

High Meadow Farm CSA

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Week 14

September 13, 2011

In this week's box:

Basil & Garlic
Broccoli (large shares)
Delicata squash
Eggplant
Melon

Green beans
Sweet bell peppers
Frying peppers
Tomatoes
Red onions

This week's bread is Naan and Sweet & Sassy Nuts

It's hard to believe that Old Jack Frost is on his way south and somewhat surprising that I still want to hold on to the long, hot summer...but I do. After deliveries today we will be covering and protecting what we can- the sweet potatoes in particular, but we won't be able to cover everything. We have been picking all of the tomatoes and peppers that seem reasonably ripe and will continue to do that until it really does frost. Then they will succumb to the cold. The sweet potatoes will be dug in the next few weeks and then they will need to "cure" for a week or so at high temps before we send them out. The sweet potatoes are all dug by hand, something that we're not looking forward too after several weeks of harvesting a prolific melon crop!

This will be the last delivery of **Basil**, but there will also be plenty of it! This plant is the most cold sensitive of all the plants that we grow. The black tips on some of the leaves are caused by the few cold nights that we dipped in to the 40's last week. When the temps get that low, the basil does not react well. We know it won't like the weather this week. The black-tipped leaves can still be used for cooking or simply trimmed out from the bunch. Use your basil to make a nice batch of pesto or dry it for winter, or use it in some nice end of summer recipes for dinner. Both basil and pesto can be frozen to use over the winter. To freeze pesto, just put it in a small plastic or glass container and freeze. To freeze basil without the other ingredients, it is best to blend it with a little olive oil first so that it doesn't turn black (like the frosted tips). Just add enough oil to coat the leaves so that they can be shaped into 1'2" balls or patties and frozen in bags, ready to toss into sauce as you need them. (Some people do just freeze the dry leaves in a zip lock bag to add to cooked dishes for flavor.) To store fresh basil, keep the bunch in the fridge in a loose plastic bag. If the leaves are wet, it will not store very long, so either pat or spin them dry if necessary.

Pesto is a great quick and delicious meal ingredient if you just coat some good, cooked pasta with it. Add onion, cherry tomatoes or diced sweet red pepper if you like. It's also delicious to spread some on a bagel!

Pesto

3 packed cups fresh basil (removed from stems)
2 lg cloves fresh garlic
½ cup pine nuts, walnuts or almonds
¾ cups fresh parmesan
½ - ¾ cup olive oil
Salt to taste

Combine everything in a small food processor or blender and blend until it forms a smooth paste.

Knowing that Naan is the bread of the week, I am looking forward to making a nice simple curry to serve with the bread! Naan is a type of flatbread that is a perfect accompaniment to a good, saucy curry. Curry is simply a type of sauce or gravy that uses a medley of spices and vegetables to create a healthy, flavorful and warming meal, usually served with rice.

The seasonings can be adjusted as you wish and as you get to know the different spices. Curries can often be spicy, but they don't need to be to still have wonderful flavor. This can be controlled by how much hot pepper or cayenne you add.

Curries can be made with meat or completely vegetarian.

This is a basic recipe for curry sauce that is easy enough to make. If you like it, I suggest picking up a curry book from the library and learning more about combining spices and other ingredients to liven up your kitchen. Curries can make a quick and amazing meal in short time or they can be cooked all day.

Basic Curry Sauce

4T ghee or oil
1 lg onion, very finely diced
2-3 cloves garlic
½ inch square piece of fresh, peeled ginger, chopped
2 tsp coriander powder
A pinch of turmeric
1 tsp cumin powder
½ tsp garam masala powder (optional)
¼ - 1 tsp cayenne powder (how hot do you like it?)
3 medium tomatoes, chopped
Salt

Heat oil and add onion. Sauté' for 20 minutes on low. Add garlic and ginger and fry for 1 minute. Add coriander and fry for 1 minute. Add the rest of the spices and sauté 30 seconds. Add meat, if desired and cook until done. Or just add a mixture of veggies and 1 cup water and cook for 10 minutes. Add tomatoes and cook for 5 more. Serve with rice and Naan. Add more water if it seems dry, or try adding a can of coconut milk.

This is just one version of curry- curry has so much diversity!

Green Bean Curry

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 tablespoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon black mustard seeds
5 whole cloves
2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger (2" knob)
1 tablespoon grated fresh garlic (3-4 large cloves)
1 large onion sliced thin
1 tablespoon kosher salt (less if using regular salt)
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon turmeric
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper (or to taste)
1/4 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
1 tomato chopped
1/2 red bell pepper sliced
1 pound fresh green beans trimmed and cut into 1" pieces
1/3 cup vegetable stock (or water)
1/4 cup plain yogurt
minced cilantro for garnish

Heat the oil in a large pan over medium-high heat until hot. Add the cumin seeds, black mustard seeds, and cloves. Stir around until the spices start to make a crackling noise. Add the garlic and ginger and give it a couple stirs. Add the onion, salt and sugar, turn down the heat to medium low and fry stirring periodically until the onions are soft and starting to brown.

Add the cumin, turmeric, cayenne pepper, coconut, tomato, bell pepper green beans and stock and stir to combine. Partially cover with a lid and cook until the green beans are tender (about 15-20 minutes). You want them cooked longer than if you were just blanching them so they absorb the flavor of the curry, but they shouldn't be mushy either.

When the green beans are done, taste for salt and spice and adjust as needed. When the flavor is to your liking, turn off the heat and stir in the yogurt. Top the green bean curry with minced cilantro and serve immediately with some basmati rice or naan.

Bowtie Pasta and Tomatoes

2 T olive oil
1 pkg bowtie pasta (Farfalle)
3 lg portabella mushrooms, chopped
2-3 cloves fresh garlic
2 sweet peppers
1 sweet or red onion, chopped
Crumbled feta cheese
Handful fresh basil, chopped
6 fresh, chopped tomatoes
Fresh grated parmesan cheese
-Cook pasta, meanwhile, sauté mushrooms and garlic in oil. Salt and add generous amount of fresh pepper.
Add to pasta with other ingredients.

Melons

We had a bumper crop of melons this year! Last weekend we harvested the remainder of them and they are being stored in our garage temporarily. There were many melons left at the sites last time we sent them out, so we don't want to send out another delivery of large watermelon, but we have them here if you still want one. This week, though, we are sending out some of the smaller ones. You will receive honeydew, cantaloupe or a small watermelon. Some of the melons may need to ripen on your counter for a few days before eating, especially the cantaloupes; the whitish-green, ball-shaped ones. When they are ripe, you should be able to sniff the fragrance from the bottom end. Honeydew are round and turn yellow or orange when they are ripe. Cantaloupe still looks green under the netted skin. When ripe, they can be eaten as are or cubed and used in a fruit salad, or frozen or you can puree them, add sugar and lemon for a delicious lemonade drink or smoothie! (Watermelon will not ripen off of the vine though.)

There are lots of **paste-type tomatoes** in your boxes. The paste tomatoes are great for cooking, slicing, adding to cold salads or hot dishes. They are large, medium or small (3 different varieties), but they are all more oblong-shaped with rounded or pointy ends. If they are a little green, they will ripen in a few days. **Green Zebra tomatoes** are always green with stripes, but the fruit looks a little yellow-ish when fully ripe. They are delicious used as slicers or added to a tomato platter with the other colored tomatoes.

Enjoy your tomatoes while they are here, fall is upon us and they will be gone soon!

Delicata squash is here again this week. This is not a long-keeper so we are sending it to you to use before we send out the longer-keeping varieties. If you run your peeler over the squash and get most of the outer skin off, then cut, seed and cube it, it is perfect for curries or stir-fries. We will be sending out Butternut, Acorn and Spaghetti squash over the next several weeks!

Eggplant are a great addition to curries! Store eggplant for up to a week in the refrigerator drawer. There are also some great recipes on the blog.

Good luck bikers!

This weekend, High Meadow Farm will be the first rest-stop for the Bike the Barns Ride; MACSAC's biggest fund-raiser for the Partner Shares program. I know that some of our members are signed up to ride and we look forward to seeing you Sunday! Good luck and thanks for the support for Partner-Shares!