



Sandhill Organics CSA Newsletter

Summer Vegetable Season • September 17, 2008

This Week's Vegetable Share

Broccoli • Carrots • Romano Beans • Kohlrabi • Fresh Sage
Beauty Heart Radishes • Red & Green Bell Peppers • Jalapeno Peppers
Fingerling Potatoes • Red Slicing Tomatoes • Green Tomatoes

This Week's Fruit Share

Bartlett Pears, Stanley Plums, Crest Haven Peaches

Farm Journal

My mom grew up in a modest 1940s bungalow on the west side of Milwaukee. Her dad had always been a warm-hearted and soft-spoken man, and he returned home after the war with an even greater inclination toward quiet and solitude. For many years Grandpa worked second shift as a machinist. His schedule allowed him to spend a couple of hours each morning working quietly and happily in his large vegetable garden. It was the kind of tidy, well-ordered garden that I dream about having one day when Matt and I retire from the wild chaos of vegetable farming.

At the back of the yard, between the vegetable garden and the fence bordering the alley, Grandpa planted two pear trees in the early 1950s. Eventually, those two trees began to produce more fruit than he knew what to do with, so he would give away bushels and bushels of pears to neighbors and friends. When I was a kid and my grandparents would come to visit in the fall, their arrival was always accompanied by the sweet smell of pears ripening in big paper grocery bags that lined the back seat of their car.

One September afternoon several years ago, I found myself driving through Milwaukee when I was seized by the urge to drive past the house on Michigan Avenue. My grandparents had since passed away, and I didn't know the current owners. I parked the car out front and walked around to the back alley. As I neared the house, the sweet smell of pears filled the warm autumn air. Tree limbs hung heavy with ripe fruit, and pears littered the grass. It was clear that the current owners didn't know what to do with all those pears either. It was then that I noticed a middle-aged man working quietly in the vegetable garden a few feet away. I introduced myself and asked if he would mind if I gathered up some of the pears. He was happy to oblige and he even helped to pick some. By the time I drove away, I knew exactly what I would do with the heavy paper sack of fruit on the seat next to me.

The next day, as I was making a pear tart for my brother's engagement party, I thought about a lot of things—how I missed my Grandpa, how much I love a sunny autumn afternoon, and how the cultivation and preparation of special foods can keep us connected to the people we love even when they're not with us anymore.

Have a good week.
-Peg

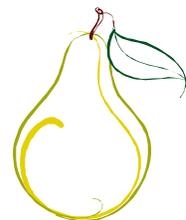
Notes from the Farm Kitchen

If you are unfamiliar with **beauty heart radishes**, they are round, grayish-white bulbs that look a bit like turnips. Cut into one of these radishes for the first time, and you are in for a surprise! The interior is a bright pink, which explains why some folks call it a watermelon radish. The beauty heart is a relatively mild radish, good for both grating and slicing.

All the plants in the *brassica* family, including **kohlrabi**, have benefited in both appearance and taste from the recent rains. These kohlrabi leaves are beautiful and can be used in soups, stews, and many other dishes (including the stuffed peppers on page 2). One of my favorite ways to prepare the bulb is to peel and grate it and toss it with grated beauty heart radish and grated carrot. The combination of colors is amazing! Any vinegar-based salad dressing will pair well.

This is the end of **tomato** season. The tomato crop was decent this year, but not spectacular. The heavy rains in June compromised the health of some of our tomato plants right from the get-go. Although we mourn the end of the fresh tomato season every year, there are always two things to look forward to — fried green tomatoes and our very own tomato puree. Green tomatoes are part of this week's share, and the puree will be included in another week or two.

Mick Klug, the farmer who grows your fruit, picks his **pears** on the firm side in order to prevent bruising during harvest. He recommends placing them in a paper bag or leaving them out on the counter to ripen. He warns against letting them get too ripe, as he thinks they taste best when they've still got a bit of crunch left in them.



Next Week's Harvest (our best guess)...
Brussels sprouts, broccoli, edamame
soybeans, carrots, gold beets, fresh thyme,
green onions, raspberries, and more!

Little Vanilla Plum Strudels

from Liz Franklin's *Organic Seasonal Cookbook*

10 oz. ripe but firm plums
3 tablespoons superfine sugar, plus extra for dusting
scant ¼ cup water
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
8 x 8-inch squares filo dough
scant ½ stick butter, melted
3 tablespoons stale cake crumbs or white breadcrumbs

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Halve the plums and remove the pits. Dice the flesh and put in a saucepan with the sugar and water. Cook over gentle heat for 15 minutes, or until soft. Stir in the vanilla extract and let cool.

Lay out 4 squares of filo dough and brush with some of the melted butter. Top each with the remaining dough squares. Scatter an equal quantity of the cake crumbs down the center and spoon one-quarter of the plum mixture on top of each. Brush the dough edges with a little more melted butter, then fold them in and roll up to form four individual strudels. Lay, seam-side down, on a baking sheet, then brush with melted butter and bake in the preheated oven for 6-8 minutes, or until golden. Remove from oven, then brush again with the remaining butter and dust with sugar. Serve with ice cream.

Fried Green Tomatoes

This recipe appeared in Cookie magazine in June.

4 large, firm green tomatoes, cut into 1/2-inch slices
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
1 cup finely ground cornmeal
1 teaspoon paprika
2 eggs
vegetable oil

Sprinkle the tomato slices with the salt and pepper; set aside. Combine the cornmeal and paprika in a shallow bowl. In another bowl, beat the eggs. Cover the bottom of a heavy skillet with 1/2 inch of oil, then place it over medium-high heat. Coat the tomato slices in the egg, then dredge them in the cornmeal mixture. Fry as many tomatoes as fit comfortably in the pan until nicely browned, about 2 minutes a side. Transfer them to a paper towel-lined platter. Repeat until all the tomatoes are cooked.

Old-fashioned Green Tomato Pie

6 medium green tomatoes
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¾ cup granulated sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1 tablespoon butter
pastry for 9-inch 2-crust pie

Wash the green tomatoes well; peel and slice. In a saucepan, combine tomatoes with lemon juice, peel, salt, and cinnamon. Cook tomato mixture over low heat, stirring frequently. Combine sugar and cornstarch; stir into tomato mixture. Cook mixture until clear, stirring constantly. Add butter, remove from heat, and let stand until slightly cooled. Line a 9-inch pie plate with pastry; pour in tomato mixture. Cover with top pastry, seal edges, crimp, and cut several small slits in crust to allow steam to escape. Bake at 435° for 35 to 45 minutes, or until nicely browned. Serve warm or cooled.

Wine-Braised Carrots with Fried Sage Leaves

from *The Splendid Table's How to Eat Supper*
by Lynne Rossetto Kasper and Sally Swift

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
20 fresh sage leaves
salt and pepper to taste
1 to 1 ¼ pounds carrots, cut on the diagonal into ¼-inch-thick pieces
½ medium onion, minced
½ cup dry white wine
water

Heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add all but 6 of the sage leaves to the pan with some salt and pepper. Sauté them until they crisp, turning the leaves with tongs, a total of 30 seconds to 1 minute. Pick them out of the pan with the tongs and drain them on paper towels.

Keep the heat at medium high as you add the carrots and onions to the skillet, along with the 6 remaining sage leaves (tearing them as they go in). Sauté for 3 minutes, or until the onions are picking up color. Pour in the wine and enough water to barely cover the carrots. Bring to a lively bubble and cover the pan.

Cook the carrots for 10 minutes, or until they are nearly tender. Uncover and boil off all the liquid so the carrots are coated in a light glaze. Taste them for seasoning, and turn them into a serving dish. Scatter the fried sage leaves over the carrots.

Vegetable-Stuffed Peppers

This is something I made up for lunch today. My official taste-testers agreed that it was tasty enough to put in the newsletter, so here it is. It occurred to me that the potato filling for this recipe could easily be turned into a breakfast hash by chopping the bell peppers and adding them directly to the potatoes. A bed of potato-pepper hash topped with a sunny-side-up egg sounds to me like a pretty good reason to get out of bed!

4 bell peppers, halved lengthwise
scant 2 tablespoons olive oil
½ cup onion, chopped
3 cups potatoes, diced
1 cup carrots, diced
1 tablespoon fresh sage, minced
½ jalapeno pepper, minced
1 cup water or vegetable broth
1 to 2 cups chopped kohlrabi leaves
salt and pepper to taste
½ cup Parmesan cheese

Place peppers cut-side down on a baking tray and spray lightly with cooking spray. Place peppers under the broiler until they are well-browned. Remove from oven and allow to cool before flipping peppers over. Set aside.

In a large skillet, heat the olive oil and sauté the onions until golden. Add the potatoes, carrots, sage and jalapeno. Cook over moderate heat until vegetables begin to brown, about 8 minutes. Add water and kohlrabi leaves to pan and cover. Simmer over low heat 15 minutes or until vegetables are just tender.

Remove skillet from heat, add Parmesan cheese and season with salt and pepper to taste. Fill each pepper half with vegetable mixture. Bake, uncovered, in a 375 degree oven for 20 minutes.