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Cycle Farm CSA Newsletter

Week 8 - August 8, 2013

This week's share

- green beans (1/2 lb Provider and Red Swan)
- summer squash (Costata Romanesco, Mutabile)
- snow peas (4 1/2 oz, Schweizer Reisen)
- snap peas (6 oz Cascadia, Sugar Ann)
- mixed lettuce (Carmona, Jester Verde, Crispmint, Brown Goldring)
- 1 bunch green onions (Evergreen Hardy Bunching)
- basil (1/4 lb Genovese)
- swiss chard (Rhubarb Red, Golden, Ford Hook Giant)
- zinnia
- pick your own herbs!



garlic curing

Dear CSA friends,

Another busy week. Hope you all are doing well and enjoying the cooler weather.

We harvested garlic - about a month later than we originally anticipated, it had a slow start this spring. A good deal of our yeild was lost to rot, but the heads that made it look incredible. The garlic is bunched and hanging in the shed. Big, glorious bulbs. *Oh the garlic harvest.* This may be my (Trish's) most favorite time of year.

The beans are starting! This year, we are growing Provider and Red Swan, 2 varieties we really enjoyed from last year. We were not terribly impressed with the Marvel of Venice (yellow) and Rattlesnake (spotty) beans last year, so we skipped them this year. Tell us what you think. We're on a daily (every other day, really) patrol for bean beetles and potato beetles. We missed a hatch and now there are nasty bright yellow larvae all over. Squishing those is only a bit less vindicating that it is gross.

Tomatoes in the greenhouse are growing thick and tall. Cucumbers are desperately needing trellising. Jeremy found a big garter snake in the greenhouse yesterday, hunting grasshoppers.

We made a batch of nocino, using unripe black walnuts from our trees. It's this wildy rich, bright green mixture, very faerie tale *Magic Potion*. A curious thing to do. We'll get to see how it works in another 6 months.

We also got started on harveting the chokecherries from trees on the farm. This is a pleasant activity for mid-afternoon: tuck into the shade of a chokecherry tree and pick, pick, pick.

About Bertha Mason - looks like we don't have a queen afterall. The hive is not as productive as it should be (building comb, collecting nectar, storing honey) and we noticed multiple eggs in cells of their comb. This behavior is indicative of a laying worker bee. Things don't look too good for Bertha Mason.



tomatillo, we saved these seed from last year's crop!



yellow crook neck squash



basil and tomatoes

A bit about companion planting...

In order to grow a sufficient amount of diverse produce on such a small piece of ground, we are employing a technique called intercropping. Intercropping is growing two or more crop types in close proximity. We do this to maximize spatial efficiency, but also because the plants sometimes respond well to each other. We are doing a lot of companion planting, where crops are intentionally planted together because they are in some way beneficial to each other. For example, in the front field, there are alternating rows of beans and potatoes. The beans help deter the Colorado potato beetle and the potatoes do the same for the Mexican bean beetle. We are finding that the beans are the stronger part of this partnership. In the back field, all of the tomato rows have a line of basil right along side and the snap peas are trellised with carrots growing just below. These are examples of a rough rule: if the plants taste good together, they probably grow together nicely. Sometimes we plant not just for the benefit of the plants, but for timing or other reasons that help us out in some way. Parsnips take a long time (3-4 weeks) to germinate and require even moisture. We finally succeeded with them this year by planting rows of radishes on both sides of the parsnips (all direct-seeded). The quick growing radishes get harvested right after the parsnips are up and we get two crops from the same space. Come by and check out the companion planting on Sunday afternoon (August 11th) during our Tea Party/Weeding Party, from 3-5pm. We'll have several different types of farm-grown herbal iced teas and snacks to share!

Here is a recipe for **Farmer Cheese Fritata** from our good friend Regina (check out her incredible food blog here www.reginarae.com). We haven't found farmer cheese available in Spearfish, but it's easy to make at home, or you can just use ricotta. We suggest trying out Regina's recipe using chard and zucchini. (Thanks Regina!)

Ingredients:

1 small onion, sliced	4 eggs
1 tablespoon olive oil or butter	1/4 cup pesto*
3 cloves garlic, roughly chopped	1/3 cup farmer cheese
1 cup roasted vegetables (eggplant, bell pepper, red onion, zucchini, winter squash, etc.)	1/4 cup sharp cheddar/parmesan, shredded pepper, to taste

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a cast iron pan (or alternative cooking/baking, oven-safe receptacle) heat olive oil or butter on medium-heat. Add onions and cook for 5-7 minutes, until wilted and beginning to caramelize. Add roasted vegetables and cook until heated through, another minute or two.
2. Meanwhile, whisk eggs, pepper and pesto. Remove cast iron from heat, add egg mixture and dollop with farmer cheese. Sprinkle with cheddar or Parmesan and finish cooking in the oven. Bake until set, between 15 and 20 minutes. In the last minute of cooking, place under the broiler for 30-45 seconds to lightly brown the top of the cheese.
3. Let sit for at least five minutes before serving. Serve hot, warm or cold. Top with salsa or avocados and fresh tomato wedges.

And here's a **pesto** recipe from the clever Moosewood folks:

3 cups fresh basil leaves	Puree everything together in a blender or a food processor - until it becomes a uniform paste, OR use a mortar and pestle, and coarse salt to pound the basil and garlic together. Stir in remaining ingredients. Store in a tightly-lidded jar.
3-4 healthy cloves of garlic	
1/4-1/2 tsp salt	
3/4 cup freshly grated parmesan	
1/2 cup pulverized nuts (walnuts, pine nuts, sunflower seeds...)	
1/2 cup olive oil	
1/2 cup fresh parsley (optional)	bon appétit, Trish and Jeremy
freshly ground black pepper (optional)	