

**Greetings!**

With the heat upon us this week, many of you will be inclined to test the waters, or go swimming. Lately I have tested the local waters, so to speak. As you may know, the Plains Art Museum has started an outdoor market, Plain Food, which occurs Thursdays from 4 to 7. At present, it is small, but it would be nice to see it grow and thrive. I attended this market a couple weeks ago, vending a few extra items. There was one other produce vendor, Owen Sivertson, as well as several other vendors of various sundries. I am not vending there on a weekly basis. Were I to attend on a regular basis, I would like your feedback as to whether you would likely visit this market; member discounts may apply.

When we have extras, I do regularly attend the farmers' market in Grand Forks, on Saturday mornings. After "The 1997 Flood", the City dedicated a corner of downtown to a square, open-air exhibition area that includes a ring of permanent booths, a fountain, restrooms, and a performance stage. This has become a well established and well attended market that offers a great deal of variety for patrons and great attendance for vendors. It would be nice to see a market like this thriving in the Fargo/Moorhead area. If GF can do it, why can't FM? Does Fargo's downtown need to burn in order for leaders to "build it so we will come"? I'm sure it can get done with far less drama. In the meantime, I want to encourage you all to visit the Plain Food Market; do what you can to support this endeavor and possibly inspire it to grow. Please feel free to send me your thoughts.

This week's box includes:

- Lettuce head(s)
- Daikon radish (large shares)
- Beans (more to come)
- Swiss chard
- Peas (snap and/or snow)
- Cucumbers
- Summer squash
- Peppers (green bell and banana)
- Summer savory (with the beans)

Farm News

Growing With the heat upon us, things will change as the garden reacts to the hot days and relatively warm nights. Many crops will respond by growing faster and developing edibles faster and with better flavor, such as nightshades (peppers, eggplant, etc), cucurbits (melons, cucumbers, squash), beans and sweet corn. One secret to great tasting tomatoes is the exposure of the fruits to heat and light. Other crops will react less positively: for example, some varieties of lettuces get bitter and bolty (go to seed) and brassicas tend to develop stronger flavors (the best brassicas always come in fall). Another effect of increased temperature is increased plant respiration (plants breathe, too). This means an increased need for moisture in order to maintain optimum growth.



The best source of moisture, rain, largely missed us again this week; we received less than ¼ inch at the farm. This increasing deficit – the bigger plants get, the more water they need – is keeping us busy with irrigation. This last week we enabled the river pump and have started using it through the trickle tape system; we can water more tape lines using the river pump versus the well pump. River water, however, is less than ideal to run through trickle tape because of the sediment load: the filters need cleaning much more often and sediment builds up inside the tape. Last year, I purchased some used aluminum pipe which we have begun setting up. Once the kinks are worked out – we’re working on it – this overhead irrigation system should allow us to cover more ground with less trouble. Its functioning is key to another activity of this week, the use of green manure crops. We broadcasted clover and grass seed over existing crops in order to accomplish several things: green manures act as a living mulch helping to mediate soil temperature swings; they provide habitat for beneficial insects and vertebrae; they condition and improve soil fertility after being worked into the growing beds the following season; and they provide nice, mud-free pathways in between beds. If we can keep the ground moist the seed will germinate.

Midseason Extras As you may recall, the first week’s box contained granola and jam. Thanks to your feedback, we have decided to offer these for sale on a regular basis, perhaps bi-weekly. When we have enough inventories I will send out an email to you stating what we have and the associated prices. If you would be interested in ordering some in the near future, reply in an email, stating “order” in the subject line, and let me know what and how much you want. Your order would be delivered to your regular drop site in a separate container with your name on it. You would mail the check to the Shelly address or we might leave an envelope on site. We will do our best to keep the granola as local as possible (e.g., dried fruit from RGG).

Volunteering There are many different varieties of fruits growing here on the farm. We are currently working with black currants, making jams and drying them out for granola. We also have choke cherries, silver buffalo berries, raspberries that need to be picked NOW, as well as other fruits that will need to be picked later, for this endeavor. Fruit requires a lot of time, to pick, clean, package and/or process. We will try to get as much as time allows, but we cannot jeopardize the health of the main crops. If you were planning on visiting the farm this summer, come do some fruit picking and we’ll take care of the rest.

Housekeeping Thank you for your participation in the reuse of containers. By in large, they have been clean and of the type that we can use: those that contained produce and have a hinged lid. Please forgo passing on any containers that contained non-produce items, (such as baked goods, meats or cheese), or produce containers that have removable lids, *except for* the ones we put in your boxes. If you have any questions about what we can reuse, please feel free to inquire.

Community News A reminder that Baker Nursery will be offering the following canning seminar: TOMATOES – SALSA: Tuesday, August 18 at 6:30 p.m. Rita Ussatis with the Cass County Extension Home Economist will explain how to make salsa. Check out their website, www.bakernursery.com for more information. (Hopefully, we’ll have tomatoes soon.)

I hope this letter finds you happy, healthy, and enjoying good food!

- Thor



Recipes/ Herb info

- **Summer savory** is a nice to use when you are cutting back on salt-it's flavor is mild, a little bit similar to thyme, but with it's own unique flavor. To me, it has a slightly peppery flavor. You can mince summer savory and combine with bread crumbs for coating fish or vegetables such as squash before sautéing. Use it in potato dishes, tomato sauces, meatballs or vegetable juices. It's also great in egg dishes such as omelets and frittatas.
- **Daikon** is an extremely versatile vegetable, and everything can be utilized, from the greens to the root. They can be added to salads or to relishes, and are also commonly used in stir-fries. When storing Daikon, place them in a plastic container or bag and put them in your refrigerator.

Cucumbers with Cream and Mint (*serves 4*)

Peel and slice:

2 cucumbers- *If the seeds are large and tough, cut the cucumbers in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds with a spoon before slicing. Place in medium size bowl and sprinkle with:*

Salt

- In another bowl combine:
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Juice of ½ lemon
- Fresh-ground black pepper

Stir well. If water has accumulated with the cucumbers, drain it off. Pour the dressing over the sliced cucumbers and combine. Coarsely chop: 2 mint sprigs, leaves only and toss with the cucumbers.

Taste and adjust the salt as needed. Serve cool.

Variations

Add pounded garlic to the dressing

Serve alongside sliced beets dressed with oil and vinegar

Grate and dice the cucumbers and serve as a sauce over baked salmon

Parsley, chervil, basil, or cilantro can be substituted for the mint.

Substitute plain yogurt for the cream.

Add spices such as cumin, coriander, or mustard seeds to the dressing.

Spicy Summer Squash Soup with Yogurt and Mint (*Makes about 2 quarts: 4 to 6 servings*)

Heat in a heavy-bottomed soup pot:

¼ cup olive oil

Add and cook, stirring often over medium heat:

- 1 large onion, sliced fine
- A pinch of saffron threads
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
- ¼ teaspoon turmeric
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced



Cook until very soft but not browned. If the onions or garlic start to stick, turn down the heat, and add a splash of water to the pot. While the onions are cooking, wash in cold water:

5 medium green or yellow summer squash (eg. zucchini)

Cut into thick (3/4 inch) slices. When the onions are done, add the squash to the pot with salt

Cook for 2 minutes, then pour in:

- 3 cups broth (suggest low salt vegetable)
- 3 cups water

Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer, and cook until the squash is tender, about 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the yogurt and mint garnish. Cut into julienne:

- 4 mint sprigs, leaves only

In a medium-size mortar, pound half of the julienned mint to a paste. Stir in the remaining mint and:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2/3 cup yogurt
- Salt

Let the soup cool a bit, then puree in a blender until very smooth. (Take care when blending hot soup to leave a vent for the steam to escape.) Reheat, thin with a little water if necessary, taste, adjust the seasoning, and serve hot with a spoonful of yogurt and mint. Pass around lime wedges at the table if you want.

Adapted from "The Art of Simple Food" by Alice Waters

Warm Swiss Chard (or any other greens) Salad *(serves 4)*

To serve greens that are slightly softer as a salad, you can cook them briefly and serve them warm with a garlicky lemon vinaigrette. The ribs can be saved to be layered with cheese and smothered with a béchamel sauce or other sauce that you like in a good au Gratin. You can use chard alone, spinach, beet greens, or other greens, or a combination of greens.

- 2 large bunches of Swiss chard (or other greens)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- Sesame oil

Wash the Swiss chard or other greens in a sink or bowl of cold water. Lift the leaves out of the water to leave the grit at the bottom. Drain and remove the ribs, reserving them for another use.

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the leaves and cook until tender, about 8 minutes. Drain and cool slightly. If desired, coarsely chop the leaves.

Transfer the warm greens to a large bowl. Mix the oil, lemon juice, and garlic in a small bowl. Pour over the chard and mix. Season with the salt and pepper. Serve warm, drizzling each serving with sesame or other oil of your choice.

Chilled Lettuce and Chervil Soup *(makes 4 to 6 servings)*

Sometimes we just seem to have too much lettuce. Luckily lettuce can make a delicate and refreshing chilled soup. In place of chervil, you can substitute tarragon or lovage, or parsley, in reduced proportions to taste.

- 4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
- 2 medium leeks, white and pale green parts only, well rinsed and coarsely chopped



- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 4 cups vegetable broth
- 1 medium head Romaine lettuce rinsed, cut into 1 inch strips (or lettuce(s) of your choice)
- 1/3 cup finely chopped fresh chervil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- Crème fraiche, thinned with milk or heavy cream for garnish

Melt the butter in a large pot over medium heat. Add the leeks and garlic and cook, stirring often, until the leeks are softened, about 5 minutes. Pour in the broth and bring to a simmer. Cover and reduce the heat to low. Simmer until the leeks are tender, about 15 minutes.

Stir in the lettuce, increase the heat to high, and bring to a boil. Cook, uncovered, until the lettuce is completely wilted, about 5 minutes.

In batches puree the soup in a blender or food processor, along with the chervil. Season with the salt and pepper. Return the soup to the pot and gently reheat until hot. Serve hot, with a dollop of the thinned crème fraiche to each bowl.

Spring Greens Salad with Sour Cream Dressing *(makes 4 servings)*

Dressing: 3 tablespoons olive oil; 2 tablespoons sour cream; 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar; 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar; Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste; 1 garlic clove, cut in half lengthwise; Salt as needed

Salad: 5 cups loosely packed salad greens, rinsed dried, and torn into bite size pieces; ½ cup coarsely chopped sun dried tomatoes; ¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

To make the dressing, whisk together all of the ingredients until smooth in a medium bowl.

If you have a wooden salad bowl, rub the bowl with garlic and a sprinkling of salt. (Suggestion -you can also do this with a ceramic or glass bowl) Mince the garlic and add or toss it into the large bowl. Add the greens, then the dressing and toss. Sprinkle in the tomatoes, add the cheese and toss again. Serve immediately.

Marinated Green Beans *(makes 4 servings)*

Any fresh snap bean will work with this salad. For the best results, dress the beans while they are hot, then chill, but serve at room temperature.



- 1 pound green beans, trimmed
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh thyme or summer savory
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil over high heat. Stir in the beans, being sure they are submerged. Cover and cook the beans until they are crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. They will make a snapping sound when cooked. Drain and rinse under cold water to stop the cooking.

In a large bowl, preferably a wooden salad bowl, whisk the oil and vinegar until combined. Season with fresh thyme or savory and the salt and pepper. Add the warm green beans and toss well. Cover and refrigerate until chilled, at least 1 hour. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving.

Adapted from "From the cook's garden" by Ellen Ecker Ogden

Salmon Teriyaki

- 1 lb. salmon steaks
- 2 tbsp. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. sake
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 tbsp. vegetable oil
- 5 oz. grated daikon or radish
- Lemon juice

Cut salmon into 4 pieces, set aside. Mix soy sauce, mirin, sake and sugar in small bowl and stir until sugar is dissolved. Marinate salmon in the bowl for 15 minutes.

Heat 10 inch pan with oil and add salmon and cook with medium heat for 3 minutes. Turn over salmon and cook another 2 minutes. Put salmon pieces on the oiled rack and broil with small heat for 10 minutes. Brush soy sauce mixture constantly on the surface of the salmon. Serve with grated daikon and sprinkle lemon juice on top of desired.

Namasu (*pickled daikon & carrot salad - is often served at Japanese meals as a side dish 8 oz. daikon radish*)



- 1 lg. carrot
- 1 tsp. lemon peel
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 1/2 c. rice vinegar
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice

Slice daikon crosswise and cut each slice into thin strips. Cut carrot crosswise into 2 inch wide pieces. Slice each piece and cut into thin strips. In a bowl, mix daikon and carrots and sprinkle 1 teaspoon salt and squeeze. Let stand 5 minutes. Rinse them under cold running water, drain and squeeze well. Cut lemon peel into thin strips and mix with daikon mixture, set aside. Combine sugar, vinegar, lemon juice and 1/2 teaspoon salt and stir until sugar and salt are dissolved. Pour vinegar mixture over daikon mixture and let stand 1 hour. (*You can also add cucumbers to this salad.*)

Daikon and Chicken Soup

- 1 (3-inch) fresh green chile
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 5 cups no-salt-added chicken broth
- 2 cups thinly sliced, peeled daikon radish (about 1/2 pound)
- 1 pound skinned, boned chicken breasts, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- 1/8 teaspoon sugar
- 2 cups hot cooked long-grain rice
- Chopped fresh cilantro (optional) Remove stem from chile; cut chile in half lengthwise, and discard seeds. Combine chile and vinegar in a blender, and process until smooth; set aside.

Bring broth to a simmer in a large saucepan; add radish, and cook 5 minutes. Add chili mixture, chicken, and next 3 ingredients; simmer 5 minutes or until chicken is done. Stir in rice; garnish with cilantro, if desired.

From *Cooking Light*, Jan. 1995.