

Erehwon Farm

Newsletter Week 10–August 08, 2010

Farm Report

Hello from Erehwon!

Oh, Joy. More rain. Just what we needed. Early this morning we were awakened by a blast of thunder that sounded like it was in the attic. (Sixty something hearts do not need shock treatment and their associated bodies do not adapt well to levitation!) The accompanying rain was not music to our ears either. It isn't just the knee deep mud that is so tiring to work in, although that is bad enough.

Last week Farmer Tim and several of the workers who had been digging potatoes looked like they had been mud wrestling. Farmer T., who maintains that the worst day on the farm is better than the best day in the office, claims that the heat, humidity, and mosquitoes don't bother him once he gets wet and muddy. All were definitely an issue last Wednesday, and Grandma Beth was starting to think longingly of her days in the office. Fortunately, Thursday and Friday were cooler and less humid, offering everyone some measure of relief, however temporary it might be.

The rain has been a factor in other ways, as well. For years, Farmer Tim has been following the practice of sowing seeds a day or two before rain is predicted, knowing



Pepper plants with water wilt.

that a gentle rain is exactly what seeds need to germinate quickly. Unfortunately, this year that practice has backfired. We have lost at least ten beds of seeds that were washed away completely in a sudden downpour, and several others did germinate, but not well.

Newsletter Contents

Farm Report	pg. 1
At the Farm This Week	pg. 1
Events	pg. 2
City of Chicago Hosts Carbon Nation	pg. 2

Recipe section

Butternut Squash	pg. 3
Summer Potato Salad	pg. 3
Mediterranean Potatoes	pg. 3
Vichyssoise	pg. 3
Cucumber Potato Soup	pg. 4
Cold Cucumber Soup	pg. 4

We are now trying to plant when no rain is coming, but that has also proven to be futile.

The rain is also causing some problems with mature plants. A lot of our pepper plants have gotten water wilt from too much water. Under soggy soil conditions, roots use up available supplies of gaseous soil oxygen, which is replaced by toxic levels of carbon dioxide. Roots can't survive without oxygen, and extended periods without this essential element lead to plant death. Other plants that may be susceptible to water wilt are tomatoes and beans. Speaking of tomatoes—it looks like the big ones are starting to ripen more quickly, so instead of getting 10 or 12 a week, we may have enough to give to everyone this week. Keep your fingers crossed!

Meanwhile, we are continuing the cleanup of the farm, getting rid of a lot of the junk that has accumulated over the years and organizing the tools, seeds, and supplies. This should help streamline the work at the farm as we prepare for our summer help to head back to school in the next weeks. Any subscribers who find themselves with free time on their hands when the little ones head off to school would be welcome as volunteers during September and October.

At the Farm This Week

This week's produce:

Lettuce, cherry tomatoes, scallions, peppers, chard, kale, beans, potatoes, cucumbers, summer squash, onions, and maybe some big tomatoes. Also, you might get an unripe winter squash. They got picked last week by mistake and can be cooked as if they were ripe, but the color and flavor won't be nearly as intense as they would be ripe. (Don't fear—there are plenty more on the plants to ripen for fall.)

Special this week:

A very large bag of summer squash for the asking. Delivery subscribers e-mail me by 9:00 am Tuesday morning. Farm subscribers—just pick them out when you come.

Pick Your Own:

-Squash blossoms: H4-5 (look for the small wooden stakes with numbers on the east or south ends of beds and see the farm map at the pick up station for areas)
-S1: herbs
-S8-10: dill.
-Section B: Raspberries, about \$4.50 a pound from Belles Berries. Check for availability.

Deals:

-Cherry tomatoes and beans: You pick and give half to Farmer Tim.
-Potato harvesting: You dig and keep 1/4. Training required.

Foraging:

-Purslane: a tasty and highly nutritious weed growing in many of

Events

Every Thursday all summer long
[Geneva Green Market](#)
Every Saturday all summer long
[Community Farmer's Market at Inglewood Pantry](#), 9:00-1:00
Saturdays starting June 26
[Batavia Farmer's Market](#)

our rows

Note: Delivery customers are welcome to come to the farm any time for the above activities. Call 630-485-9963 or 630-485-9964 to make sure someone will be there.

Farm Pick-up Times

Wednesday 4:00-6:30

Friday 2:30-5:30

Delivery Times (Tuesday)

1:00-1:30 Van leaves farm

1:45-2:15 Drop off at Wheaton

2:15-2:30 Drop off at Bartlett

2:30-2:45 Drop off at Elgin

City of Chicago Hosts Carbon Nation

The City of Chicago hosts Carbon Nation Celebration with the Chicago Premiere of Carbon Nation on **Tuesday, August 10th at the spectacular Jay Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park. The event is FREE to the Public. Live entertainment at 7PM and screening at 8PM.** Please

come. Bring friends. Bring friends of your friends!

Carbon Nation is a positive, solutions-based, non-preachy, nonpartisan, big tent film about tackling climate change while boosting the economy, increasing national & energy security and promoting good health & a robust environment.

The festivities will feature performances by comedian Hal Sparks, the star of Shrek The Musical and The Happiness Club, a green carpet event with celebrities and the director, producers and stars of Carbon Nation.

For event information visit: www.chicagoclimatereaction.org/
For movie information visit: and www.facebook.com/carbonnation



Bianca pepper. They will eventually ripen to red—if the plants survive.

Follow Erehwon Farm on Facebook. Become a fan.

Grandma Beth's Cookbook

Butternut Squash

1 butternut squash
salt
brown sugar (optional)

Cut 1 butternut squash in half (there is no need to peel). Sprinkle salt and brown sugar onto the squash.

Be sure the oven is preheated to 350°F before placing in oven.

Bake squash until soft; then simply scoop the squash out of the skin, add a little butter and serve!

Summer Potato Salad

5 cups peeled and cubed potatoes
3 eggs
1/3 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup vegetable oil
2 teaspoons white sugar
1 ½ teaspoons seasoning salt
1 ½ teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon ground mustard
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
½ cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup chopped green onions
1/3 cup chopped celery
3 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add potatoes; cook until tender but still firm, about 15 minutes. Drain, and transfer to a large bowl.

Place eggs in a saucepan, and cover completely with cold water. Bring water to a boil. Cover, remove from heat, and let eggs stand in hot water for 10 to 12 minutes. Remove from hot water, and cool. Peel, chop, and add to potatoes.

In a small bowl, combine lemon juice, oil, sugar, seasoned salt, Worcestershire sauce, mustard powder and black pepper; mix well. Blend in mayonnaise. Pour lemon dressing over potatoes, and stir to coat.

Mix in green onions, celery, and parsley. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving.

Mediterranean Potatoes

potatoes
summer squash
sweet pepper
a large onion
handful of fresh chopped herbs
juice of one lemon

Peel and dice potatoes, then boil or steam until just cooked. Choose a firm fleshed variety so they don't go mushy! Drain and set aside.

Slice summer squash, sweet peppers and a large onion and gently fry in olive or nut oil until soft.

Stir in diced cooked potatoes and a handful of fresh chopped herbs (coriander works very well). Cook gently for a few minutes.

Then add the juice of a whole lemon to the pan and stir. Heat for a further minute and serve hot!

Vichyssoise

2 cups finely diced raw potatoes
4 tablespoons butter
6 leeks, cleaned and cut into 1 inch pieces (or substitute onions)
3 cups chicken bouillon
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
a dash of nutmeg
1 1/2 to 2 cups sour cream or heavy cream
Chopped chives

Cook the potatoes in salted water to cover until just tender. Melt the butter in a skillet and cool the leeks gently, tossing them lightly, for a few minutes. Add the chicken bouillon and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer the leeks until tender. Add the potatoes to the leeks and the broth and season to taste with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Put this mixture in the blender (you will need to blend it in two lots) and blend for 1 minute, or until smooth. Chill. When ready to serve, mix in sour cream or heavy cream. Garnish with chopped chives.

Contributed Recipes

The following two recipes are courtesy of Betty Watabari.

Betty cooks for one of the food pantries that has been taking away our excess cucumbers and summer squash. (Remember, you can have all the extras you want at this point!) If you have a recipe you particularly like, please e-mail it to us for inclusion in a newsletter.

Cucumber Potato Soup

4 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups water
1 medium cucumber, peeled, diced and seeded
1/4 teaspoon white pepper
1 cup heavy whipping cream *or* 1 cup milk
1/2 cup milk
1 green onion, sliced
1 teaspoon dill weed *or* 1 tablespoon minced fresh dill
Additional salt and pepper to taste

In a large saucepan, cook potatoes in salted water until very soft. Place sieve over a large bowl. Pour potatoes and liquid into sieve and force potatoes through. Return to saucepan.

Stir in cucumber, pepper, cream, milk and onion. Simmer gently for about 5 minutes or until cucumber is tender. Add dill, salt and pepper. Serve hot or cold.

Cold Cucumber Soup

(originally from Emeril)

6 pounds cucumbers (about 6 cucumbers), peeled, seeded, and coarsely chopped (12 cups)
2 yellow bell peppers, stem and seeds removed, coarsely chopped
4 green onions, chopped
2 jalapeno peppers, minced
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh cilantro
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh mint
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh dill
3 to 4 garlic cloves, mashed to a paste with 1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons Essence, recipe follows
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
3 cups plain yogurt
3 cups sour cream, divided
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
2 tablespoons minced fresh chives

Combine the cucumbers, bell peppers, green onions, jalapenos, cilantro, mint, dill, garlic, Essence, salt, cayenne, yogurt, 2 cups sour cream, olive oil, and white wine vinegar in a large bowl. Working in batches, puree the ingredients in a blender until very smooth. Transfer the soup to the refrigerator until well chilled, at least 2 hours. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve the soup, with each bowl garnished with a dollop of the remaining sour cream and some of the minced chives.

Emeril's ESSENCE Creole Seasoning (also referred to as Bayou Blast):

2 1/2 tablespoons paprika
2 tablespoons salt
2 tablespoons garlic powder
1 tablespoon black pepper
1 tablespoon onion powder
1 tablespoon cayenne pepper
1 tablespoon dried oregano
1 tablespoon dried thyme

Combine all ingredients thoroughly.