



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, eggplant, 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.



Contact Us:

Cedar Down Farm
519-665-2008
info@cedardownfarm.ca
22145 Conc. 14 RR#1
Neustadt, ON N0G 2N0
www.cedardownfarm.ca

Szechuan Eggplant

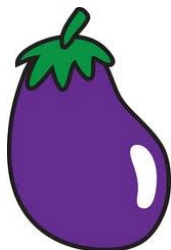
1 large eggplant or 2 smaller cut into thick sticks
¼ kg ground pork
Half a garlic head, minced
One 1 inch piece ginger, sliced
1 tbsp cornstarch dissolved in ¼ cup water

Marinade:

tbsp soy sauce
Freshly cracked pepper

Sauce:

2 tbsp sesame oil
2 tbsp brown sugar
3 tbsp chilli garlic paste (Lee Kum Kee)
2 tbsp soy sauce
Optional: 1 tbsp rice wine



In a bowl, combine the ingredients for the marinade and add the pork. Let stand in the refrigerator for at least 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a bowl combine the ingredients for the sauce.

In a wok (big enough to hold the eggplant) heat enough sesame oil to coat the bottom of the pan. Add the ground pork mixture and cook until fat renders and meat is lightly browned.

When cooked, remove from pan. Using the same pan and the oil, over medium heat, add the garlic and ginger and toast until fragrant.

Add the eggplant and stir – fry to cook until tender. About 3 – 5 minutes.

Add the sauce, the pork and mix well. Add the cornstarch slurry and cook until thickened and eggplant is tender. Serve warm and enjoy!

Crispy Eggplant with Tomato Salsa

1-2 eggplants, ends removed, sliced to 1/3 inch slices
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
2 eggs, beaten
1/4 tsp salt
fresh ground black pepper
1/4 cup neutral frying oil

For salsa:

2 medium tomatoes, diced
1 small hot pepper, any type, seeds removed and minced
1 sweet onion, minced
1/4 cup parsley, cilantro or basil (or a mixture)
2 tsp red wine vinegar
2 tsp lime juice
salt and pepper to taste



Salt eggplant slices, both sides and allow to sit for 20 minutes. Rinse and pat dry. Add salt and pepper to flour. Heat oil in a large skillet until hot but not smoking. Dip eggplant in beaten egg then dredge in flour and add to hot skillet. Fry for 2-3 minutes, until first side is golden, flip and fry until other side is golden brown. Drain on paper towel and repeat with every slice. Add all salsa ingredients to a small bowl and toss - season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve fried eggplant topped with salsa and enjoy!

Sautéed String Beans

.75-1 lbs green beans
½ 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
½ 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.

Farm Open House!

Saturday, July 28th 1-5pm

Come and see where your food is grown!

Please join us at the farm for a tour, meet other CSA members and check out how we grow the veggies in your CSA shares.

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

