



Greetings!

As the Twins fell to the mighty Yankees, our hopes for a last miraculous Metrodome championship withering away this past week, so did a hard freeze put an end to our cold sensitive crops. Our seasons had to close sometime but I am dismayed that the endings had to be so brutal. Yet behold! All is not lost. The cold tolerant crops might be more or less done growing but we are not yet finished picking and delivering them! **There will be a sixteenth delivery next week on the 20th.** (After that, I am not sure; I'll make the call well before the potential seventeenth delivery.)

Here's what's in your box (in no particular order):

- Tomatillos
- Carrots
- Beets
- Onions
- Leeks
- Peppers, bells, bananas and jalapeños
- Tomatoes, heirlooms and others
- Melons
- Kale or Collards
- Parsley and thyme

Notes on the contents:

Okay, the tomatoes this week are not the prettiest of the season; they are, however, the last. I stored them in a heated bunkhouse for the last week or two where some developed some unpreventable nastiness; I guesstimate that for every three we gave out this week there was one that didn't make the grading cut. Now, after getting this newsletter sent out, I have about 250 pounds of squishy tomatoes to process; my feet will be bound to the kitchen for the next two days.

The leeks deserve mentioning as they make their first and perhaps only appearance of the season. Leek lovers, I hate to bear this bad news. (The problem was not that I planted too few of them; it was that the majority of the thousands of plants that I ordered and planted by hand – because the flood prevented me from growing them from seed myself – were by and large runty little plants that did not even begin to grow. Now that I have an alternative site for seed starting, next year I will start them along with other crops the flood forced me to purchase instead of start myself (for example, onions, peppers, eggplant).) There are several hundred smaller leeks that we will harvest perhaps by next week, so you may want to hang onto those from this week if you need more of them for a recipe.

I thought we had planted the kale and collards in plenty of time to have nice big plants by now. The plants did not develop as fast as anticipated; they are just large enough to pick a few decent leaves from each plant and those are not as thick (and freeze tolerant) as leaves from more mature plants. Some of the leaves may have sustained damage from the cold and windy conditions but they should taste really good. Use them as soon as you can: strip the leaf from the stem and use like chard or spinach; the stem can be used but needs more cooking time. I am not sure if there will be more of these two greens or chard next week. The lettuce I anticipated cutting was damaged to varying degrees by the freezing temps; this, too, I would like to get to you but am not sure about. Most of it looked decent last Monday.

The carrots this week were mostly the 'White Satin' variety that you probably saw earlier this season. I'm not convinced of the worthiness of this variety – I'm not sure its flavor is particularly



great, though it may taste better now after exposure to cold. (Many crops develop sweeter, better flavor after exposure to cold.) I would like to get some feedback on this variety.

Next week, there will be more beets, carrots; some sort of onion; kale, collards or Swiss chard (hopefully); cabbage or broccoli, winter squashes, and herbs (sage, rosemary and/or parsley). We will pick the available Brussels sprouts this weekend and hopefully dig and clean a couple thousand green onions. I'll contact Hugh at Hugh's Gardens about getting some organic potatoes as well.

Instead of pumpkins this year, I grew an heirloom squash called 'Long Island Cheese' (see stock photo), called so as it resembles a flattened wheel of cheddar. This is a large specimen that keeps well and is known for making good pies (and soups I imagine). The first time I grew these I was amazed at their size but not impressed with the plants' productivity. This year I was amazed at the size of some (approaching 20 pounds), their productivity and the wart-like growths on the some, making these doubly useful as unique fall decoration - I can virtually guarantee no one else on your block will have one of these. Unfortunately, with about 50 of them, I do not have enough to go around for everyone. I am going to give each large shareholder one. The remainder is up for grabs. *If you would like to purchase one of these for \$0.50 per pound I will bring one down next Tuesday with your box* (the same protocol as the jam/granola ordering). Look for a separate email from me in the next couple days with some photos of some of these gnarley beauties.



Farm News

Growing/ weather

If you haven't noticed, this fall has been colder than normal. For the first time since I have been here (this is my eighth fall), the leaves of many ash, basswood and other species have been freeze dried on the branches, not getting a chance to turn before they drop. So far, we're looking at a dull season for color.

The driveway is much more passable compared to the previous two weeks' sloppiness. Thus far - who knows if it will hold true - the forecasts for this coming weekend look promising; it will likely be the best (and perhaps last) chance of the season to come for a visit. Let me know (if, when).

Housekeeping

I became aware (all too recently) that last week's newsletter and hence news of this week's drop did not arrive in many (most, all?) of your inboxes. Here, I thought gmail was going to be less limiting than yahoo. I apologize for this mishap and hope to resolve this before next week.

Community news, etc.

Getting stressed out lately, perhaps by the impending H1N1 plague (overblown) - or by the vegetables piling up in your fridge (more likely)? If so, join fellow CSA member Juliet Trnka as she leads "The Science of Yoga for Stress Relief" workshop coming up on October 17th. Preregistration is required so act soon! For more information on this and other paths to relaxation guided by Juliet, go to <http://www.fargo5element.com/>; click on 'Workshops'; or, call Juliet at 701-388-2967.

Recipe sites

- Visit <http://www.leekrecipes.org/> and allrecipes.com for dozens of recipes on **leeks**, <http://allrecipes.com/recipes/everyday-cooking/seasonal/winter/leek/main.aspx>.
- For **thyme** recipes, etc., check out <http://homecooking.about.com/library/archive/blthyme.htm>.



RGG, 1008 CR3, PO Box 157, Shelly, MN 56581, redgoosegardens@yahoo.com, 218.886.6281

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing's going to get better. It's not." - The Lorax

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

~ *Thor*



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Recipes

For a list of soup recipes, see the '50 Soups' attachment sent to me by a CSA member.

Vegetable Stock (Makes about 2 quarts)

In this recipe, the vegetables are lightly browned to give the stock intense flavor. You can vary the flavor by increasing the amount of garlic, replacing the carrots with parsnips (or another root vegetable), or changing some of the fresh herbs for others. Or add any of the following: dried mushrooms, such as porcini or shiitake, a few corncobs, some chopped tomatoes, thinly sliced leeks, etc. If the stock is to be used to make Italian dishes, add a rind of Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese once the water has been added. If making a vegetarian dish with other vegetables, use the scraps to flavor the stock, such as beet greens for beet risotto. But be careful to avoid adding anything that is less than fresh or has too strong a flavor, such as most cruciferous vegetables (including broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage).

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion – peeled, half coarsely chopped, the other half kept whole
- 2 large celery stalks, cut into ½ inch pieces
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and cut into ½ inch pieces
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 8 sprigs flat-leaf parsley
- 8 sprigs basil
- 4 sprigs thyme
- 1 dried bay leaf
- ¼ teaspoon whole black peppercorns
- Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper

Brown vegetables. Heat the oil in a medium stockpot over medium until hot but not smoking. Add chopped onion and cook, stirring often, until beginning to brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Add celery, carrots and garlic; cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender and lightly browned – about 10 minutes.

Make stock. Pour in enough water to cover vegetables by 1 inch (8 to 10 cups) and add the herbs, peppercorns and remaining onion half. Season with salt and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a gentle simmer and cook (uncovered) 1 hour.

Strain stock. Pour stock through a fine sieve into a large bowl or another pot, pressing on vegetables to extract as much flavorful liquid as possible. Discard solids. If not using immediately, cool in an ice-water bath (or, just put the pot outside for awhile) before transferring to airtight containers. Vegetable stock can be refrigerated for up to several days or frozen for several months.

Vegetable Tian (Serves 6)

A tian is a Provencal creation named for the traditional earthenware baking dish. Be sure to drizzle generously with oil to impart flavor and keep the vegetables from drying out (remember there's no other liquid in a tian); you can spoon off excess oil after cooking.

- 1/3 to ½ cup olive oil
- 1 small eggplant thinly slice crosswise on a slight diagonal
- 1 yellow squash or zucchini thinly sliced crosswise on a diagonal
- 4 plum tomatoes (about 1 pound) sliced lengthwise ¼ inch thick
- 2 small red, white, or yellow onions thinly sliced crosswise
- Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper



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Sprigs of herbs, such as thyme, rosemary, oregano, or marjoram
1 head garlic, separated into cloves, but not peeled

Assembly. Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Coat the bottom of an oval baking dish or 9 by 13 inch baking dish with 2 tablespoons oil. Arrange vegetables in dish, alternating them and overlapping them. Season with salt and pepper; drizzle with enough oil to coat generously, and scatter herbs and garlic evenly over the top.

Baking. Bake 25 minutes, then baste vegetables with oil from pan and continue baking until tender and browned, about 20 minutes more.

Adapted from "Martha Stewart's Cooking School" by Martha Stewart

Minestrone with Pesto (6 servings)

Minestrone is a thick mixed vegetable soup using almost any combination of seasonal vegetables. Go ahead and add more vegetables to this recipe. Short pasta or rice may also be added. This version includes pesto sauce.

6 ¼ cups stock or water, or a combination of both
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 leek, sliced
2 carrots finely chopped
1 stalk celery, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
2 potatoes, peeled and cut into small dice
1 bay leaf
1 sprig fresh thyme or ¼ teaspoon dried thyme
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
¾ cup peas, fresh or frozen
1-3 zucchini finely chopped
3 medium tomatoes, peeled and finely chopped
2 cups cooked or canned beans such as cannellini
3 tablespoons pesto sauce
Freshly grated Parmesan cheese, to serve

In a medium saucepan, heat the stock or water to simmering.

In a saucepan heat the olive oil. Stir in the onion and leek and cook for 5-6 minutes, or until the onion softens. Add the carrots, celery and garlic and cook over moderate heat, stirring often, for another 5 minutes. Add the potatoes and cook for 2-3 minutes more.

Pour in the hot stock or water, and stir well. Add the herbs and season with salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat slightly and cook for 10-12 minutes.

Stir in the peas, if fresh, and the zucchini. Simmer for 5 minutes more. Add the frozen peas, if using, and the tomatoes. Cover the pan and boil for 5-8 minutes.

About 10 minutes before serving the soup, uncover and stir in the beans. Simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in the pesto sauce. Taste for seasoning. Simmer for another 5 minutes then remove from the heat. Allow the soup to stand for a few minutes then serve with the grated Parmesan.

Potatoes Baked with Tomatoes (6 servings)

This hearty dish is from the south of Italy and is best made with fresh tomatoes.



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2 large red or yellow onions, thinly sliced
2 lbs potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
1 lb tomatoes, fresh
6 tablespoons olive oil
1 cup freshly grated Parmesan or Romano cheese
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
A few leaves of fresh basil
¼ cup water

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Brush a large baking dish generously with oil.

Arrange a layer of onions in the dish followed by layers of potatoes and tomatoes. Pour on a little of the oil and sprinkle with the cheese. Season with salt and pepper.

Repeat until the vegetables are used up, ending with an overlapping layer of potatoes and tomatoes. Tear the basil leaves into pieces and add them here and there among the vegetables. Sprinkle the top with cheese and a little oil.

If the top begins to brown too much, place a sheet of foil or a flat cookie sheet on top of the dish. Serve hot.

Eggplant, Lemon and Capers Salad (4 servings)

This cooked vegetable relish is a classic Sicilian dish which is delicious served as an accompaniment to cold meats or poultry, with pasta, or simply on its own with some good crusty bread. Make sure the eggplant is well cooked until it is meltingly soft.

1 large eggplant, about 1 ½ lbs
¼ cup olive oil
Grated rind and juice of one lemon
2 tablespoons capers, rinsed
12 pitted green olives
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Cut the eggplant into 1 inch cubes. Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan and cook the eggplant cubes over medium heat for about 10 minutes, tossing regularly, until golden and softened. You may need to do this in two batches. Drain on paper towels and sprinkle with a little salt.

Place the eggplant cubes in a large serving bowl, toss with the lemon rind and juice, capers, olives and chopped parsley and season well with salt and pepper. Serve at room temperature.

Adapted from "The Italian Cooking Encyclopedia."

Roasted Beet Salad

Salad:
6 medium beets, roots and tops trimmed
Olive oil to coat
½ cup pecans, chopped and toasted
1/3 cup high quality blue cheese, crumbled

Dressing:
1 cup balsamic vinegar, reduced to 1/3 cup
1/3 teaspoon red pepper flakes



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½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon allspice
1/8 teaspoon cayenne

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Toss beets in olive oil to coat and place on a sheet pan; roast until tender (approximately 30 to 45 minutes); let cool.

Prepare dressing. Toast pecans.

When cooled, peel (optional) and cut beets into wedges. Put 4 to 5 wedges on a plate and sprinkle the pecans and blue cheese on top, then drizzle on the reduced vinegar. Wilted greens add nice color and flavor. This salad can be made up to a day in advance.

Seasonal Greens Soufflé (12 servings)

The recipe calls for chard but other greens can be used.

2 lbs fresh chard (or other greens)
¼ cup unsalted butter
¼ cup reconstituted porcini mushrooms, chopped
¼ cup fontina cheese, or mild-flavored melting cheese, diced
2 ½ cups béchamel sauce (recipe below)
3 eggs, separated
Salt and pepper

Cook greens, in just the water clinging to the leaves after washing. Drain, squeezing out as much water as possible, and chop. Gently sauté the greens in butter for 5 to 7 more minutes; remove from heat.

Allow to cool, then stir the greens, porcini, and fontina into the béchamel sauce, then stir in egg yolks one at a time. Beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Gently fold in beaten egg whites into cheese sauce. Pour mixture into prepared molds (8 oz ramekins). Bake in a water bath of simmering water at 350 degrees for 30 to 40 minutes, or until set.

Béchamel Sauce

¼ cup butter
¼ cup all purpose flour
2 cups whole milk
Salt and pepper
Pinch of nutmeg

Melt the butter in a pan over medium heat, whisk in the flour until incorporated, then add milk, whisking constantly until it comes to a boil. Season with salt, lower the heat, and cover and simmer gently, stirring occasionally for at least 20 minutes. Remove from heat, adjust seasoning with pepper, nutmeg and more salt, if needed.

Adapted from "The Minnesota Homegrown Cookbook"

Avocado - Tomatillo Salsa (4-6 servings)

This is a wonderful treat. The recipes calls for boiling the tomatillos, but consider roasting, broiling or grilling them – it makes a substantial difference in the taste!

20 tomatillos, husks removed
6 Hungarian wax chilies, seeded and minced
4 serrano chiles, seeded and minced



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¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
¼ cup minced yellow onion
2 cloves garlic, minced
½ teaspoon salt
3 avocados, halved, pitted and peeled
Juice of 4 limes (about 2 tablespoons)

Bring a saucepan ¾ full of water to a boil. Add the tomatillos and boil until softened, about 5 minutes. Drain and let cool. Or, place them on a cookie sheet and roast, broil or grill them for a few minutes until softened. Add the chilies, cilantro, onion, garlic and salt. Stir to combine. Add the avocado halves and, using a fork, mash into the tomatillo mixture. The salsa should be a little chunky. Stir in the lime juice. Serve this dish with your favorite main course, or serve it as a snack or light meal with tortilla chips and/or warm bread, and possibly a light green salad.

Adapted from Williams-Sonoma "Casual Outdoor Dining."

Braised Sour Cabbage (4 Servings)

This dish complements a variety of main dishes. You can substitute different cabbages and add some sliced apples if you like.

1 pound savoy or other cabbage, cored and cut into 1 inch slices
1 medium onion peeled and thinly sliced
¾ cup dark raisins
1 cup sweet apple cider
3 tablespoons cider vinegar
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
½ tablespoon canola oil

Combine all the ingredients in a stainless steel saucepan.

Bring to a boil, cover, reduce the heat to medium and braise for 30-45 minutes. Most of the liquid should have evaporated by then, but the cabbage should be moist; cook longer without the lid if excess moisture remains in the bottom of the pan. The small amount of liquid still in the pan should be caramelized and brown, and the cabbage a little bit crunchy. Serve.

Adapted from "Jacques Pepin's Table" by Jacques Pepin



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