

North Creek Community Farm NEWSLETTER

Week Thirteen - Tuesday, Sept. 6

Preparations

I know now, after 20 years of living in the Midwest, that it is going to get cold in September and that the first frost is around the middle of the month. I know that, and yet every year it is shocking that it really can go from 65° at night one night and be 41° the next. I study and think about Peak Everything and Transition Initiatives, but still, it is hard to imagine fossil fuels as being anything but inexpensive and available. Four-dollar gas seems expensive but relative to what it can do, it is still a steal that we squander.

I live in the country and have worked at being self sufficient, but still would be in a world of hurt if the power went out for a week or two as it did for some farms in Vermont. The hurricane on the East Coast gave me a mental nudge to finish up some preparedness plans. I do not believe that the party of cheap energy that we have been enjoying for a long time will continue forever and I want to lower my impact on the environment.

I have a foot-powered manual water pump in the barn that I switch to in the winter. Instead of worrying about the pressure tank freezing, I just get some exercise and pump water with my own energy. In the house, I want to install a hand pump that could be used in emergencies. Also, I am ordering a new house wood stove that is a cook stove too. This behemoth can heat water as well and will change the way I operate in the winter. This will really mean the power could go off for quite a while and I would be all set. A small photovoltaic array for just enough power to stay hooked to the net and I am all set. If things start changing, it could happen like a hurricane and I want to have a few things in place.

Harvest Festival

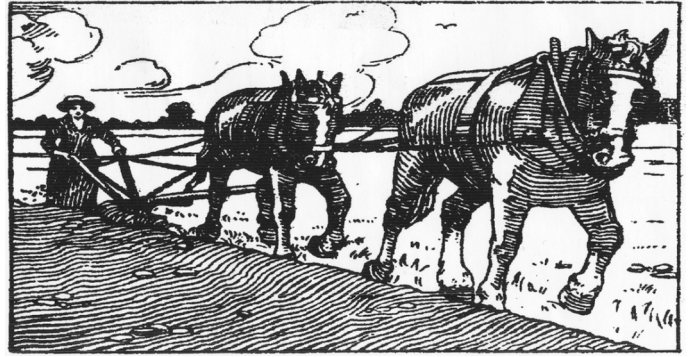
Saturday, September 24 and
Sunday, September 25

(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.



IN THE BAG:

Red cabbage
Fresh fennel
Tomatoes
Cilantro
Potatoes (Nicola)
Onions
Peppers
Leeks (a few)
Watermelon

About the vegetables:

Red cabbage can be used just like green cabbage but I like to make the sweet and sour recipe that I have sent along. For me, this is a harbinger of fall. The fresh fennel suffered quite a bit from the humidity but many of the bulbs came through unscathed. Suddenly the tomatoes have stopped ripening. I can't figure it out except that a threshold of temperature and light may have been quietly crossed with no fan-fare or trumpets.

I learned a new recipe that I had for supper last night. I was at Margaret Penning and Dan Guenther's farm, Common Harvest, and Margaret was preparing this. Some of these ingredients are in your bag and some you may have from last week.

Warmed Tomato and Garlic Pasta

Serves 2-3

4-5 tomatoes
½ cup olive oil
2 large cloves garlic, minced
½ tsp. salt
10 – 15 basil leaves cut into small strips
pasta for two or three
½ cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese

Remove the core from the tomatoes and cut them into wedges, maybe eight per tomato. Add the rest of the ingredients. Don't skimp on the olive oil. Let marinate for several hours on the counter. Don't refrigerate. Cook the pasta until al dente. I used rotini but fetucini is good too. While the pasta is piping hot, just before serving, add pasta to the tomatoes and stir. Top each portion with a generous amount of cheese. Note: I don't measure when I cook so the amounts are

Danish Red Cabbage

House & Garden | February 1964 by Nika Standen Hazelton

Yield: Serves 4

1 medium red cabbage (about 3 pounds)
3 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon sugar or more, according to taste
1/4 cup vinegar
Salt, pepper

2 medium tart apples, peeled, cored and chopped (optional)
1/2 cup red currant jelly

Remove and discard tough outer leaves from cabbage. Shred cabbage very fine. In heavy kettle, melt butter. Add sugar, but do not brown. Add cabbage and cook 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Add vinegar, water, salt and pepper to taste. Simmer covered for 2-3 hours, or until cabbage is very tender. Stir occasionally, and if necessary, add a little hot water to prevent scorching. When cabbage is almost tender, add apples, if desired, and red currant jelly. Cabbage should be quite sweet-sour. If necessary, add more sugar or vinegar, a little at a time. Simmer covered for 30 minutes longer, stirring occasionally. Serve with roast goose or duck. This is best if made a day ahead, and reheated slowly.

Sauté of Fresh White Beans, Onions, and Fennel

Makes 4 to 6 servings

2 cans white beans, drained and rinsed or equivalent cooked great Northern beans
1/3 cup olive oil
1 cup chopped onion
1 leek, cleaned well and tender parts chopped
1 fresh fennel bulb, trimmed, sliced
1 teaspoon fennel seeds, coarsely ground in spice grinder
1 1/3 cups (about) canned low-salt chicken broth
2 teaspoons dried dill
1/2 cup chopped pancetta or cooked bacon
1/2 teaspoon dried savory
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion, leek and fennel bulb; sauté 5 minutes. Add beans and fennel seeds; sauté 3 minutes. Add 1 cup broth and 2 teaspoons dill; bring to boil. Reduce heat; simmer 10 minutes to blend flavors. Stir in pancetta or bacon and savory, adding more broth if mixture is dry. Mix in lemon juice and 2 tablespoons dill. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature. (Can be made 2 days ahead. Cover and chill. Bring to room temperature before serving.)