

# THE TIPI TIMES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2008, WEEK 18

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## **THIS WEEK'S BOX CONTAINS:**

White potatoes, 3.5 lb.  
Garlic  
Swiss chard  
Broccoli  
Fennel bulbs, 1 or 2  
Candy onions  
Bell pepper, 1  
Watermelon  
Poblano peppers, 2

You will receive at least  
one of the following:  
heirloom tomatoes OR  
slicing tomatoes OR  
cherry/grape tomatoes OR  
'Yummy' peppers

## **NEXT WEEK'S BOX WILL PROBABLY CONTAIN:\***

Carrots, dill, zucchini,  
peppers and more

**FARM PARTY ON OCTOBER 5.** We will hold our pumpkin u-pick and gleaning party on Sunday October 5. Details will be in next week's newsletter.

**BASICS COOP IN JANESVILLE IS MOVING NEXT WEEK.** Janesville members, Basics is moving to a new location next week. Please pick up your box at the usual location this week, then get next week's box (9/26) at the new site.

New location: 1711 Lodge Drive, Janesville. Basics is relocating to the old Hancock Fabric building next to Mounds Pet Food and across from Toys R Us.

The hours to retrieve your CSA box will remain unchanged for now. I believe the store hours will be extended at the new location. I'll confirm that in a future newsletter, or you can check the posted hours at the new store next week.

**FARM NEWS.** You can feel the first hints of fall in the cool nights, and in this week's veggies. We've sent mostly summer vegetables in this box. However, broccoli and poblano chiles signal the change of seasons. Broccoli forms heads once the nights are cool. Poblano chiles love hot weather, but they need a long season so they aren't ready until fall. This will be the last melon of the season.

**MENU IDEAS.** Fennel and tomatoes are a wonderful Mediterranean tradition (eg bouillabaisse or fennel stewed in tomato sauce), yet we rarely combine these two vegetables in one CSA box. Fennel grows best in cool weather, and our tomatoes are often done by the time the fennel is ready in fall. I'm glad to send them in combination, even though the quantity of tomatoes is small. Try

combining them with fish or shellfish in some way; the flavors are great together.

There are a number of ways to combine potatoes and fennel. I've given you two different potato-fennel recipes; one contains dairy, the other is nondairy. Here are other potato-fennel ideas I've seen in recipes:

- Potato-fennel soup, similar to potato-leek soup, often with ham or smoked meat.
- Potato-fennel mashed potatoes
- Oven-roasted potatoes, fennel and onions

We've included the Swiss chard because we think it is a good addition or accompaniment to any of these dishes.

**VEGGIE NOTES.** Some members will receive both poblano chiles and 'Yummy' peppers this week. They are superficially similar. It's important to distinguish between them because the 'Yummy' peppers are sweet and poblanos are hot. The poblanos are larger and more triangular. Most are dark green, but some will have a red tinge. In contrast, the 'Yummy' peppers are smaller, more slender, and completely colored. We won't send any poblanos that are fully red.

**Poblano chiles (triangular, glossy, fragrant, dark green, perhaps tinged with red)** - These medium-hot chiles have great flavor. Roasting or frying releases their flavor.

**White potatoes** - These are from Doug Rouse of Meadowbrook Farm again. Doug says white potatoes are good all-purpose potatoes, and his favorite type of potato.

**Garlic** - As usual, the garlic is from John Hendrickson of Stone Circle Farm.

**Candy onions** - As mentioned in previous newsletters, this type of onion is better for frying than the Walla Walla onions we've sent recently.

**Heirloom tomatoes** - See last week's newsletter for notes on handling these.

**Grape and cherry tomatoes** - Some of you will receive yellow grape tomatoes or white cherry tomatoes. The colors are unusual, but the flavors are great.

**'Yummy' peppers (small orange, red or yellow peppers)** - These peppers are sweet with excellent flavor. They make a great snack because of their size, color, flavor and sparse seeds. They are a lovely little package. We'll keep rotating these around so all sites receive them at least once this summer.

**BRAISED FENNEL WITH TOMATOES & POTATOES**. Some sites will receive enough tomatoes to make this dish. From EatingWell Magazine, September/October 2007. Makes 4 servings, 1 cup each. Braised fennel, tomatoes and potatoes make a rich and hearty side dish. Serve as an accompaniment to grilled or pan-seared veal chops, chicken breasts and any kind of broiled or baked fish.

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
1 large bulb fennel, trimmed, cored and thinly sliced, fronds reserved for garnish  
1 teaspoon fennel seed  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
Freshly ground pepper to taste  
2 large tomatoes, diced  
1 pound Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch cubes  
1/2-3/4 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth or water, divided  
2 tablespoons Pernod or other anise-flavored liqueur (optional)  
2 tablespoons finely chopped flat-leaf parsley or fennel fronds for garnish

Heat oil in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over high heat. Add fennel and cook, stirring often, until it starts to brown, 4 to 5 minutes. Season with fennel seed, salt and pepper. Add tomatoes, bring to a simmer and cook until the tomato juices are slightly reduced, about 4 minutes. Add potatoes and 1/2 cup broth (or water); cover the pan tightly and simmer over medium-low heat, checking every 10 minutes to make sure the pan juices don't run dry. If necessary, add more broth (or water), 2 tablespoons at a time, to prevent scorching. Simmer until the potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes. Uncover, add Pernod (or other liqueur), if using, and simmer for 3 to 4 minutes more. Serve garnished with parsley (or fennel fronds), if desired.

### **FENNEL AND POTATO GRATIN**

Real Simple magazine, October 2001. Yield: 6 servings

1 cup milk  
1/2 cup cream (or milk)  
2 cloves garlic, peeled and halved  
3 sprigs fresh thyme  
1 or 2 fennel bulbs, trimmed of fronds and halved  
3 large baking potatoes, peeled  
Salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste  
8 ounces semihard or hard cheese (like Gruyere or Jarlsberg)

Heat oven to 375° F. In a small saucepan, combine the milk, cream, garlic, and thyme. Bring to a boil. Remove from heat; set aside for 10 minutes. Discard the garlic and thyme. Meanwhile, coat a 2-quart gratin dish or ovenproof casserole with vegetable cooking spray. Cut the fennel lengthwise into 1/4-inch slices. Cut the potatoes crosswise into 1/4-inch thick slices. Place a layer of potatoes in the dish and season with salt and freshly ground pepper. Overlap with a layer of fennel and half the cheese. Repeat with the remaining potatoes, fennel, and cheese. Pour the infused milk over the vegetables. Bake until the gratin is golden and the vegetables feel tender when pierced with a fork, 40 to 50 minutes. Remove from oven 15 minutes before serving.