that is being preserved for its outstanding flavor. Our garlic this week also has Slow Food ties, Melissa and I brought this back from Italy in 2008 after seeing it at the Salone del Gusto, a large exposition of artisanal producers in Northern Italy. Ail Rose de Lautrec translates as the Pink Rose of Lautrec, a small village in the south of France. As far as I know we are the only Iowa producers growing this particular variety of garlic. We have also pulled the kabocha squash out of storage. It will have either green or orange skin and can be cooked like any other squash. I do expect the weather to get colder in the next two weeks so the outdoor harvested vegetables may be fewer in number before Thanksgiving, but we do have a great variety in storage already. Here's to a great winter.

Until next time, have a great week!

THIS WEEK'S SHARE

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Potatoes | 5 pounds |
| Soup Carrots | 3 pounds |
| Bolero Carrots | 2 pounds |
| Cauliflower | 1 larger or 2 smaller |
| Kabocha Squash | 1 or 2 |
| Green-Top Beets | 1 bunch |
| Ail Rose de Lautrec Garlic | 2 bulbs |
| Salad Mix | 2 bags |
| Gilfeather Turnip | 1 or 2 |
| Rosemary | 1 bunch |
| Savoy Cabbage | 1 larger or 2 smaller heads |
| Fennel | 3 bulbs |

News from the Farm

SEEDING AND WEATHER:

This is the first season I have seeded nearly all fields to a cover crop due to the spectacular fall weather; what a difference from last season's rain!

COMING UP:

Some possibilities for the second winter share include: carrots, spinach and/or arugula, sweet potatoes, garlic, squash, shallots, a cooking green, romanesco cauliflower (if it doesn't get too cold), turnips or rutabaga, beauty heart radishes, Brussels sprouts, and celeriac.



Photo from our farm tour of Vermont Valley Farm, Wisconsin



Roasted Fennel Wedges

If you like licorice you'll love this dish from Andrea Chesman's *The Roasted Vegetable*. Roasting brings out the anise like flavor of fennel. If cooked fennel is not to your liking it is quite sweet sliced on salad.

INGREDIENT LIST:

3 Fennel bulbs cut into wedges
Extra virgin olive oil
High-quality balsamic vinegar
salt and pepper

RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Brush the fennel with the oil and arrange in a single layer in a small baking dish. Roast for 15 minutes, until the wedges are tender and beginning to brown on the edges. Transfer the fennel to a serving bowl or platter. Drizzle a little vinegar over the fennel and sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste. Serve warm or at room temperature.



Top: Harmony Valley's seed stock, this is enough to plant 100 acres! They have an entire cooler dedicated to seed storage. Wow!
Bottom: Vermont Valley Farm, we really liked their scale for weighing root crops.

Cauliflower Pie

After a trip to Wisconsin and a visit to Harmony Valley Farm I thought it fitting to include a recipe from one of their shareholders, Susan Hollingsworth.

INGREDIENT LIST:

3 medium potatoes
2 Tbsp. minced onion
salt and pepper to taste
1 head cauliflower, separated into florets
2 Tbsp. butter
1 cup chopped onion
2-3 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tsp. dried basil
1 egg
4-6 oz. grated cheddar cheese

RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Boil potatoes 10 minutes then drain and cool. Shred (or mash) them, mix in minced onion plus a bit of salt and pepper. Press potato and onion combination into buttered 9-inch pie pan; bake 30 minutes at 375 degrees. Steam cauliflower 10 minutes, and then remove half the florets. Steam the rest 15 minutes longer and mash. Heat butter in skillet, add onions and garlic and sauté until tender. Add basil, mashed cauliflower, salt, and pepper. Sauté one minute. Remove from heat and stir in egg. Spread this into potato crust. Sprinkle on the cheese and scatter partially steamed cauliflower florets on top. Bake 30-40 minutes. Makes 8 servings.

STORAGE TIPS FOR THIS WEEK'S SHARE

Cauliflower, Cabbage, Carrots, Rosemary, Beets, Fennel, Turnips, and Salad Mix:

Store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer

Garlic, Potatoes, and Squash:

Store in a cool spot in your kitchen out of direct sunlight

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Sweet Potatoes for Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. As a food producer I really enjoy celebrating with family and friends and sharing food that I grew with my own hands. This year our family will be celebrating with my sister and her husband and eating produce that they grew in their garden. Being able to share food with loved ones is one of the reasons I chose to become a farmer. That being said, this CSA box is put together with a possible Thanksgiving meal in mind. Nearly everything will keep well into next week with the exception of the Romanesco, arugula, and spinach. We deliberately did not rinse the greens in case you are hoping to serve a local salad dish for the holiday; just keep an eye on the bags and wash in cold water to rejuvenate any leaves that may look limp. I personally would eat the greens this week for the sake of superior quality, but they often hold for longer than that. All of the roots will keep well for weeks, even if you don't get to them next Thursday. Many, including the beauty heart radishes and rutabagas, were picked recently, while the rest came out of our cold storage. The sweet potato crop was amazing this year and keeps on giving. Should you receive a very large sweet potato or two keep in mind that it takes longer for them to cook through when coordinating a holiday meal. The exceptionally wet August weather gave us fits with certain crops and the Brussels sprouts were one of them. They are smaller than usual this season and should be trimmed. The sprouts on the bottoms of the stems were of poor quality so we had to be choosy in the field. Give them a good looking over as we debated whether to even include them in the share at all. Look to page two for a recipe including the shallots this week, they are simply fantastic.

Until next time, have a happy Thanksgiving!

THIS WEEK'S SHARE

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------|
| Sweet Potatoes | 5 pounds |
| Carrots | 3 pounds |
| Romanesco Cauliflower | 1 petite head |
| Butternut Squash | 1 |
| Shallots | 1 pound |
| Ail Rose de Lautrec Garlic | 2 bulbs |
| Spinach (not rinsed) | 1 bag |
| Arugula (also not rinsed) | 1 bag |
| Collard Greens | 1 bunch |
| Brussels Sprouts | 1 pound |
| Celeriac | 2 or 3 |
| Rutabaga | 2 or 3 |
| Beauty Heart Radishes | 1 ½ pound |

News from the Farm

SEEDING AND WEATHER:

We received some much needed rain this week. Nearly all of the field work is finished for 2010, if possible I'd still like to mow off the asparagus tops and disc the field before winter.

COMING UP:

Some possibilities for the third winter share include: carrots, a few heads of lettuce, potatoes, sweet potatoes, garlic, onions, kale, beets, beauty heart radishes, and Brussels sprouts.



Unfamiliar Veggies:
Top- Romanesco
Cauliflower
Right - Beauty Heart
Radish
Left - Celeriac,
often referred to as
celery root



Seared Brussels Sprouts Braised with Apple Cider

Brussels sprouts are a great dish this time of year. Ours have gone through a few good frosts which makes them taste sweeter. This apple cider dish from MACSAC brings two great fall foods together.

INGREDIENT LIST:

½ pound Brussels sprouts
salt
cooking oil
¼– ½ cup apple cider

RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Trim Brussels sprouts. Heat a cast-iron pan over medium heat. Add some oil and salt. Lay the sprouts in the pan and toss in oil. Cook until deep brown, about 5 minutes. Add apple cider, cover pan, and turn off heat. Leave the lid on and allow to continue cooking for another 5 minutes (the hot pan will keep the dish cooking). This dish goes well with chicken.



Top: Emma, Melissa and Collin at the last Des Moines Farmers Market
Bottom: Emma sitting in her favorite sunny spot

Braised Shallots

If you have your own shallot recipes by all means use them as you see fit. If not, this Deborah Madison recipe is good enough to eat with a spoon and will make peeling the shallots seem well worth it.

INGREDIENT LIST:

1 pound shallots
2 Tbsp. butter or olive oil
2 small bay leaves
2 thyme sprigs
2 tsp. sugar
salt and freshly milled pepper
½ cup dry white wine or vermouth

RECIPE DIRECTIONS:

Peel the shallots. Melt the butter, or heat the oil, in a skillet with the bay leaves and thyme and add the onions and sugar. Cook over medium heat, shaking the pan occasionally, until browned in places, 10–15 minutes. Season with ½ tsp. salt and pepper to taste and add the wine. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat, cover, and simmer until the onions are tender, 15–20 minutes. Check once or twice during cooking, and if the pan is dry, add a few tablespoons water. Remove the lid and reduce the remaining juices to a syrupy glaze.

STORAGE TIPS FOR THIS WEEK'S SHARE

Romanesco, Carrots, Rutabaga, Celeriac, Beauty Heart Radishes, Spinach, Arugula, Brussels Sprouts, and Collard Greens :
Store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer
Garlic, Sweet Potatoes, Shallots, and Squash:
Store in a cool spot in your kitchen out of direct sunlight