



Down on the Farm Notes: August 4th & 6th, 2009

Hi everybody,

This is the best time of the year if you love to cook and eat fresh produce and fruit. Abundance is here!

Your little backyard garden is finally giving you wonderful things to eat. You stroll through the farmers' markets and the farmer's tables are displayed with beautiful colors and flavors of so many wonderful fruits and vegetables. The farmers are putting many hours into harvesting now. This is a wonderful time of the year.

I hear we are suppose to cool off some this coming week. Share this wonderful season with friends and family. Keep your menu simple. There is no better time than now to entertain and share a meal with someone.

Here's what you will find in the basket this week:

- * Zucchini
- * Corn
- * Melons
- * Basil
- * Onion
- * Tomatoes

- * Peppers
- * Parsley
- * Watermelon
- * Eggplant (We are hoping! Farmer Rick's eggplants are just starting to come on. He will try hard to find enough for everyone. If not we will stagger and next Thursday will receive eggplant.)

Here's what you'll find in the fruit share:

- * Pluots and plums
- * White peaches
- * Melons (certified organic)
- * Grapes

Rick just told me his heirloom tomatoes are also beginning to ripen. Most of these are a later tomato. Have you heard of the ugly tomato variety that was created a few years ago? Well, Rick claims his heirlooms this year are ugly!! What he means is that they come in all kinds of shapes and twists and bulges. Mmmm, it doesn't matter what they look like—they all taste so good with a little olive oil, basil, and fresh mozzarella. Yum!!

Rick also has some wonderful news. We maybe shouldn't "toot our horn" too loud because weather can come in and change things over night, but he is very excited about his raspberry crop that is going to be ready here pretty soon. He says he hasn't had this beautiful of a crop for a long time. Doesn't that sound good!!! Start thinking of it now, but if Rick's raspberries do turn out the way he is hoping, he will have flats of raspberries for making jam or freezing. I just can't encourage you enough to give it a try. A little sugar, not much time and a few jars will give you an incredible experience and a taste that you will absolutely fall in love with. (Can you tell raspberry jam is one of my favorites? I can actually eat that and apricot jam with a spoon. Skip the bread. Or add bread....ice cream, cobbler, cereal, biscuits on a cold winter night, cookies.... ok...you have the picture.)

An important note: If you are making payments to the Basket, please mail them to **PO Box 5358 Fallon NV 89406.**

Have a great week. Happy cooking!

Tina

Recipes

Summer Vegetable Sauté with Sausage

4 small zucchini and summer squash, sliced
3 tbl. olive oil
1 lb. sausage
1 onion, halved and slivered
1-2 peppers, julienned
2 cloves garlic, minced
kernels of corn cut from 2 ears of corn
2 ripe tomatoes, seeded and diced
1/4c. fresh basil
1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper
1 tbl. balsamic vinegar

Heat 1 tbl. of oil in a large skillet. Add the sausage and sauté, stirring and breaking up the meat with your spoon, until the meat is thoroughly cooked and no pink shows, about 8 minutes. Remove the skillet from the heat. Remove sausage with a slotted spoon, set aside, and keep warm.

Return the skillet to the stove, add 1 tbl. of the oil, and heat over medium heat. Add the summer squash and zucchini. Sauté for about 3 minutes. Add garlic and pepper to taste. Continue to sauté until the squash are tender crisp, 2 minutes longer.

(recipe continues on the following page)

Return the sausage and vegetables to the skillet. Add the corn and tomatoes. Cook until the tomatoes are heated through, about 5 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste, the basil, red pepper flakes, if using, and vinegar. Taste and adjust the seasonings. Serve hot.

Ziti with Ratatouille

1/2c. olive oil
1 small yellow onion, cut into 1/2" dice
8 large cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 small eggplant, cut into cubes (if no eggplant, replace with summer squash)
salt and pepper
2 different colored peppers, diced
1 lb. ziti (or rigatoni pasta)
3 zucchini cut into quarter moon pieces
6 tomatoes, chopped
3/4c. chopped fresh parsley
1/2c. chopped fresh basil
Parmesan cheese for garnish

Heat 2 tbl. of olive oil in a skillet. Add the onion and cook, stirring frequently, until soft, about 10 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until the onion is golden and the garlic fragrant, about 3 minutes longer. Transfer the onion mixture to a large bowl, being careful to remove all the garlic from the skillet.

Add 4 tbl. olive oil to skillet. When hot, add the eggplant. Season in with salt and pepper. Cook the eggplant until just soft, about 10 minutes. (If you don't care for eggplant, or don't have eggplant, replace with summer squash). Transfer to the bowl with the onion.

Meanwhile, cook pasta. Add the remaining 1 tbl. olive oil to the skillet and cook zucchini. When finished cooking, add to rest of veggies. Add the tomatoes, parsley, basil, and 1/2 tsp. each of salt and pepper to the skillet. Increase the heat. Add the vegetables and any liquid in the bowl to the tomato mixture and cook until warmed through. Drain the ziti, combine with veggies, and top with freshly grated parmesan.

Cantaloupe Smoothie

1/2 ripe cantaloupe, peeled, seeded, cut into chunks
1 c. milk
1 c. yogurt
1 c. crushed ice
2 tbl. sugar or honey

Combine ingredients in a blender until smooth. Makes about 4c