

Newsletter 16th August 2011

Hello CSA members, friends, family and fans,

Rain, rain, still more rain...though I hear that PEI is much wetter than we are and Newfoundland has renamed the month of June to January to reflect their recent weather...so no complaints here. The farm has just said goodbye, with great regrets to our latest WWOOFer, Charlotte who visited from France by way of India and helped us whip the garden into shape...or at least pull enough weeds so that we could find the crops. We pulled a few hundred onions and they are now curing in the barn and I am looking forward to braiding some and stringing others once their stems dry down a bit more. The garlic is all now hanging as it should be and the "meat birds" are enjoying their final days before they meet their maker and my freezer, all in the same hour! This is not at all like Walt Disney who is hoping to meet his maker, post freezer and be able to still thaw thoroughly enough to tell the story to his great grandchildren. The apples are ripening and dropping from the trees and we are learning to avoid them or suffer the fate of Isaac Newton and his perspective...read Goethe's criticism of Newton if you want to know what I mean. The sheep are enjoying their latest pasture under the apple trees and they are helping us by eating all the windfalls while looking amazingly bucolic and picturesque. The sauerkraut crock has been cleaned up and we are waiting for a rainy enough afternoon to start a huge batch of our own lacto-fermented caraway seeded special along with some of my Auntie Chippie's famous (at least in our family) kosher dill pickles. In the meantime, here is what you can expect in your bag this week.

Garlic: You should each have a few heads of lovely fresh hardneck garlic. Again, this garlic is very fresh and so you will find that it is quite different than what you are likely used to with the skins between the cloves still being largely very juicy and not thin and dry and papery. This makes the peeling much easier. Enjoy them raw and chopped finely in a salad dressing or cooked in all of the wonderful ways that garlic can be cooked. If you have never before tried roasted garlic, you may want to just try it with these beauties. You keep the head of garlic intact and then take a knife and trim off a tiny tip off the top of each bulb then drizzle some olive oil on the whole head and wrap the whole thing in tin foil and put it in a 350 oven for about thirty minutes. What emerges is entirely transformed into a sweet buttery delicious treat that can be spread on bread or eaten as just squeeze the softened buttery clove into your mouth and enjoy.

Lettuce: Today we have a selection of Crispino, a sort of iceberg, Jericho and Green Towers in the romaine world, Red Oak Leaf and Green Black Seeded Simpson. The earwigs and slugs are enjoying a wonderful summer with all of our recent rain and while we have enjoyed those few very hot days last week with swims in the river to cool off, the lettuce has paid the price. I still managed to find just enough lettuce for everyone that has not yet either bolted or been so damaged by crawling creatures as to be rendered inedible. The next round of lettuce is on the way so we should be back in the salad mix game in a week or two.

Herbs: Today's bouquet almost sounds like that famous song that chimes off that wonderful combination of herbs...Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Thyme...Our version includes, Parsley, Sage, Summer Savoury and Oregano. So many wonderful and unique flavours.

Fennel: The last of the bulbing fennel for this year. This is so wonderful and crunchy fresh and raw but the sweetness becomes more concentrated when it is roasted and I know that some love to throw it on the BBQ and with all these sunny days promised for later this week...

Cucumbers: Most of the cucumbers have recovered sufficiently from the onslaught of the beetles

to produce beautiful fruit. This week we have a selection of the slender and small Persian, a smallish English Cucumber and a few of the long skinny curling Suvo Long. The parsley is great, as all tabouli lovers know, when paired with the cucumbers and lots of lemon juice and olive oil.

Summer Squash: Every week we are amazed by the array of shapes and colours that greet us in the rows of squash plants. Here's a recipe that will likely be new to many of you and it is a lovely way to use your squash:

<http://southernfood.about.com/od/zucchinirecipes/r/r100605a.htm>

You can substitute the basil in this recipe with the summer savoury for a uniquely Nova Scotian twist on these pancakes.

Celery: This beautiful bright green and leafy celery comes to you from Rumtopf Farm. Everybody knows how to use the stalks, spread with cream cheese or quark and eaten as an appetizer or even spread with peanut butter for the kids in all of us. The leaves are great best used in soups to help create a fuller flavour. You can tie them together as you would a bouquet garni and then fish them out of the soup or stock and have the benefit of that great flavour without the leafy mass.

Blueberries: Also from the wonderful hill top farm of Wanda and Mike Wolter, these highbush blueberries in the paper bag can be frozen for later use (think winter smoothies) or enjoyed straight away...I find them the perfect car snack food and use them to fuel me through my long delivery days.

Flowers: Large size members will find a bouquet resplendent with all of the colours of the rainbow. Sorry to all of the small size members. We will try our best to get you a bouquet in the next week or two...hopefully a few more hands on deck and the liatris and a few other blossoms on the way will make that a more likely prospect.

Happy eating,

Camelia and the Watershed Woolies.