

BROOKFIELD FARM SHOP TALK

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September 19, 2009
Distribution Week #16

WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK

Squash Party!

Carnival Squash: This has become a standard early squash for us over the past three seasons. It's a nice taste with the sweetness (and coloring) of delicata and the nuttiness (and shape) of acorn. Use it like any winter squash (see recipe below).

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM

Squash Is In. Wipe the Slate Clean.

Just as expected the sun shone brightly again at the beginning of this week. And we knew again that meant only one thing. Time to bring in the rest of the winter squash.

We clipped the butternut, pie pumpkins, and the sunshine (red kabocha) on Tuesday morning and got the bins ready. By the afternoon we were rolling - tossing squash into the bins as fast as our little hands would let us. One afternoon. All done.

Of course, that can only mean one thing. We have some squash, but not quite as much as we are used to (*We always say that farming is a lot easier when you have no crops!*) We did manage to scrounge about 16,000 lbs of squash from the fields this year. And we consider ourselves lucky after another version of phytopthera wiped out many plantings of squash around the valley. So while we were a little forlorn, missing our 45,000 lbs harvest of 2 years ago, we were glad to put something in the greenhouse, make the bins tidy, close the side walls, prime the heater, and let the frost know that we were ready to see it come. Whenever.

Sure, we still have a few peppers out there to protect, but when the swamp maples started turning red, and the wind started swirling leaves around our heads, we knew it was time to begin the great wind-down. And after a year like this, the idea of heading towards home was comfort indeed.

WHAT'S ON THE WAY

GREEN KALE
RED POTATOES
DAIKON RADISH
CAULIFLOWER

BULK PRODUCE

SWISS CHARD, TOSCANO
KALE, COLLARDS: \$2/LB
CARROTS, BEETS: \$1 / LB

Help Wanted for

Brookfield Farm's Parade Float!

The farm is sponsoring a float in the
Amherst 250th Parade
on Sunday Sept. 27th.

Want to help out?

We are looking for some folks to help paint on
Thursday (4:00 - 5:00pm) or Saturdays (10:00am -
12:00pm) each week until the job is done!
Find us out behind the barn &
stop by to lend a hand!

Carnival Squash Salad

2 med carnival squash
1/2 c olive oil
1/3 c fresh cilantro
6 tbsp orange juice
3 tbsp maple syrup
2 tbsp minced candied ginger
1/2 tsp salt
1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
salad greens (one handful per
serving, washed, dried, lightly
dressed in extra virgin olive oil).

Preheat oven to 375 F. Cut the squash in half and scoop out the seeds. Place the squash cut-sides down on a baking sheet. Bake until tender (30-45min). Cool completely, scoop out the soft flesh, and roughly chop. Place the squash in a bowl and set aside. Combine the olive oil, cilantro, orange juice, maple syrup, ginger, salt, and cayenne in a blender. Blend well. Pour the dressing over the squash and toss gently. Chill for a least 1 hr to allow the flavors to combine. Serve on a bed of lightly dressed greens

This came from "Farmer John's Cookbook" a great seasonal eating guide available at the Farm Shop.

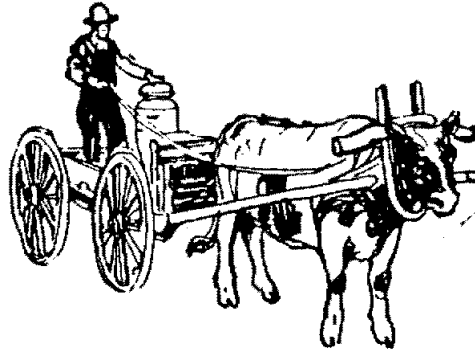
So, we filled the hopper on the spinner with oat and red clover seed. Ripped up some drip lines from the melons. And laid some soil to sleep for the season. We had planted those melons in the greenhouse in April. Laid the plastic in May. Planted on a warm day in early June. Cultivated through July. Prayed for sun in August. And harvested the delicious fruit from an adequate patch in late August. Now it was time to wipe the etch-a-sketch clean. It was a nice drawing. But this year it's good to start starting again.

We hope you enjoy the harvest,
Farmer Dan (for Karen, Abbe, Adan, Kerry, Lisa, and Brigitte)

HOW WE FARM

Cover Cropping

One of the ways we fertilize is through the use of fall sown "cover crops" which feed the soil through biological means. These plants will build up nitrogen, minerals, and organic matter in the soil. This is one way that we can continue to grow vegetables without using chemical fertilizers. In addition these crops hold the soil in place, keeping erosion due to wind and water to a minimum.



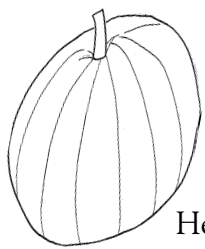
fallow (not planting a crop for human consumption) we give the soil a chance to build nutrients and soil life. By rotating our crops around the fields we ensure that all of our land will be fallow every five years or so. This is one way our soil is replenished and can continue to allow us to harvest 250,000 lbs. of produce from our farm each year.

There's still tons (literally!) of food in the fields - leeks, carrots, potatoes, squash, celery, lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, kale, and collards - but September marks the beginning of winter preparation and the last chance for us to plant our leguminous cover crops to prepare our land for next year.

We spin on the seed (oats, peas, vetch, rye, red clover) with a broadcast spreader and then lightly harrow the seeds, which incorporates the seed into the first few inches of soil.

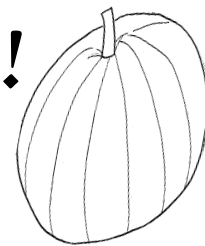
Oats help to bring up minerals from the sub-soil and convert them into a useable form for plants. Oats do not survive the winter (over-winter), but begin to decompose in early-spring, releasing nutrients into the soil which are in a form that crops can use as food in the spring. Vetch (a legume in the bean/pea family) and red clover host a bacteria on its roots (azotobacter) which takes nitrogen from the air and makes it into a form that plants can use. These legumes over-winter nicely, growing back again in the spring when they are plowed or harrowed into the soil releasing all of their usable nitrogen (and other minerals) to feed our crops.

Some areas will be planted to vegetables again next year and some cover crops will be left to grow through the Spring and Summer. When a cover crop is left in the ground to grow the following year it is called a fallow crop. By leaving our land



Pumpkin Harvest Party!

Saturday, Sept 26, 10:30 am



Help us harvest all of our pumpkins from the patch from 10:30 -11am, (don't be late, this goes very quickly with lots of people!)

then pick out your pumpkin and take a wagon ride around the farm.

A fun time for all ages, especially little ones

Please note this year we will be very short on pumpkins as one of our varieties didn't produce any pumpkins at all. Since we will only have half of a crop, we will only be able to give one pumpkin per family.....

When Does Regular Distribution End?

We'll should have beautiful crops and continue the same schedule thru Thanksgiving

When Can I Renew My Share?

In two weeks!

We'll be giving you a renewal form at the farm or sending it in the mail (if we miss you!).