

THE TIPI TIMES

November 10, 2011, week 26 (green EOW)

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THIS WEEK'S BOX CONTAINS:

Butternut squash
Russet potatoes, 3.5 lb
Brussels sprouts, 1 lb
Kale
Parsnips, 1.5 lb
Lettuce
Beauty Heart radish
Cauliflower OR
Romanesco broccoli
Onions
Garlic

NEXT WEEK'S BOX?

There is no box next week! This is the final box of the season.

FINAL WEEK OF CSA Well folks, this is our last delivery. This is a bittersweet moment for us. We truly enjoy feeding all of you. It is a responsibility that makes us proud. We hope you have enjoyed your season with us.

Our work is almost over. If the weather cooperates, we should have all our storage crops tucked away by the end of next week. The cold, wet weather makes us uneasy because we still have root crops in the ground. We will do whatever it takes to get them harvested. Our soils drain quickly and our harvester is speedy, so we are optimistic that everything will get harvested. As you can imagine, we and our crew look forward to wrapping up this season.

Steve and I are mulling over this year's CSA season. Each year is a bit different, isn't it? We feel that we packed more produce than usual in the CSA boxes this year. At times, we had bumper crops and wanted to share them with you. We hope you used all the produce that we sent. It is pointless to share our bounty if it is more than you can eat.

Overall, we feel we had a good growing season. The weather was generally favorable and most crops came through well. There are always oddities (eg., the very late tomato harvest) but we expect something unusual each year. As we look back, there were a few successes that stand out. Due to a cool spring, we were able to deliver asparagus for six weeks and peas for a full seven weeks. It was a productive year for peppers, especially Italian frying peppers. I miss them already! Mostly, we were happy to have a variety of crops to choose from, so we could pack interesting and varied boxes each week.

It was an interesting year for cabbage. We cut back on our summer cabbage planting because it often struggles during hot summer weather. Then, the fall plantings produced the biggest cabbage heads of all time (Our standing record is 14.5 lb, but we're still harvesting so we might top the record yet.) It feels as if our farm is admonishing us "What were you thinking by cutting back on the summer cabbage?? Let's make it up with giant heads in the fall." All the cabbage-family relatives did well this fall: cauliflower, Romanesco, broccoli. Members have frequently asked for more broccoli. This is the year that we could deliver it.

We have prepared a survey so you can share your thoughts on our CSA season. Please take the time to complete it. Thank you so much for being members of our CSA this season. We hope you will join us again next year. We hope you all have a wonderful, restful winter. *Beth & Steve*

2012 CSA Registration We are almost ready to open our 2012 CSA registrations. Watch for an email from me in the next few days. There will be an opportunity for returning members to register early at a discounted rate. We will not open registration for new members until after December 1.

2011 Survey. There is a link to this year's survey in the Wed. email message. Thank you to everyone who responded to our brief raspberry survey in September. It gave us so much insight into what was happening to our fragile raspberries once they left the farm. We are interested in more feedback on this CSA season. It's been a few years since we polled members about their vegetable preferences. Here is your chance to tell us your most and least favorite veggies. We value your feedback and will keep it in mind as we plan next year's crops.

Veggie Notes. The veggies are surprisingly clean, considering the weather today. During the snow storm, we told the crew they could do a minimal wash of the lettuce and kale. They still cleaned everything nicely.

Russet potatoes are from Brian Igl of Igl Farms in Antigo. Store at room temperature in the paper bag.

Butternut squash - These are all the 'Waltham' variety. It is a variety that matures well in storage. We save this variety until last because it improves with time. Store at room temperature. Here is a tip for cutting raw squash: Microwave the squash for one to two minutes on high before you try to cut it. The squash will be softer and easier to cut.

Lettuce - We have another small lettuce for you. We've been happy with these small fall lettuces and hope you appreciate having fresh salads at this time of year.

Beauty Heart radish (round, pale green exterior, bright pink interior) - These are excellent thinly sliced in salads, or lightly cooked in mixed vegetable medleys. Try making a grated carrot-Beauty Heart salad if you still have carrots from last week. I like to cut this radish into matchsticks and add to pasta salads. The color is lovely.

Parsnips (long white roots) - Those long, white roots are not carrots, they are parsnips. The two vegetables are related though. Unlike carrots, parsnips are rarely eaten raw, although I've heard of parsnip slaw. When cooked, parsnips are sweet and starchy. Try to brown them so the sugars caramelize. That gives them the best flavor. The most extreme example of this I've experienced was parsnip chips, thin parsnip slices fried in hot oil like potato chips. They were brown and incredibly delicious. Here are a few ideas about how to prepare parsnips:

- You can caramelize the parsnips by roasting them in a vegetable medley.
- Parsnip fries are delicious: cut like French fries, coat lightly with oil, place on a cookie sheet and roast in a hot oven until cooked through and browned.
- Try substituting grated parsnips in a potato pancake recipe. They brown beautifully and are very tasty.
- Our favorite way to prepare parsnips is to pan-fry them with onions and garlic.

Roasted Winter Vegetables "Chez Panisse Vegetables" by Alice Waters

Beth's notes: Hang on to this recipe. It is useful with many winter vegetables. FYI, clarified butter works great for this recipe but canola oil does too. Add some whole garlic cloves near the end of baking, about the last 15 minutes.

You will need parsnips, turnips, rutabagas, celery root, fennel bulk - in any combination - and about the same amount of butternut squash. Trimmed and peeled, the vegetables should be cut into 1/2-inch cubes - except for baby turnips, which can be left unpeeled and cut in halves or quarters, and fennel, which should be trimmed and sliced into thin wedges.

Toss the vegetables in enough clarified butter to coat them lightly, season with salt and pepper, and spread them out on large baking sheets with 1-inch sides. Roast for 30 to 40 minutes in a preheated 400oF oven until they are thoroughly cooked and beginning to caramelize nicely, stirring occasionally with a spatula to make sure they don't stick. (Beware of over-roasting: a little browning makes them sweeter, but if you let them get too dark, they will taste bitter.) Serve directly from the oven or set aside and reheat later. Before serving, check the seasoning and sprinkle with your choice of herbs (sage, thyme, winter savory), chopped fine.

Cannellini and Kale Soup Martha Stewart Living, October 2011

Thyme, garlic, and a bay leaf are simmered in water to create a flavorful broth that's low in calories. Frying garlic creates crunchy chips and a tasty oil to drizzle on top. Pureed cannellini beans give this soup a velvety texture, canceling out the need for heavy cream.

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

2 onions, chopped

1 medium carrot, chopped

Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper

4 garlic cloves, minced, plus 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme

Scant 1/4 teaspoon crushed red-pepper flakes

12 ounces cannellini beans (2 cups), picked through and soaked overnight

6 cups water

1 dried bay leaf

8 ounces Tuscan kale (lacinato kale), stems and center ribs removed, leaves sliced crosswise 1/2 inch thick

Directions

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a medium Dutch oven or a large pot over medium heat. Cook onions and carrot until just softened, about 5 minutes. Season with 2 1/2 teaspoons salt. Stir in minced garlic, thyme, and red-pepper flakes. Cook for 1 minute.

Drain and rinse cannellini beans. Add to Dutch oven with water and bay leaf. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, covered, until beans are tender, about 45 minutes. Let cool slightly. Discard bay leaf.

Working in batches, puree soup in a blender until smooth, transferring it to a clean pot as you work. (For safety, remove cap from hole in lid, and cover with a dish towel to prevent spattering.)

Bring soup to a simmer. Stir in kale and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Simmer until kale is tender, about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil in a small skillet over medium-low heat. Cook sliced garlic, stirring often, until crisp and golden, 1 to 2 minutes. Transfer garlic to a plate using a slotted spoon. Reserve garlic oil.

Divide soup among 6 bowls. Garnish with garlic chips, and drizzle with garlic oil.