



Down on the Farm Notes: December 8th, 2009

Hi everyone,

Well winter is here! It has been very cold. In fact it is so cold it is giving our hoop houses a real test. Those of us that have greens outside and covered with row cover lost them the last few nights. We are hoping that all the greens in the hoop houses will make it. We will begin picking tomorrow and won't know how everything turned out until then. The temperatures are not supposed to get above freezing. It will be interesting picking. We will hope for the best. So everything I tell you that you are receiving in the box will hopefully come to be. But there may be a few changes. If you don't get something that I said you were then that means the frost got it first!!

It is beginning to look a lot like Christmas. I am beginning to get into the Christmas spirit now. Like all of you, there are Christmas traditions that our family enjoys every year. As our kids grew up and left home, we have changed some of these or "altered" them. But it is still such a special time of the year. I hope you are enjoying it. Slow the pace down and make sure you are enjoying the moment. Don't rush it!

Here is what you'll find in the Basket:

- * Potatoes
- * Carrots
- * Greens (hopefully they will have made it through the frost)
- * Winter Squash (Some of you will get Delicata (skinny yellow colored), Spaghetti (oblong yellow), Acorn, or Dumpling.
- * Pie pumpkin (May be the last...do I hear a sigh of relief??)
- * Onions
- * Jerusalem Artichokes (Sun chokes)
Make sure you check out the recipes to find out how to use them.
- * Mushrooms (some of you this week, rest of you next week)
- * Tomatoes (yes, a surprise. Nevada's Own kept tomatoes going in their greenhouse. Use them for color. He didn't have very many! Again, some of you this week and the rest next week)
- * Rosemary or Thyme (also depends on how hard the frost was on them)
- * Hazelnuts (You may receive hazelnuts this week or next week)

We are truly keeping our fingers crossed with the greens and the cold temperatures. As you have noticed we have been short all season. Something we plan to change for next year. A few crop failures taught us that we need to have everyone plant greens. Sorry for the disappointment! Next year I hope to hear you groaning over too many greens. Wouldn't that be great?? !!!!

If you receive a spaghetti squash, it truly cooks up like spaghetti. You can pour pasta sauce over it and sprinkle cheese on top just like you would spaghetti--except the squash is baked in the oven first. Then take a fork and scrape out the pieces of spaghetti.

Sun chokes are also great in soups and stews. Dan at Nevada's Own has been excited about the mushrooms. They keep coming. I like the tender part of the mushrooms in with eggs or salad. The stockier part of the mushroom is great cut up and cooked in a vegetable broth. Imparts a great flavor. Enjoy them! When the basket is finished, you can still find them at the Great Basin Co-Op in Reno.

The tomatoes are kind of a novelty. Dan needs to keep his heater going anyway because of other plants he is starting at

this time of the year and crazy enough, we don't have greens but we have tomatoes. So enjoy!

If you get hazelnuts this week, use them as you would any other nut. They are a raw nut right now. You can lightly toast them or roast them in the oven. They are excellent in cookies. So keep this in mind during your holiday baking. Great toasted on salads or anything you want to give some crunch.

Don't forget the Corn Days at Lattin Farms in Fallon this Saturday. This is a great time to take advantage of free chicken feed or experience the novelty of picking corn and coming into the barn and using their old fashioned corn grinders. Dress warm because it looks like it is going to be a nice brisk winter day. Last year we had snow and everyone still had a great time!! Bring a lunch and hope to see you there!

Enjoy the pumpkin bread pudding recipe. It was so good that I decided it might take the place of pumpkin pie for awhile. Oh, and for just this one time, buy half-and-half. Don't skimp. It is really, really good!!! Next week is our last delivery. And did you know that in just a little over a week after that, it is Christmas?? Have a good week!

Tina

Recipes

Onion, Potato, and Goat Cheese Pizza

7 oz. potatoes
1 tsp. olive oil
1 onion, cut into 1/2" thick slices
A pizza crust (frozen or homemade)
2 tbl. cornmeal
1 c. mozzarella cheese
3/4c. crumbled goat cheese (optional) or feta or blue cheese
1 clove garlic, minced
1 1/2tsp. fresh thyme leaves (or dried)

Cook potatoes in boiling water until tender; drain. Cool slightly; cut potatoes crosswise into 1/4" slices. Heat olive oil in a skillet. Add onion to pan, and sauté until tender.

Roll pizza dough out on a lightly floured surface to a 14x10" rectangle. Sprinkle cornmeal over a large baking sheet; place dough on baking sheet. Sprinkle mozzarella evenly over dough. Arrange potatoes and onion over mozzarella; top evenly with goat cheese and garlic.

Bake in lower third of oven at 450 for 15 minutes or until browned. Sprinkle with thyme; cut and serve.

Potato-Apple Latkes

2c. shredded potatoes
2c. shredded apples
1 1/2 tsp. salt, divided
1/2 tsp. black pepper
About 1/2c. flour
6tbl. oil, divided
1 tsp. sugar

Combine potatoes, apples, and 1 tsp. salt in a colander. Let stand 20 minutes, pressing occasionally with the back of a spoon until barely moist.

Combine potato mixture, remaining 1/2 tsp. salt, and pepper in a large bowl. Add flour to potato mixture; toss well to combine.

Heat a skillet over medium high heat. Add 1 1/2tbl. oil to pan, swirling to coat. Add potato mixture in 1/3 cupfuls to pan to form 4 latkes; flatten slightly. Cook 6 minutes on each side or until golden brown.

Remove latkes from pan; keep warm. Repeat procedure 3 more times with remaining oil and potato mixture. Sprinkle latkes evenly with sugar.

Spiced Pumpkin Butter

4c. pumpkin puree
1 1/4c. pure maple syrup
1/2c. apple juice
2 tbl. lemon juice
2 tsp. ground ginger
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1/4 tsp. salt
chopped hazelnuts (optional)

In 5 qt. Dutch oven combine all ingredients except nuts. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Cook, uncovered, over medium heat, stirring frequently, 25 minutes or until thick. (If mixture spatters, reduce heat to medium-low).

Remove from heat; cool.

Ladle into jars or freezer containers, leaving 1/2" headspace. Cover; store in refrigerator up to 1 week or freezer up to 6 months. To serve, top with nuts.

Sautéed Jerusalem Artichokes (sun chokes)

2 tbl. olive oil
2 shallots, or onions, diced
1 1/2lb. Jerusalem artichokes, scrubbed and sliced 1/4" thick.

Salt and pepper
1/2 lemon

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add the shallots and Jerusalem artichokes and sauté until the Jerusalem artichokes are crispy on the outside and soft on the inside, 5-8 minutes.

Season to taste with the salt and pepper. Squeeze the lemon over the artichokes and serve hot.

Pumpkin Pancakes

1 1/2c. flour
1/4c. sugar
3/4 tsp. salt
1 tsp. nutmeg
1 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
2 1/2 tsp. baking powder
3 tbl oil
2 eggs
2/3c. pumpkin puree
1 c. milk

Mix all of dry ingredients together. Mix wet ingredients together in a separate bowl. Combine together and mix.

Makes about 12 pancakes.

Caramel-Pecan-Pumpkin Bread Pudding

Bread Pudding:

4 eggs
1 5oz. pumpkin
1 1/2c. milk
1c. half-and-half
1c. sugar
1 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
1/2 tsp. vanilla
1 12oz. loaf French bread, cut into 1" pieces (about 10 cups)

Caramel-Pecan Sauce"

1c. pecans, chopped
1c. brown sugar
1/2c. butter
1 tbl. light corn syrup
1 tsp. vanilla

To prepare bread pudding, whisk together eggs and next 8 ingredients in a large bowl until well blended. Add bread pieces, stirring to thoroughly coat. Cover with plastic wrap, and chill 8-24 hours. (it really is better if left overnight)

Preheat oven to 350. Spoon bread mixture into 11 (6oz.) lightly greased ramekins. Place on an aluminum foil-lined jelly roll pan. Bake at 350 for 50 minutes, shielding with foil after 30 minutes.

During last 15 minutes of baking, prepare caramel sauce. Heat a skillet and lightly toast pecans. Cook brown sugar, butter and corn syrup in a small saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, 3-4 minutes or until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla and pecans.

Remove bread pudding from oven and drizzle with sauce. Bake 5 minutes more or until sauce is thoroughly heated and begins to bubble.

Note: I don't own Ramekin dishes so we put the bread mixture in a greased 9x13 baking dish. Cover with aluminum foil. Bake covered, at 350 for 35 minutes. Uncover and bake 15 minutes. Proceed with the rest of the same steps of the recipe.

Lemon and Herb Roasted Jerusalem Artichokes

2lbs. Jerusalem artichokes
3 tbl. olive oil
dried basil
2 cloves garlic
zest of 1/2 lemon
salt

Preheat oven to 500. Lightly grease a large sheet pan with olive oil. Scrub the Jerusalem artichokes well. Cut off the

irregular knobs to make reasonably regular shapes. Cut the artichokes into 1" pieces.

Combine the artichokes with the oil in a large bowl and toss to coat. Arrange in a single layer in the prepared pan. Roast for about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally.

While the artichokes roast, combine the basil, garlic, and lemon zest in a mini food processor or on your cutting board and finely chop. Sprinkle the lemon-herb mixture over the artichokes and continue to roast for about 5 minutes. The artichokes should be well browned and tender, and the garlic should be fragrant but not burned.

Transfer the chokes to a serving bowl or platter. Sprinkle with salt and serve at once.

Winter Squash Salad with Citrus Dressing

1 spaghetti squash or other winter squash
3 tbl. oil
2 tbl. fresh lime juice
2 tbl. fresh orange juice
1 tbl. fresh lemon juice
1/2 tsp. fresh lime zest
salt and pepper
1 carrot, grated
1 c. toasted almonds or hazelnuts
1/3c. chopped onion
2 tbl. chopped fresh cilantro (optional)
2 tbl. chopped mint (optional)

Bake or boil squash until tender. Let cool.

Meanwhile, combine the oil, lime juice, orange juice, lemon juice, and lime zest in a small bowl. Whisk well. Season with salt and pepper.

When the squash is cool enough to handle, scrape out the strands of squash (if using a spaghetti) or chop winter squash meat into small cubes. Add the carrot, nuts, onion, cilantro, and mint, and toss. Pour the dressing over the salad and toss well.

Taste and adjust the seasoning. Let the salad stand for at least 30 minutes to allow the flavors to blend. Serve at room temp.