



The Cedar Post

Cedar Down Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Summer CSA, Week 7, July 23, 2012

This week's share:

Beets, beans, zucchini, cucumber, tomatoes, green peppers, garlic, hot peppers, herbs

Next week's guess:

Carrots, zucchini, cucumber, beans, tomatoes, new potatoes, cipollini onions, peppers, garlic, parsley, chard

On the farm...

By now, I'm sure you have all heard plenty about the drought effecting much of Ontario. You may have driven past corn fields withered and yellowing or pastures yellow and short. You may have heard about farmers losing crops and livestock farmers on dried out pastures feeding hay meant for winter feed while looking at hay fields too dry to regrow. Farmers are looking at selling off their herds because there isn't food to feed them.

This year has been the worst weather in decades for farmers in Ontario. After a long dry winter and spring, the summer has been no better for rain. This is all contributing to seriously dry conditions with water sources drying up because they were never replenished with winter and spring precipitation. After getting through this spring very well, we are now starting to seriously feel the effects of this drought on the farm. Crops like lettuce, spinach, kale and other greens that are meant to regrow for many harvests are withering, others are lacking the vigour to produce abundantly and still others have not had enough moisture to size up. We have been irrigating nearly everyday from our pond but can't quite keep up and now the pond is dangerously near to empty. Though it is spring-fed, it can't seem to replenish itself this year after such a dry winter.

While we begin to feel the real effects of drought, you may also see it reflected in your CSA shares. Until it rains again, we are rationing our water - having to pick and choose what to irrigate most, what we might need to let go. You will notice the absence of greens in your share and perhaps that quantities are smaller (perhaps a good thing for some of you!).

But this situation highlights the very core of Community Shared Agriculture (CSA). The idea behind how we farm, in relationship with you as our members, is that farmers need the support of their community to be sustainable in the long run (and inversely, the community needs farmers growing food to be healthy and sustainable long-term). CSA recognizes the truly symbiotic relationship between farmers and their communities - if farms are healthy and thriving so too will be their communities. If the community gives ongoing support to local farms, farmers will be healthy and thriving into the future.

In a time like this, if our farm (like so many others do) relied strictly on the returns from taking our crop to market, we would be suffering financially for certain (and we are suffering somewhat already from not having enough crop to go to our one farmers market). But, because we farm through CSA, we are able to maintain the financial support that we need to keep the farm running despite the fact that some of our crops are not doing well. Thank you for that!

So, while it's possible that we may all feel a bit of scarcity this season because of the weather, you, as CSA members are helping to create a more secure food system in the long run by being being a supportive community - ensuring the continued existence of local farms.

Garlic Parmesan Green Beans

.75 lb. fresh green beans, stems removed
2 tbsp. unsalted butter
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. kosher salt
1/8 tsp. ground black pepper
1 tbsp. freshly grated parmesan cheese

Steam green beans until slightly tender, about 6-8 minutes.

Melt butter over medium heat in a large skillet. Add garlic and cook 1-2 minutes. Transfer steamed green beans to the melted butter and garlic. Toss to coat green beans evenly and continue to sautee for approximately 5 minutes over medium heat. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Remove from heat and sprinkle grated parmesan. Toss once again until parmesan is melted, approximately 1 minute.

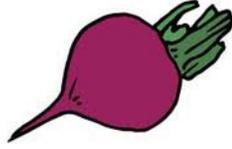


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Grated beet pickles

5-6 medium sized beets, scrubbed and peeled
1/4 cup cider vinegar
1 tbsp kosher salt
1 1/2 tbsp sugar
1 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp prepared horseradish
1/4 cup chopped dill



Grate the beets on the large holes of a box grater (wearing rubber gloves and an apron prevents against staining). Combine beets with the ingredients in a large bowl and allow them to sit for 1/2 hour or more.

If you prefer the soft texture of cooked beets, rather than raw beets (their texture is more like carrots), throw the grated beets in a pan over medium heat and sauté in 1 tbsp of olive oil to soften before continuing on with the recipe.

Green Beans with Oven Roasted Tomatoes

10 ounces green beans
1 lb tomatoes, cut into half moons
3 cloves garlic, crushed and finely minced
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar or honey
1 teaspoon black pepper, freshly ground
1 yellow onion, thinly sliced
1-1/2 teaspoons salt
6 tablespoons olive oil



Preheat the oven to 300°F.

Brush a baking pan with olive oil. Place the tomatoes, flesh side up.

In a small bowl, dissolve the sugar in balsamic vinegar. Add garlic and 4 tablespoons of olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle mixture over tomatoes

Roast for 2 hours at 275°F. At the end, to ensure the garlic is well roasted, change the setting to a broil for about 3-4 minutes. Allow to cool for about 1 hour; the tomatoes should be warm.

Wash and pat dry the green beans.

Heat the rest of the oil in a large, non-stick pan. Once the oil is hot, add the sliced onions and slowly cook until caramelized, stirring often. Add the beans. Toss well, leaving the heat at the highest setting for about 3 minutes until the color changes and becomes translucent. Add salt (this step will ensure a bright green color). Drizzle about 1 cup of water and cook until the liquid completely evaporates. The green beans should still be crisp at this point, not mushy. Adjust seasoning. Add more salt (if necessary) and pepper. Transfer to a platter and add the caramelized cherry tomatoes, drizzling the pan drippings over the greens. Toss well.

Serve immediately.

Sautéed String Beans

.75-1 lbs green beans
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup canola oil (or any neutral oil)
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
2 teaspoons black bean sauce
1 teaspoon chili garlic sauce
1/2 teaspoon black pepper, freshly ground
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon sesame oil (optional)
Directions

Wash and pat dry the beans. Divide into 4 batches.

Heat the canola oil in a deep pan. Once the oil is hot, fry the beans, one batch at a time. Don't over-crowd the pan. Cook until they are golden brown. Transfer to a paper towel and sprinkle with salt. Reserve the oil for other use, leaving about 1 tablespoon in the pan. The beans should still be crisp at this point, not mushy. Trim the ends of the beans after frying them if you like.

In the same pan, re-heat the oil. Once it's hot, add the garlic. Cook until fragrant. Add the green beans, black bean and chili garlic sauce, sugar and soy sauce. Stir-fry for about 3 minutes. Sprinkle with black pepper.

Finish with a drizzle of sesame oil if you like.

Serve immediately.

Roasted Tomato Salsa

1 pound tomatoes (cut in half)
2 jalapenos
1 green pepper
1/4 cup onion (diced)
1 clove garlic (chopped)
1 lime (juice)
1 handful cilantro (chopped)
salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Roast the tomatoes in a preheated 350F oven for an hour.
2. Let the tomatoes cool and dice them.
3. Broil the chilies and green pepper until blackened on all sides.
4. Let the peppers cool in a sealed container, peel the skins from them, seed them and dice them.
5. Mix everything and let sit for 20 minutes to bring out the flavours.

Farm Open House!

Saturday, July 28th 1-5pm



Come and see where your food is grown!

Farm tours at 1:30pm and 3:30pm

Tour the farm, meet your fellow CSA members!