

North Creek Community Farm NEWSLETTER Week Twelve - Thursday, Sept. 1

Free Range Chickens Available

Free range chickens now available, delivered on Thursday, Sept. 13 to St. Paul. These birds are raised by my Amish neighbors in pens that are moved everyday. The feed is not organic but is local and they have never been fed antibiotics. They will be butchered at a new processing place near us that is small, professional and very clean. These birds taste different than store-bought chickens with lots of flavor. They are only \$3.00 a pound plus a \$2.50 delivery charge per bird. Elvin and his family moved into the neighborhood and bought an older farm. They are working to build up a new clientele for their chickens and lamb. I said that I would help them by using my contacts with you. Many members have asked in the past about a source for pasture raised birds. I have extended the deadline to sign up for chickens. Please email by Saturday, September 3 at kstout@chibardun.net.

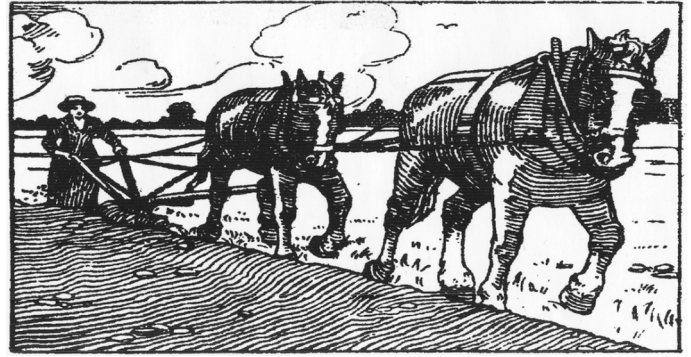
Harvest Festival Saturday, September 24 and Sunday, September 25

(You choose the day you would like to attend)

10:30 – potato harvesting
1:30 – Soup is on, eating through out the day
2:30 - pumpkin harvest
Gleaning - whenever

The harvest festival helps me get ready for the end of the season and the final delivery the following week and gives you a chance to share in the bounty of the farm. I don't deliver carving pumpkins; just pie pumpkins but there are lots of Jack's lanterns in the field. Bring bags to take home goodies.

Bring a dessert to share or something that could accompany soup. We will prepare a BIG vegetarian leek and potato soup. The farm will provide lemonade. BYOB if you like.



IN THE BAG:

Sweet corn
Purple Viking potatoes
Garlic
Lettuce mix
Beets (a mix of Chiogga and red)
Summer squash
Cucumbers
Basil
Onions
Eggplant
Red peppers
Jalapenos
Sweet corn on the side
Watermelons on the side

About the vegetables:

The chiogga beets have a fun bulls eye pattern inside and make a fun addition to a bowl of beets. We have another bed of beets that should mature by the end of the season. This is the last of the sweet corn. Such a fleeting treat. There was a little blight in the purple Viking potatoes but I think that has resolved itself.

Frost?

The garden is beginning to ramp up for the final push towards the first fall frost. Rural Wisconsin is cooler than the Cities area by at least 5 degrees and most years we expect frost by Sept. 18 or so. Its hard to believe that is just about 3 weeks away. With the crazy weather this year, it could surprise us. The first thing to die back is the basil and often we cover the tender rows with Remay, a floating row cover. A double layer of this material will give us about 5° of protection. A light frost is good for killing back the pumpkin and squash leaves. This reveals the shy fruits hiding in the underbrush. Suddenly the field looks like a postcard picture. As the winter draws to an end, the cover crops need to get in the ground with more and more urgency. Some cover crops are killed by the cold winter temperatures and they need to be in by mid-August. Others, like winter rye and wheat have a larger window. I have planted winter rye as late as October 1 and it still does all right.

Roasted Beet Salad

1 bunch beets (3/4 pound without greens or 1 1/4 pound with), trimmed
1/4 cup sliced natural almonds
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon minced shallot or yellow onions minced then rinsed
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 1/2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
1/4 teaspoon sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 large Asian pear
3 cups mâche, baby arugula (3 ounces) or lettuce mix

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Wrap beets in foil and roast in middle of oven until tender, 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Unwrap beets and cool.

While beets are roasting, cook almonds in oil in a small skillet over moderate heat, stirring occasionally, until pale golden. Cool almonds in oil (nuts will get darker as they cool). Transfer almonds with a slotted spoon to a small bowl and season with salt.

Stir together shallot, lemon juice, vinegar, sugar, salt, and oil from almonds in a large bowl.

Slip skins from beets and halve large beets. Cut beets into 1/4-inch-thick slices and add to dressing, tossing to coat.

Quarter and core pear and cut into julienne strips.

Arrange beets on a platter and drizzle with any dressing remaining in bowl. Top with mâche, then pear. Sprinkle with almonds.

Chocolate Beet Cake

1 cup softened butter divided
1 1/2 c. packed dark brown sugar
3 eggs at room temp
1 1/2 oz. dark chocolate
5 medium beets/2 c. pureed beets
1 t. vanilla extract
2 c. all-purpose flour
2 t. baking soda
1/4 t. salt
1/2 t. cinnamon
1/4 t. nutmeg
confectioners' sugar for dusting

To make beet puree, trim stems and roots off beets and quarter them. Place in heavy sauce pan filled with water. Bring to a boil and reduce to a simmer for 50 mins or until the beets are tender. Drain off remaining liquid and rinse beets in cold water as they'll be too hot to handle otherwise. Slide skins off and place beets in blender. Pulse until a smooth puree forms. Let cool slightly before using in cake. Puree can be made several days in advance.

In a mixing bowl, cream 3/4 cup butter and brown sugar. Add eggs; mix well. Melt chocolate with remaining butter; stir until smooth. Cool slightly. Blend chocolate mixture, beets and vanilla into the creamed mixture (mixture will appear separated). Combine flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg; add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Pour into a greased and floured 10-in. spring form pan. Bake at 375 degrees F for 50-55 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool in pan 15 minutes before removing to a wire rack. Cool completely before dusting with confectioners' sugar.