

North Creek Community Farm NEWSLETTER

Week Six - Tuesday, July 19

IN THE BAG:

Green Pepper

Kale

Broccoli

New Potatoes

Cucumbers

Carrots

Summer squash

Flavored basil

Cilantro

Intern Becky Montgomery

Hi! My name is Becky Montgomery and I'm one of this season's interns at the farm. I am from the Winona area of Minnesota and went to school at the Perpich Center for Arts Education in the metro area. I have also studied massage therapy and am on my second season of organic CSA farming.

I grew up with a large garden in the country; we canned and preserved most everything that my family grew. We also foraged for blackberries, elderberries and morel mushrooms. I have carried on the family tradition by blanching and freezing many of the greens that we have shipped as well as drying some of the herbs. I plan on canning salsa, tomatoes, jelly, pickles, green beans and tomato sauce.

One of the things that I love about working on North Creek Community Farm is the sense of community that I get from the other farmers in the area as well as from the members. To me, one of the most important parts of CSA farming is connecting with the members and getting to know them.

Another great thing about working here is all of the animals. I enjoy driving the horses and collecting eggs from under the chickens. I also have sheep for the first time; five Shetland sheep for wool and three Dorset market lambs. I am carding, spinning and knitting the wool into various garments. I also love trying new vegetables and recipes. One of my favorite things to make is raw zucchini pasta. To make this, you peel a zucchini with a vegetable peeler and then use the peeler to make length-wise strips of the zucchini flesh until you reach the seedy core. Then I sprinkle the zucchini "pasta" with sea salt and balsamic vinegar. Now, you can add sliced Greek olives, feta or mozzarella cheese and fresh basil. You can also add any other herbs or meats that sound good. Smoked trout is great in this.

In the future, I hope to homestead and be 100% self-sufficient and have my own off-the-grid CSA farm based out of the Winona area. I also plan on working to help promote organic, local and sustainable foods in the public health care and school systems.



About the vegetables:

The heat caused the broccoli to turn an interesting chartreuse color and to get a few discolored buds but it still tastes good. Soak the heads in cold water for 10 minutes to remove any worms. The heat is making us turn an interesting color too and it's not chartreuse. We are handling the heat well with early work and lazy afternoons. It will be nice when this heat breaks.

The cilantro is getting brown spots from the humidity. It should still taste just fine.

Cucumbers are here with a vengeance. We had 4 1/2 inches of rain on Saturday morning and things are growing really fast in the heat. I have included some easy recipes for cucumbers. The recipe with the Wasabi is really good. The wasabi wasn't very hot so I would recommend doubling it. I like making bread and butter pickles.

The flavored basil is fun just in a bouquet on the table or try adding to a pasta salad or Thai curry. The cilantro is doing well with all the heat. If your family doesn't like it, just toss it. For those of us who love it, it's a real treat.

Kale is good many ways. Here is a recipe for a basic way to cook kale:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISLwNdPdZts>

Garlic Harvest a Success

Over 45 people came to the festival and helped us harvest garlic. You worked really hard and we got it all done! Then we had a wonderful meal of roasted garlic, potatoes, salad, cheese, fruit salad, and cookies. What a great pleasure to get up and see it all laid out in the greenhouse. The extreme moisture in the air will make it hard to dry but the weather can't stay this damp for the rest of the summer... I hope. It is very gratifying for us to meet and smooze with the members and the work that gets done really does make a difference. Thank you one and all.

The next festival will be the Corn Feed and Overnight Camping on Saturday, August 20. Come just for the afternoon of corn and fun or bring a tent as well and camp out at the farm. I'll make pancakes on the wood stove in the morning. Hard to believe but last year it was wonderfully chill in the morning and the

Zucchini Cornbread

1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter plus more for pan
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
1/2 cup buttermilk
1 large zucchini (about 10 ounces)
1 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup whole wheat flour
1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon baking powder
3/4 teaspoon fine sea salt
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
3/4 cup medium-grind cornmeal
Position a rack in the middle of oven and preheat to 350°F. Butter a 9x5x3" loaf pan.

Melt 1/2-cup butter in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Continue cooking until butter solids at bottom of pan turn golden brown, about 3 minutes. Scrape butter into a medium bowl. Set aside and let cool. Whisk in eggs and buttermilk.

Trim zucchini ends. Thinly slice five 1/8" rounds from 1 end of zucchini and reserve for garnish. Coarsely grate remaining zucchini. Add to bowl with butter mixture and stir until well blended.

Mix flours, sugar, baking powder, salt, and baking soda into a large bowl. Whisk in cornmeal. Add zucchini mixture; fold just to blend (mixture will be very thick). Transfer batter to prepared pan and smooth top. Place reserved zucchini slices atop batter down center in a single layer.

Bake bread until golden and a tester inserted into center comes out clean, 55-65 minutes. Let cool in pan 10 minutes. Remove from pan; let cool completely on a wire rack. *DO AHEAD: Can be made 1 day ahead. Store airtight at room temperature.*

Cucumbers with Wasabi and Rice Vinegar

Note from Kate: I love this recipe. It does NOT taste a lot like wasabi. In fact, if you are a wasabi fan, you may want to increase the amount.

1-pound cucumbers (about 3)
1-teaspoon wasabi powder
1-teaspoon water
2 tablespoons rice vinegar (not seasoned)
1-tablespoon sugar
1/4-teaspoon soy sauce

Equipment:

an adjustable-blade slicer

Very thinly slice cucumbers crosswise with slicer; toss with 1-teaspoon salt and drain in a colander 15 minutes.

Cucumbers with Wasabi and Rice Vinegar (continued)

Rinse cucumbers under cold water, then squeeze handfuls to remove excess water; pat dry.

Stir together wasabi powder and water in a bowl and let stand 5 minutes.

Add vinegar, sugar, and soy sauce, whisking until sugar has dissolved. Add cucumbers and toss well.