



BLUE HOUSE FARM

CSA Newsletter

Dude. Be Chill.

10.27.11

This week we are including Pippin apples in your boxes. The Golden Delicious are still producing well in the orchard and we are trying to get as much fruit off of the trees and into our cooler as time allows. But now the Pippins are producing and we thought you might like a change. Pippins are a slightly tarter apple and good for eating fresh, but are really fantastic in for making pies, tarts, and sauce. Interestingly, this was George Washington's favorite apple. Due to the wet spring, many of these apples are cosmetically flawed. They have little brown spots on the skin called, which is the result of scab, a fungal disease that happens when the weather is wet and warm for a prolonged period of time. Fortunately, the scab is only on the surface in minimal amounts and does not affect the flesh or edibility of the fruit, only the appearance.

For the last week we've been mowing and disking as much ground as we can. It is the time of the year when we plant cover crop seeds for the winter. The cover crop seed consist of bell beans, peas, and vetch. These are all legumes, which "fix" nitrogen from the atmosphere and eventually feed it to the soil. Basically, the plants grab nitrogen from the air as they grow and little tiny white nitrogen clumps develop on the roots of the plants. In the spring, we mow and turn the cover crop into the ground. All these tiny white clumps stay in the ground and combined with all of the fresh plant matter, adds a considerable amount of nitrogen to the soil. Nitrogen is one of the most important nutrients for plant growth. It is also one of the most volatile and if not managed carefully, easily lost nutrients in the soil. If you have too much nitrogen, it can leach from your soil and enter ground water and make wells unsafe for drinking water. It can also run off of the fields and enter surface water, such as streams, and create algae blooms and be harmful to fish and the general watershed ecology. Cover crops also do a fantastic job of grabbing hold of any excess of nitrogen in the soil that could potentially leach-out, and holding it in their leaves and stems all winter long. It is amazing that the same plant can create and feed nitrogen to the soil when it is deficient and also absorb it and stabilize it when it is in excess.

Sadly, the time to plant cover crops also marks the time to mow down many of our summer crops. And this usually corresponds with the first Fall frost, which we got last night! When Evelyn went out to cut the flowers this morning, all of the dahlias were frozen. We harvested what was not eaten by the deer in the peppers and found that the only peppers which the deer did not

Anticipated Harvest

Carrots
Collard Greens
Baby Pac Choi
Green Beans
Salad Mix
Butter Lettuce
Assorted Chiles
Thyme
Pippin Apples

*Pity the old faithfuls! While I spend a season waxing on about all manner of ephemeral produce, a regular presence in your box goes unacknowledged. So let's hear it for **carrots!** From raw uses to all manner of sautés and roasts, the carrot's culinary charms need little elaboration. Its history, however, is a far more complicated affair. Wild carrot has grown all across Eurasia for many thousand years, and for millennia indeed it was known and used by humans not for its root but for its aromatic leaves and seeds (and in a pinch, carrot greens are an acceptable substitute for its cousin, parsley). Even in such a primitive form the carrot was a force for good health; a Roman military doctor of the First Century AD recommended its virtues to both legionnaires and housewives. After the Roman Empire fell, the use of wild carrot vanishes from the West. But in the East the wild carrot was cultivated, and for the first time (gene research suggests in Afghanistan) the root was the desired element. These first modern carrots were purple, but as their cultivation moved westward an orange variety was developed. Even today, the two remain separate cultivars; Eastern Carrots are purple, and Western Carrots are orange. The carrot we grow is of French extraction. And yes, all that β -carotene is great for your eyes, but did you know studies have shown that carrots also can prevent Cardiovascular Disease?*

eat, were the hot ones! So you are getting small bags of mixed hot peppers, mostly Serranos and Cayennes. These will last a really long time in the fridge and are great for spicing up a dish. We left the eggplant in the field and should have them for next week. We have a lot of really nice crops in the ground to finish up the season, but we will have to part ways with the summer crops until next year.

From The Field, Ryan

CSA News & Notes

-: This is the 20th and final week for flower bouquets. The CSA will continue for another 4 weeks.

-: Due to a programming error, not all members have been given credit for held boxes. If you have placed boxes on hold this season, please email bluehousefarm@gmail.com to ensure that you receive your full due credit, which you can use in these last few weeks to buy add-ons or use as a down-payment for next year's CSA.



Our chickens cross the frozen tundra that is Blue House Farm at daybreak.

Qabuli – Afghani Carrot Rice

1 Bunch Carrots, Julienned
½ C Golden Raisins
½ C Almonds, Toasted & Slivered
4 C Uncooked Basmati Rice
½ C Vegetable Oil
1 C Water
1 T & ! tsp Sugar
1 tsp each cinnamon, cardamom, cumin & black pepper, ground.

Preheat oven to 325°. Place rice in a large bowl, rinse and then soak it in cold water for 30 minutes.

Bring a large pot of water to boil over high heat. Meanwhile, heat a few tablespoons of oil in a skillet over moderate flame. Add carrots and 1 tsp sugar and, stirring frequently, cook until tender. Continue stirring and add the raisins and almonds; cook until raisins are soft and plump, then remove from heat.

Strain the rice and add it to the boiling water. After 5 minutes, drain or strain out the rice. Heat ½ C oil and 1T sugar in a cast-iron skillet until the sugar dissolves completely, making a syrup. Remove from heat and cool, then add 1 C Water and return to a boil. Add parboiled rice, then the carrots, raisins and almonds and stir well, then mix in the spices. Keep over high flame until you hear a crackling sound. Move from stove to oven and bake for 20 minutes. Toss with fork before serving.

Creamed Collards

1 Bunch Collards
1 Medium Onion
½ C Heavy Cream
1T Butter
Nutmeg
Salt

Destem & tear or chop the collards & thinly slice the onion.

Melt butter in a skillet over medium heat until it foams, then add onion and fry until browned at the edges. Add the collards and stir, cooking for a couple minutes until greens are slightly wilted.

Reduce heat to medium-low, then stir in the heavy cream. Simmer for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the cream is largely reduced.

Season with fresh grated nutmeg & salt.

Pad Thai

Sauce:

½ C Fish Sauce
1/3C Brown Sugar
1 T Paprika
2 T Sriracha
2 T Tamarind Concentrate
Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan, then bring to a boil. As soon as the sauce boils, remove from heat and let rest while you prepare:

The Rest:

1 Pkg. Thin Rice Noodles, Soaked Til Soft
1 Pkg. Tofu, Sliced (Optional)
1 Egg
2 Baby Bok Choy, Halved
1 Handful Green Beans, Chopped
6-8 Basil Leaves
2T Chives
½ C Peanuts, Crushed
Vegetable Oil

Heat oil in a wok until it sizzles on contact. If using tofu, add it to the wok and when it starts to brown, add the bok choy and green beans. Toss, then add the rice noodles and a ladleful of the sauce. Keep the wok contents moving, and cook until the noodles are rather soft. Clear out part of the wok and crack the egg into it, then stir to incorporate with the rest of the dish. Add the rest of the ingredients and cook until noodles are desired texture. Add more sauce as you like. Finish with a squeeze of lime.