

Cascade Farm CSA Harvest Notes 2011

Cascade Farm CSA Harvest #20 September 29, 2011

THE HARVEST

Your Harvest Share this week

Here we are leaving September already (in the middle of the latest rain-a-thon) and heading into October. October brings the chance of frost in our area and that brings dramatic changes to our gardens and greenhouses and we will be busy in the coming weeks preparing for that. It is hard to believe October approaches with the heat and humidity we've had but we know the cold will come eventually.

All this wet, humid weather has taken a toll on our crops throughout the season. Lately, you may have heard on the news that pumpkins and winter squash in our area has been severely affected by the storms and wet weather. We are lucky to have some of our winter squash but it has been hit by a late fungus. The butternut squash you received last week may have had brown markings on it. On the butternut this is superficial on the skin surface, not penetrating the flesh so the squash is still fine to eat. However this fungus will impact the length of long term storage of the winter squash. Under optimal conditions, you should be able to store most winter squash from one to four months, but because of the fungus this storage time may only be a few weeks to just over a month. If for some reason you will not be enjoying your winter squash within a short time, plan to cook and freeze it – it freezes well and can be used in a variety of soups, breads, and desserts.

A new crop this week will be purple top turnips. Turnips when prepared properly can be quite tasty, but improperly prepared turnips can be bitter tasting and cause most people to not give them a second chance. My favorite ways to cook turnips is to stir-fry or roast in the oven. Boiling is common but be sure they are completely cooked so they are not bitter (see tips below).

Another new item this week is spaghetti squash. The flesh of this squash is stringy like spaghetti. They are often baked as other winter squash and then the mildly sweet flesh is scooped out and topped with tomato sauce (and a sprinkle of cheese).

Enjoy your harvest!



THIS WEEK'S HARVEST MAY INCLUDE:

- Carrots
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Hot Peppers
- Joi Choi
- Kale
- Mustard Greens
- Sweet Peppers
- Turnips (new this week)
- Watermelon
- Winter Squash (Spaghetti squash, Pie Pumpkin)
- Fresh Herbs (Dill, Parsley, Sage)

THE FARM

Events

PUMPKIN PICKING: October is a beautiful time at the farm with colorful tree foliage and a field full of pumpkins ready for picking. October weekends we will be open to the public (and our members of course) to come for a hay ride and u-pick pumpkins. Our farm stand will also be open selling fresh produce and fresh goodies we will be cooking up each week. Pumpkin Picking is available Saturdays and Sundays in October (beginning October 1st), as well as Columbus Day, from 11am to 6pm.

HARVEST TIPS

This section usually includes tips for new items in your harvest (how to store and prepare). For information about other items in your harvest see the previous harvest notes. They can be found on the website www.cascadefarmschool.org under the CSA Member Page.

PURPLE TOP GLOBE TURNIPS

Turnips are a wonderful fall vegetable that can be baked, boiled, sautéed, or steamed.

Storage Tips

- Store turnips in your refrigerator crisper for up to 2 weeks
- Leftover turnips aren't usually very tasty so be sure to cook only enough for your current meal
- Turnips can be blanched and frozen for later use

Cooking Tips

- Turnips are well known for their bitter flavor if not prepared correctly, when boiling place a potato in the water alongside the turnip to take out the bitter flavor
- Slice into thin rounds and fry quickly in hot oil (both sides)
- Bake whole turnips at 350 degrees for 30 – 45 minutes – after they cool slip the skins off to eat or add to soups or stews
- Roast with other root vegetables or winter squash in the oven

FEATURED RECIPES

Pumpkin Sage Soup

This recipe is adapted from *Farmer John's Cookbook* by John Peterson and Angelic Organics.

A hearty fall dish so keep this recipe on hand for when the cold weather hits. Sprinkle with some Parmesan cheese and serve with crusty bread.

Ingredients

- 1 medium pie pumpkin
- 3 Tablespoons olive oil

- 3 tablespoons whole sage leaves
- 1 medium onion (minced)
- 1 clove garlic (minced)
- 1 quart vegetable or chick stock or water
- 4 tablespoons of fresh parsley (minced)
- ¼ teaspoon of dried thyme
- Pinch of ground cinnamon (or more to taste)
- 1 teaspoon of salt
- 1 teaspoon of black pepper

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Cut the pumpkin in half, scoop out the seeds, and place the halves cut side down in a glass baking dish with a bit of water. Bake until soft about 30 – 40 minutes.
3. Heat the olive oil in a soup pot over medium heat. Dip a sage leaf in the oil, if it sizzles it is hot enough to add remaining sage leaves. Cook until the leaves are speckled and begin to turn a very dark green. Scoop them out and transfer them to a paper towel lined plate.
4. Add the onions to the sage oil and sauté, stirring frequently for about 10 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook for 2 additional minutes.
5. When the pumpkin is cool enough, scoop out all of the flesh and chop it roughly. Add it to the soup pot, stir well. Add the stock or water, parsley, thyme, and cinnamon. Bring to a boil. Add the salt and pepper. Reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.
6. If you prefer a smooth soup, run the soup through a blender or food processor.
7. Garnish your soup with the fried sage leaves before serving.