

## This week's share:

Potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic, squash, cabbage, celeriac, beets, dry beans



## Next week's guess...

Potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic, parsnip, sweet potatoes, cabbage or kohlrabi



# The Cedar Post

Cedar Down Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Winter CSA, Week 8 of 10, February 7/8, 2012

## Celeriac Potato Mash

2 medium celery roots (celeriac; 1 3/4 pounds total), trimmed, peeled, cut into 1-inch cubes (about 8 cups)

1 pound potatoes, peeled, cut into 3/4-inch cubes (about 3 cups)

2 cups chicken or vegetable broth

2 cups whole milk

3 garlic cloves, peeled

3 fresh thyme sprigs

1 fresh bay leaf

3 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, divided

Combine first 7 ingredients in heavy large pot. Add enough water to cover. Sprinkle with salt. Bring to boil, reduce heat to medium, and simmer with lid slightly ajar until vegetables are tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Drain; return to pot. Discard thyme sprigs and bay leaf. Stir over medium heat to dry vegetables. Using potato masher, mash vegetables until coarsely pureed. Mash in butter. Season with salt and pepper.



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## On the farm...

A few (about 25) new arrivals showed up on the farm this week. Hardworking (though you couldn't tell from looking), peaceful and very well-respected (at least here!), these new arrivals are quite unassuming and you wouldn't necessarily know from looking at them how important their role is on the farm. That's right, I'm talking about cows!

Each winter, through an arrangement with local farmers (and CSA members) Gerald and Marlene Poechman, we take care of 25 cattle here at the farm, providing them with shelter, food and water in exchange for, well, their poop! This poop, sorry - manure, is what makes these creatures so important to us. It is a crucial aspect of our soil fertility, adding priceless nutrients and organic matter to the soil. We spread about 30 to 40 tons of composted manure to our fields each year and without our own herd of cattle (yet!), this partnership with the Poechmans means that we get a good chunk of our compost without having to actually pay cash for it. That is, we exchange the room and board for the manure. Plus we get the benefit of the presence of these peaceful animals on the farm.

Cattle and other grazing animals are extremely important for soil fertility on farms and in natural grassland ecosystems. Not only does their manure add precious fertility to soils but good grazing practices also promotes healthy pastures and grasslands which in turn build the soil and have other environmental benefits (like carbon sequestration). Unlike cattle that are fed corn and soy and kept in feedlot systems, grazing cattle can be extremely beneficial for the environment because of their relationship with pasture. If grazed correctly, cattle help to build organic matter in the soil and can turn depleted soils into productive soil - increasing fertility, preventing erosion and increasing water holding capacity and soil aeration.



But, back to our farm, where at this point we are not grazing cattle but simply housing them for the winter. We still reap enormous benefit just from being able to collect their manure and turn it into compost. So, we were very glad to welcome the cows back to the farm this week. Hopefully one day, we will have our own herd grazing, pooping and building soil!

Last year's herd chewing and resting...

## Beans!

The beans in this week's share come, once again, from our neighbour across the fence - Ahren Hughes. Lovely in appearance and outstanding in flavour, this variety of bean - Beka Brown - is definitely one of my favourites. Nutty, sweet and rich, when I cook up a pot of them, I can barely get them onto the table because they taste so good I tend to munch them plain, straight out of the pot. Being so delicious all on their own, they make a quick and easy meal because they don't need any fancy recipes to make them shine. I often boil them and just toss them with some sauteed onions over rice but they work very well in any bean recipe. Soak them for a few hours or overnight before boiling them and they will cook up in 45 minutes or so.

### Louisiana Beans and Rice

1 pound beka brown beans  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
1 large onion, diced  
6 cloves garlic  
1 carrot, diced  
1/2 celeriac, peeled and diced  
2 bay leaves  
1/2 teaspoon ground sage  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
2 chipotle peppers (from canned chipotles in adobo), finely chopped  
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
3 cups vegetable stock  
2-3 cups water  
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce  
1/2 cup chopped red onion, for garnish  
Cooked rice, for serving  
Tabasco sauce, for serving



Soak the beans overnight. Drain and set aside.

Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a large heavy pot. Add the onion, garlic, carrot and celeriac. Sauté until soft, about 5-6 minutes. Add the beans, bay leaves, sage, oregano, chipotles, cayenne, stock, 2 cups of water and Worcestershire sauce. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, until the beans are tender, about 1 hour. Add more water as needed to keep the beans from drying out; when done, the mixture should be saucy yet slightly thick. If it seems too watery, mash a cup of the beans and stir back in. (The dish will also naturally thicken overnight if you are serving it the next day.)

Remove the bay leaves and serve on rice, passing the Tabasco.

Serves 6-8

## Sautéed Cabbage and Sweet Onions with Almonds

1/2 medium cabbage, chopped fine/shredded like in a coleslaw  
1 large onion, peeled and sliced thin into half moons  
1 dry hot pepper or 2 fresh  
1.5 cups sliced canned tomatoes  
a fistful of sliced almonds  
1.5 tablespoons olive oil or any cooking oil  
salt  
some red chili powder/cayenne pepper/  
paprika - if you want to spice it up  
a fistful of curry leaves/kari patta, shredded  
(or any other fresh herb that you would want to use)



Use a large flat bottomed pan or a skillet.

Heat oil in the pan and sauté the onions and chili peppers (if you are using them) for a couple of minutes till the onions are translucent.

Add the tomatoes and cook till the tomatoes are mushy. Add the shredded cabbage, chili powder and salt; stir to combine the onion, tomatoes and the cabbage and cook at medium to high heat while stirring around till the cabbage is wilted but still slightly crunchy, about 5 minutes. Add the torn curry leaves or any other fresh herb that you would use and stir them in. Switch off the heat and add the almonds. Toss well.

Serve warm or at room temperature as a side dish.

## BORSCHT

Yield: about 6 servings

1 medium yellow onion, diced  
4 cups chicken or vegetable broth  
1 cup water  
4 medium red beets, peeled and diced  
1 large potato, diced  
2 carrots, diced  
2 cups shredded cabbage  
1/4 cup fresh dill or 1 tsp dried dill, minced, plus extra for garnish  
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar  
1 bay leaf  
salt + pepper to taste  
yogurt or sour cream for garnish

In a large pot, warm 2 teaspoons olive oil over medium heat. Add the diced onion and saute until soft, about 5-7 minutes. Add the broth, water, beets, potato, carrots and bay leaf and cover. Simmer for about 20-30 minutes, until the vegetables are cooked. Add the cabbage and the fresh dill and simmer for another 5 minutes or so. Turn off heat and add the vinegar. Season generously with salt and pepper.

Ladle into bowls and finish with a dollop of yogurt or sour cream, and a sprinkling of dill.