



Down on the Farm Notes: October 21st, 2008

Hi everyone,

Hope you are enjoying the beautiful fall weather. It is so crazy to be so warm after our cold front that moved through. But it sure is fall now. Mmm, the cold weather hits and I just want to stay in the kitchen. I love coming in from the cold weather outside with nice rosy cheeks and a cold nose and the good smells of a steamy pot of soup on the stove meet you. Hearty soups, hearty meals—that is what comes with the cold weather.

We have given you some hearty things to cook. Jerusalem artichokes are your new veggie for the week. They are not related to an artichoke or Jerusalem. They are what you would call a sun choke, a root tuber of a wild sunflower native to the U.S. It is mild, sweet, and nutlike in flavor. They are a good source of iron and niacin and surprisingly free of any starch. In fact, a sweetener is manufactured from sun chokes for diabetics. I got this information from one of my favorite cookbooks for CSAs. I've included some recipes for cooking these interesting tubers.

Also this week, you will have another bag of mixed peppers, potatoes, carrots, onions, another Butternut and a Buttercup winter squash. Some of you will receive some lemon balm and some of you will receive tarragon. Both are great when baking chicken and also great in omelets. Remember that we are not overloading you on winter squash. We are stocking you up to carry you through the next few months. That way you will enjoy it a little longer. Keep in a cool dry location and they will last a long time. We have also given you some Nevada apples. They came from the Southern Nevada area, and ALL certified organic. There is a Winesap, a Jonathan, some Red Delicious and the yellow apples are Yellow Delicious. The Yellow Delicious were picked extra ripe and are, consequently, a little on the soft side, so when you have a soft apple you make apple sauce. Peel and quarter the apples. Cover 1/2 with water in a pot. Cook until they mush down with a potato masher. Add sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg...whatever your family likes. I also gave you an upside down cake recipe to try with the apples. Our family loves applesauce, though.

We also have something new that we are trying. As you noticed last week, there was a jar of beautiful jam in the boxes. This past year we received a grant to create some value-added products with our own vegetables and fruits (like berries and cantaloupe and tomatoes). Well, we tried a few things like homemade ketchup and salsa. We are excited about how everything turned out. This week you get to try our ketchup made from our very own Lattin Farm tomatoes and in the future you will be able to taste some of our salsa. Some of our volunteers had the chance to take the first taste later this summer. Everyone gave a thumbs up so we hope you enjoy it. All of our products are made in either John Ault's kitchen right in Reno or in the Lattin Farms kitchen in Fallon. John Ault processes organic jams and jellies and such, and we're really happy to have him on board with us.

Everyone is slowing down on the farm. clearing off the frozen plants and pulling t-tape (our irrigation pipes); time to get the soil ready and worked up for a cover crop for the winter. The deer have done an amazing job this year of cleaning up for us. The quail come in and mingle with the deer. The rabbits come in at night and I am sure the mice have their dens completely filled already.

For those of you who took on canning this past summer, don't you feel like a little

squirrel, with a full den ready for the winter???? What a good feeling. Oh by the way, just a nice little tidbit for you, Rick has a lot of field corn this year from the maze. We hope to grind some so you can enjoy fresh cornmeal. You will love the cornbread the fresh cornmeal makes. He also has a lot of popcorn. Fall is so fun. Look for a pumpkin next week. Happy cooking!!

Tina

Recipes

Cider Roasted Winter Squash

1/4c. apple juice or fresh apple cider
2 tbl. cider vinegar
3 tbl. olive oil
3 tbl. butter, melted
About 4 lbs. of a variety of winter squash (butternut, acorn, etc.)
4 sprigs fresh sage, chopped (or dry sage)
4 sprigs fresh thyme (or dry thyme)
salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400. Whisk together first 4 ingredients in a large bowl. Add squash and remaining ingredients and toss to coat. Place vegetables in a single layer on a shallow baking pan, and roast at 400, turning once, for 50-55 minutes or until tender and light golden brown around the edges. Serve immediately or at room temperature.

Caramel Apple Upside-down Olive Oil Cake

1/2c. butter
1 1/2c. sugar, divided
3 cooking apples, peeled and quartered
5 eggs, separated
3/4c. olive oil
2 tsp. vanilla extract
1c. cake flour (or sifted regular flour)
1/2 tsp. salt

Melt butter over low heat in a 10" (2"deep) cast iron skillet. If you don't have a skillet, a glass 9x13 will work. Melt in a 350 oven. Stir in 3/4c. sugar, combining well. Arrange apple quarters in a circular pattern around the outside of the skillet, and fill in the center with additional quarters. Increase heat to medium, and cook, without stirring, 15-20 minutes or until sugar turns golden.

Beat egg yolks and 1/2c. sugar in a large bowl. Beat at high speed for about 3 minutes or until thick and pale. Reduce speed to medium, and slowly add olive oil and vanilla until well combined. Remove from mixer, and stir in flour just to combine.

Place egg whites and 1/2 tsp. salt in a separate large bowl and beat at medium speed until frothy. Add remaining 1/4c. sugar, and continue beating just until soft peaks form.

Fold one-third of the egg whites gently into the yolk mixture. Fold in remaining whites, being careful not to over mix. Pour batter into skillet with apples. Bake at 350 for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean.

Cool cake about 5 minutes, then run a knife around edges to loosen. Invert onto a large platter and, if desired, sprinkle 1/4tsp. salt over the apples and caramel. Serve warm with whipped cream or ice cream.

Toasty Pumpkin/Winter Squash Waffles

1c. flour
1 tbl. brown sugar
1 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
1 egg, beaten
1 1/4c. milk
2/3c. pumpkin or winter squash puree
4 1/2 tsp. melted butter
1/3c. chopped toasted pecans

In a large bowl, combine the flour, brown sugar, baking powder and salt.

Whisk the egg, milk, pumpkin and butter; stir into dry ingredients until blended. Fold in pecans. Bake in a preheated waffle iron.

Maple Cranberry Butter

1/2c. fresh or frozen cranberries
1/4c. maple syrup
1c. butter, softened

In a small saucepan, combine cranberries and syrup. Cook over medium heat until berries pop, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a small mixing bowl; cool slightly. Beat in butter until blended. Serve waffles with maple cranberry butter and syrup if desired. Refrigerate or freeze leftover butter.

Carrots and Pearl Onions

3c. water
1/2lb. fresh pearl onions, peeled
1 tbl. butter
1 1/2 tsp. sugar, divided
1 lb. carrots, cut into 1/4" slices
6 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
1/2c. chicken broth
1 bay leaf
1 tsp. dried thyme
1/4 tsp. salt and pepper

In a large saucepan, bring water to a boil. Add pearl onions; boil for 3 minutes. Drain and rinse in cold water; peel. In the same pan, cook onions in butter and 3/4 tsp. sugar over medium heat until golden brown, stirring frequently.

Add the carrots, bacon, broth, bay leaf, thyme, salt and pepper and remaining sugar. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 8–10 minutes or until carrots are tender. Uncover; return to a boil. Cook until liquid is reduced by half. Discard bay leaf. Serve with a slotted spoon.

Root Vegetable Soup with Sausage

1/4lb. bulk Italian sausage
1 butternut squash, peeled and cubed
4 potatoes, peeled and cubed
3 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
1 bunch carrots, sliced
1 turnip, diced, rutabaga, peeled and cubed (any winter root veggie)
10c. water
2 cans (14 1/2oz cans) vegetable broth
2 tbl. sugar
1 1/2tsp. salt
1 tsp. ground ginger (optional)
1/8 tsp. pepper
1/4c. whipping cream

Crumble sausage into a large kettle. Cook over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in the vegetables, water, broth, sugar and seasonings; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 35–40 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Cool slightly. In a blender, process soup in batches until smooth. Return to the pan; whisk in cream. Heat through (do not boil).

Glazed Sun Chokes

1lb. sun chokes
1 tsp. lemon juice
1 large onion, chopped
3 tbl. butter
1/2c. pecans
1 tbl. honey

Cut sun chokes into 1/2" pieces and place into bowl of water mixed with lemon juice. Bring a saucepan of water to boil; add sun chokes and onions; cook 7 minutes, drain, then stir fry them in butter, stirring in pecans and honey. Cook until onions begin to brown.

Roasted Jerusalem Artichokes

Scrub chokes and remove gritty dirt. Place chokes in a roasting pan, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Toss until well coated. Roast until tender, 20-30 minutes or until tender. Can add onions or garlic and whatever herb you prefer

Garlicky Sun Choke Salad with Feta

2 1/2c. thinly sliced sun chokes
1/2c. chopped onion
2-3 tsp. minced garlic
1/4c. olive oil
1/3c. cider vinegar
1 1/2 tbl. dried dill weed
1 1/2tsp. tarragon (fresh or dried)
1/2 tsp. salt

Combine the sun chokes, onion, and garlic in a bowl. Add the oil, vinegar, dill, tarragon, and salt and pepper to taste. Toss well. Marinate in the refrigerator for 8-12 hours, stirring occasionally. When ready to serve, garnish with sliced radish and crumbled feta cheese.