



Down on the Farm Notes: September 9th & 11th, 2008

Hi everyone,

Well, fall was here for a few days but the hot days are now back. However, the nights are cooling off and the plants are showing signs of fall approaching. When daylight begins to wane, the plants know it is time to surge forward because they don't have much longer to get seed made. Leaves are beginning to turn and everything is ripening. The picking schedule has been tough up to now, but once this harvest mode comes in, the schedule becomes even more intense.

Even though the work load increases, it is still a special time of the year. Harvest!!! We've worked hard all summer at planting, weeding, watering, and nurturing a bed of vegetables, and now it is time to harvest. It is a natural rhythm, the culmination of a successful cycle. Our bodies are wearing down from the summer harvesting, but there is a little renewed energy to bring the final harvest in this next month.

This is my favorite time of the year in the garden! There is so much to harvest, and so many hours are put into picking and bringing it all in. We're side by side with the workers, picking, boxing, hauling,

talking, joking, and now even singing can be heard among the rust colored rows of turning leaves and maturing weeds. A good feeling of camaraderie and happiness permeates our group. We the farmers are thankful for our dedicated workers putting in long days of back breaking work. They are learning each year how the basket works and getting more excited as they understand the concept of the project and that their efforts are feeding over 300 families. It gives them a special feeling of gratification to be part of this.

Many of our workers are 3rd generation employees. They become part of our family. Their kids and grandkids all work on the farm. There is a special bond between the "patrone" and the people working. There is a special respect and thankfulness between us. We are thankful for their unwavering loyalty and all of their hard work. They love working in the soil, growing; they are farmers deep down. They also have a feeling of gratitude to be allowed to work on the farm and be part of the growing and harvesting and to be able to raise their children in this wholesome way. Our workers are such incredibly sincere and

down-to-earth people. Working side by side with each other, harvesting, sharing, is about the best experience we enjoy in our line of work. We become family. And now, you are a part of this family because of your support for all of our hard work and this way of life that is going on day to day on our local small farms. Thank you! May your lives as well be blessed with friends of loyalty and integrity!

What is in the box this week. We have tomatoes, eggplant, the "Z" word, melons, carrots, an onion, and peppers. The verdict is still out on the corn. We have to wait and see if we have enough from the farm in Smith Valley. (This is all organically grown corn.) We won't know until I have already finished this letter if there will be enough.

What you can expect next week. we will offer corn on the side. It will be at each pick up location and will be in a separate box. IT IS CONVENTIONALLY GROWN CORN from Rick. We want to make sure you understand that. If some of you don't mind, we will have it available for you to grab from the box. So look for the corn. If there isn't any that just means it wasn't ready to pick, but keep watch for it in the future. We decided to at least offer it to those of you who don't mind. Just remember, though, for those of you who don't want conventionally grown corn, that is why we didn't put it in the box.

I actually spent this weekend freezing corn. We also tried drying it and it turned out great—easy to do. To freeze corn, place ears in boiling water. Allow water to begin boiling again and then cook for just 3 minutes. Take out of boiling water and cool in sink with running water until you have removed the intense heat. Then allow to cool in water which ice has been added to make ice cold water. It is important to entirely cool the corn. After it is cooled, about 15 to 30 min., drain corn. Cut corn from cob, gather up cut corn and place in a plastic Ziploc. Freeze. We keep it all winter and it tastes just like fresh. Great to add to soups and stews. If you are interested, now is the time to order corn from Rick. It is his conventionally grown corn, but he will have lots of it in the next couple of weeks. Take advantage of it. (by the way, it still has some worm damage in it...easily cut off though)

Rick will also continue to offer canning tomatoes. Quite a few of you have taken advantage of this. Let Rick know if you want lugs of tomatoes.

PLEASE READ: Pauline is gone this week. She needed to leave unexpectedly for Chile. Her father is dying and she went to be with him, so she will not be responding to emails or returning phone calls. She is out of the country. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause especially if we have problems to deal with while she is gone. Please have patience, though, and

understand that Pauline will get in touch with you right after she gets home. Thank you for being understanding through this difficult time for Pauline.

Also, a reminder to all of you who subscribed to the Buckaroo Bouquet: this is your last week to receive bouquets. Can you believe the season is already over? Actually, it ended just at the right time. Carol received a killing frost in Dayton last week which is totally unheard of for this early in the season. She has performed a miracle for the last delivery. The sad thing about these killing frosts is that it freezes in the space of 1 night and then gets back to 95 degree days that are great for growing. It is so frustrating and sad. But that is what we have to work with here in Nevada. Don't forget to sign up for flowers next year if you enjoyed them this summer.

Hope all of you have a good week. Happy cooking!!

Recipes

Poulet Nicoise

(taken from the William Sonoma Fall Catalogue)

1 chicken (cut into individual pieces)
salt and pepper to taste
1/4c. olive oil
1 onion, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 squash, quartered and sliced into thick chunks
1/4c. dry white wine
3 tbl. chopped fresh parsley
2 tsp. tarragon
5 small tomatoes, seeded and quartered
1/4c. black olives, pitted
1 1/4c. chicken stock

Season chicken with salt and pepper. In a 5 1/2qt Dutch oven over medium heat, warm oil. Add chicken; brown on all sides, about 7 min. Transfer to plate. Reduce heat to medium. Add onion, cook until soft, about 7 min. Add garlic; cook 2 min. more. Add squash, wine, 2 tbl. parsley and 2 tsp. tarragon. Cook, stirring occasionally, until squash are soft but not browned, about 5 min. Return chicken to pan; add tomatoes, olives and stock. Bring to a gentle simmer; reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer until chicken is cooked through, 25-30 min. Stir in 1 tbl. parsley and 1 tsp. tarragon. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

Eggplant and Tomato Stacks

(also taken from the Fall Williams Sonoma catalog)

1/2c. plus 2 tsp. olive oil, plus more as needed
4 yellow onions, diced
salt and freshly ground pepper, to taste
4 cloves garlic, minced
10 fresh basil leaves, cut into thin strips (if you have fresh),
1 tbl. chopped fresh oregano
1/4c. chopped fresh flat leaf parsley (if flat leaf is available)
1 eggplant, sliced into 1/8" thick slices
5 tomatoes, sliced into 1/4" thick slices
4 zucchini (squash) ; halved crosswise, sliced lengthwise 1/8"thick.
1/2c.grated parmesan

Preheat oven to 425.

In sauté pan over medium heat, warm 6tbl. oil. Add onions, salt and pepper; cook until soft, about 10 min. Add garlic, basil, oregano and parsley; cook 2 min. more. Rub bottom and sides of 12" cast iron fry pan with oil. Place 8 eggplant slices in single layer in pan; season with salt. Top each with 1 tsp. onions and 1 tomato slice; season with salt. Top each with 1 tsp. onions and 2 zucchini slices, season with salt. Top each with 1 tsp. onions. Repeat layering 2 more times, ending with zucchini. Drizzle each vegetable stack with 1 tsp. oil.

Bake vegetables 40 minutes. Sprinkle each stack with 1 tbl. cheese; bake 7-10 min. more. Let rest 5 minutes, then serve. Serves 8.

Golden Quinoa Salad

Dressing:

1/3c. plain yogurt
1/4c. olive oil
2 tbl. lime juice
1 tbl. minced fresh ginger
2 tsp. curry powder
1/2 tsp. salt and pepper

Quinoa Salad:

1c. quinoa
2c. water
2 ripe mangoes, peeled, pitted and chopped
1 red or green bell pepper, seeded and cut into bite size strips
1 green onion, thickly sliced
1 chili pepper, seeded and finely chopped
1c. toasted and coarsely chopped walnuts
1/2c. chopped fresh mint (optional)

To prepare dressing, whisk together all dressing ingredients in bowl; cover and chill until ready to serve. To prepare salad, rinse quinoa in a fine mesh strainer; drain well. Bring water to a boil and stir in quinoa, reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 12 min. Remove from heat and let stand for 5 min. Fluff with a fork and chill for at least 30 min. Stir dressing into quinoa, then lightly stir in remaining salad ingredients
Makes 8 side servings.