



The Weekly Weeder

A weekly publication for CSA members

JULY 23, 2008—BOX #7

WWW.RIDGELANDHARVEST.COM

Box Contents & Tips

Turnip Greens— store in a sealed plastic bag

Cabbage— store in crisper drawer

Red Romaine Lettuce— this planting came earlier than expected due to the warm weather the last week

Cilantro—

Lemon Balm a member of the mint family, is considered a "calming" herb. It is used to reduce stress and anxiety, promote sleep, improve appetite, and ease pain and discomfort associated with digestion. Store in plastic bag or freeze.

Broccoli —

Green Garlic - Freshly harvested, so store in a tightly sealed container in the refrigerator to avoid off smells. Not as strong as cured garlic, but a wonderful zing and spice to it.

Scallions—

Radishes - (half shares only)

Swiss Chard—

Coming Soon...

Eggplant, cucumbers, peppers, fennel, tomatoes, sweet onions, lettuces, summer squash and more herbs.

Bulletin Board:

Garlic Harvest Party Saturday July 26th. Weather Permitting. We will provide some refreshments and ask that everyone bring a dish to pass for lunch. We will start digging the garlic at 10:00 am and will work until it is harvested and hung to dry. Please RSVP

Reminder that August 1 post-dated checks will be deposited in one more week. An updated statement will be emailed to each of you individually who this applies to.

It may seem like a long way off, but Winter Shares are still available for sign-up. Our general order form may be printed off the website and submitted with your payment.

News from the Farm

We are now in the transition period between the spring crops and summer crops. We are also feeling the impact of those missed plantings during those wet weeks in June. But the tomatoes are growing nicely as well as the summer squashes, cucumbers and eggplant. We were able to pick a few sungold cherry tomatoes for the crew to snack on for a morning break. It looks like we may have enough for CSA in a couple more weeks. It's wonderful for it to finally feel like summer

This week everything is put on hold to get our garlic harvested and hung to cure. It is hard to walk by that weedy bed of corn or rutabagas, but garlic is one of our largest and most valuable crops. A timely harvest is important for good storage and a disease free seed stock.

Our method for harvesting garlic is to first pull back the straw mulch on the sides of a bed. Then we use a digger which is pulled behind the tractor to undercut and lift the soil— thereby loosening the bulbs. We then pull the garlic, clean off the dirt and rubber band them into bundles of 10. The bundles are then hauled to the tobacco barn. We place 5 bundles on lath which is then hung in the barn between two poles to cure,

The hanging is pretty dangerous. Four to five people are staggered from floor to ceiling on wooden poles. We then hand the garlic filled lath up to upper most person who places them on poles. The danger is not only from falling, but also the poles breaking and crashing down on the people below. The barn is very old and frankly not in the best of condition. We had a near accident on Monday— a support for a series of poles broke and we scrambled to get out of the way to safety. We were able to secure the support and remove most of the weight. Needless to say that, during the harvest party, CSA members will only get to watch the hanging process. It was a little unnerving. Not only because of the potential danger, but to see that in a matter of minutes we could fatally damage our favorite crop as it crashes to the floor below.

Next year we will be building some new drying racks in the hay mow of our animal barn. Which won't require climbing or relaying on 100 year old poles to support the heavy weight of our one of our most cherished cash crops. It will be a good use for the space as we now use round bales and no longer store hay in the barn. It is interesting to see how these old buildings evolve in their use. Anyway lets hope for some good weather on Saturday so you too can get a taste of garlic production. Have a good week— Mat

Recipes

Turnip Greens adapted from a recipe sent in by CSA member Chris Hunter

- 1 bunch turnip greens
- 6 strips Bacon
- 1 Quart chicken stock
- salt to taste

Wash turnip greens in large amounts of cold water. It pays to scrub each leaf with your fingertips, as grit is very annoying!

In the meantime, start frying the bacon until moderately crisp.

Boil 1 qt chicken stock (if available; may use veggie stock) with water, if more needed.

Add turnip greens, and 2-3 T bacon grease to the boiling water. After boiling a while, salt to taste (too soon and the salt from the bacon won't be cooked in yet, and you could over salt). Don't be overly generous on the salt too quickly. When greens are cooked, drain the liquid away in a colander and serve hot.

Lemon Balm Tea

2 tablespoons of fresh leaves for each cup of boiling water

(or make sun tea by placing herbs and cool water in covered jar in the sun for a few hours) Strain add honey.

Ridgeland Harvest Swiss Chard and Eggs

- 2 stalks chard
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon butter

Remove leaves from stem. Chop leaves and stem separately. Melt butter in skillet. Sautee copped stems until they are just about tender. Add chopped leaves, continue to sauté until leaves are completely wilted. Add eggs and scramble. For more zest you can also add garlic or scallions at before adding the chard.

Fruited Cabbage Salad

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| 4 cups shredded cabbage | 1 medium red apple, diced |
| 1 medium firm banana, sliced | 1/3 cup chopped pecans |
| 2 tablespoons raisins | 1/2 cup mayonnaise or salad dressing |
| 2 tablespoons milk | 2 tablespoons sugar |
| 1 tablespoon lemon juice | salt to taste |

.In a bowl, combine the first five ingredients; set aside. In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine mayonnaise, milk, sugar, lemon juice and salt if desired; shake well. Pour over cabbage mixture and toss to coat.



Garlic Beds: we planted 8 beds of garlic with about 100 pounds of seed per bed last October. We grow 4 varieties and are about half finished with the harvest



The crew working Monday afternoon on the garlic harvest. With five experienced people we were able to get 2 bed dug in a few hours. We will hang it to cure on Tuesday morning.