



January 29, 2009

Greetings CSAers,

It's the last week of CSA deliveries (except for make-up boxes next week), marking the end of our 2008 season. We appreciate your support over the last months, it's made an already good year end on a real high note. We don't know what the coming year will bring. I suspect that as job losses penetrate our little corner of the world and begin to affect our friends and neighbors with disabilities we may find that we have many more applicants than positions for paid employment. We will get through this recession together, generating as much revenue as we can for employment and distributing as much produce as we can to the food banks.

What's in Your Box

- Potatoes — Rose Finn, unwashed for storage. Transfer them to a paper bag and keep in a dark, cool, dry place. Use within a month.
- Winter Squash — the very last, an assortment of varieties
- Leeks
- Garlic
- Kale and Collard Greens — recovering from the freeze!
- Tat soi — tiny and tasty



Beth's Farm News: What's Growing On



Washing the leeks

While pulling leeks Wednesday morning I felt it: a shift in the wind, a certain taste to the air, and sunlight pouring from a slightly higher angle in the sky -- all the signs reminding me that we are approaching mid-winter with warmer, brighter days ahead. The kale and collard greens have begun new, tender growth, and the winter rye shines like an emerald carpet on the fields.

Last Saturday volunteers helped mulch more native plants and learned about fruit tree pruning from CSA member and Master Gardener Shanna Winters. Kelly continues to make progress on the new greenhouse. I'm finalizing seed orders and farm plans. Jane is helping organize the farm's goals while Lori and Shane provide steady support for Growers. Both inside and outside we are catching the excitement of a shift in the season.



Pruning the apple tree



January 29, 2009

Sharon's Corner



I arrived at the farm this morning, and immediately set up my computer to start compiling this newsletter for you. I got to the lines in Beth's Farm News, about "winter rye shines like an emerald carpet", and realized that I hadn't walked around the farm in two weeks. I immediately saved what I was working on, and took off for a quick visitation. I admired the winter rye. I inspected the garlic, which spent a week underwater. They are bravely showing spikes, and I was interested to note that even at 1 ½ inches tall, most of the garlic spikes are green, but the Inchilium Red's spikes are red. I also saw many plump worms being devoured by Robins in the rows where we harvested leeks, obligingly leaving freshly turned soil. Our staff are not quite so bundled up, and the adolescent chickens are out in their yard, not huddled by a heat lamp. I hope you also are seeing signs of the new season around you.



Kelly and Glenn in the compost

Recipes

Kale-Crunch *from our very own Jane, seen at top, trimming leeks.*

Kale

Oil spray

Salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, or seasonings of choice (think potato chips)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheet with foil and spray with one of those oil mist sprays. Wash and shake dry a big bunch of kale. Break off and throw away stems. Cut across the leaf into wide shreds. Spread evenly on baking sheet and bake 15-20 minutes, stirring once or twice while they bake. Watch it carefully, and remove it while crisp, but still bright green. Cook for less time if you want it chewy. After you remove it from the oven, you can sprinkle it with salt or other seasonings if you like. Best used same day but keeps a day or 2 in a tin at room temperature. Can be eaten as a snack or sprinkled onto or into pasta, risotto, salads, etc. (Think healthy snack crunchies).

Squash Soup with Peppers and Fresh Lime *from The Daily Olympian*

Start to finish: 30 minutes (10 minutes active)

Servings: 6

Two 12-ounce packages frozen pureed squash (*or equivalent amount of freshly cooked winter squash*)

Two 14 1/2 -ounce cans fat-free, low-sodium chicken broth (*or water*)

1 large potato, peeled and diced

1 red green bell pepper, cored, seeded and finely chopped

1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and finely chopped

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon ground cumin

1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lime juice



January 29, 2009

1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
Fresh lime wedges, for serving

In a large saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the squash and chicken broth. Bring to a simmer and cook, uncovered, until the squash is thawed, about 10 minutes. Add the potato, red bell pepper and jalapeno and continue to simmer until the potatoes are tender and the soup has thickened, about another 10 minutes. Stir in the salt, cumin and lime juice. Serve topped with fresh cilantro and with lime wedges alongside.

Ragout of Shiitake Mushrooms, Black-Eyed Peas, and Southern Greens *from Passionate Vegetarian by Crescent Dragonwagon.*

1 Tablespoon Olive Oil
1/2 pound shiitake mushrooms, cleaned, tough part of stems removed, coarsely sliced or halved
3 to 4 cloves garlic, pressed
3 1/2 cups good tomato sauce
2 cups cooked black-eyed peas, or well-drained canned black-eyes
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
Honey, if necessary
1 bunch hearty greens (kale, turnip, mustard, or chard), (*or collards*), washed, sliced as thinly as possible
Polenta, with 1/2 cup grated Parmesan stirred in, hot and ready to serve
Freshly shaved Parmesan

Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet or one that has been sprayed with cooking spray over medium heat. Add the shiitakes and sauté until they start to soften, about 3 minutes. Stir in the garlic and sauté until the mushrooms start to stick, another few minutes. Remove from the heat. Combine the tomato sauce and black-eyed peas with the shiitakes. Return to very low heat and cook, stirring occasionally, for 20 - 25 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. If the tomatoes aren't sweet, add a drop of honey. Bring a large pot of water to a hard boil. Drop in the greens and blanch just until the color brightens and the greens get limp, about 45 seconds. The blanching process is very quick, but timing varies, depending on the tenderness of the greens and the thickness of the pieces; chard is done almost instantly, collard greens in 40 to 60 seconds. Drain well. Quickly pour cold water over the greens to stop the cooking. Stir about one-quarter of the blanched greens into the hot ragout, reserving the remainder. If possible, warm or heat dinner plates. Place a big ladleful of polenta with Parmesan in the center of each serving plate, with the middle slightly hollowed to make a nest for a good-sized spoonful of the ragout. Top the ragout with a little tangle of the reserved blanched greens, and lay a few slices of shaved Parmesan along the edges of the plate.

Enjoy!