



WEEKLY NOTE Week of August 28, 2016

Fresh from the Farm!

Peak and Pivot are my operative phrases lately.

Peak - the beans and the tomatoes are at their peak and your boxes reflect that last and again this week. We are anticipating a pivot coming along as we crest the midpoint of our Summer Share.

This is week **5** of our **9** week share - oh my gosh, just over half way done.

Mid August when the fields were all tidied up for our field day, I had that mistaken feeling we had some coasting time. Ha!

This past weekend had us tackling several big projects - building our second compost pile of the season (Photo: the newly constructed pile on the left, a



second year pile on the right), mowing off the pollinator habitat area (still preparing it for frost seeding this winter),

moving 1/3 of the chicks in the field into a second pen for more room (they are growing), and fencing in the popcorn (we discovered the deer have been munching on the popcorn ears). Glad for Monday when all we had to do was harvest :)



THIS WEEK

- Tomatoes
- Green pepper
- Colored peppers
- Summer squash/Zucchini
- Cucumbers
- Green & Yellow Beans
- Leeks

Yellow watermelon for Belmond

Go Gourmet

- Chinese Cabbage
- Cherry tomatoes

Fruit Share

- Raspberries

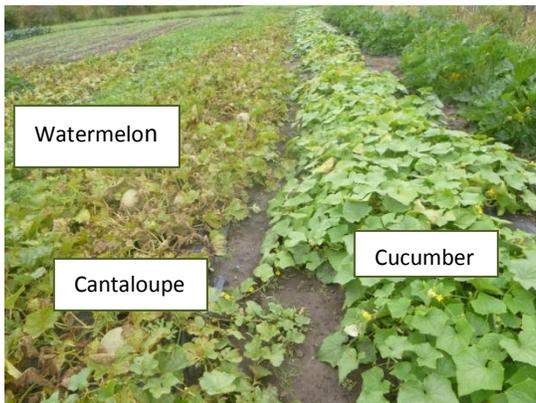
And yes, as we assessed this week's priorities, harvest topped the list... and for good reason; the crops right now need vigilance lest they get out of hand. A two day picking cycle is just about ideal for cucumbers, zucchini, and beans.



Thankfully we do have some patient crops: potatoes - they wait so patiently in the ground. We've been wanting to get more dug, but other tasks just get in the way. All during bean harvest Monday it rumbled. I looked up and saw the sky darkening from the west. During lunch the sky opened up and the rain poured out...that was the end of our plans for Monday's potato harvest.

Peak, pivot...and I must add patience!

I've been watching the melon patch with guarded glee all season. While our yellow watermelon are just starting to ripen, the disease I've also been observing in the cantaloupe (despite my treatment efforts) has taken off and left a field of underdeveloped melons exposed to the sun. Without sufficient leaf support, these melons are unlikely to ripen fully and may well be a loss. Sad day for sure!



We will get by with watermelons, starting delivery this week as the supply fits the various pick up sites. Trust us, we will get supply to each of the sites, but it will be a bit of hop and skip. This week supplies will cover Belmont and the farm. *The rest of the sites have that element of anticipation!*

Vegetable in the Spotlight

Leeks - did you notice the leeks in your box last week? The long, narrow, slick vegetable with onion aroma? I didn't list them in the Box Contents list prior to finalizing the note. We have them again this week. Will keep in the refrigerator for up to two weeks (maybe more). Great with potatoes or sliced thinly with tomato dishes.

More on beans as beans are on more this week once again! variety overview:

Our first planting includes these three varieties: Bush Blue Lake(57 day), Provider (50 day), and Golden Yellow Wax (54 day). We chose these for their relatively rapid maturation and productivity. Yellow wax is particularly prolific and still going strong, Provider is done now with Bush Blue Lake are winding down. Our second planting - French Green Beans (61 day)- is just coming on and you may notice some particularly long and slender beans in your mix...that would be them.

So in our peak and pivot time at the farm, what's around the corner? Here's a sneak peak

Lettuce in the hoophouse is filling out nicely and should be showing up in boxes in the next couple of weeks. There are some very new late season greens sprouting alongside our Summer Share greens.

A second round of cabbage - mostly green this time, is finishing up.
Winter squash - contrary to our cantaloupe - is looking great. While working with the popcorn, we got a peak at what's been developing under the canopy of green leaves and it looks good.



Carrots - we've had a number of inquiries "When are your carrots going to be ready?" Well, they're coming. We think they'll need another three weeks before first digging.



Broccoli - baby heads are starting to form. Three weeks again.

Cooking...Out of the Box

For our lunch Monday, Becky brought this beautiful and equally tasty Ratatouille dish. Very scrumptious. After entering the recipe here in the Weekly Note, with its many steps (phew!), yes, I would pause before taking the time to make this, but it's really, really good and I would suggest worth the work. Beside - look at that photo...a work of art.

Remy's Rataouille

This dish is prepared with a bottom layer of Piperade (see below directions), topped with thinly sliced vegetables topped with tasty vinaigrette.

NOTE: This recipe calls for Thyme - if you don't have any, try substituting last week's summer savory.



Piperade

Ingredients:

1/2 red bell pepper, seeds and ribs removed
1/2 yellow bell pepper, seeds and ribs removed
1/2 orange bell pepper, seeds and ribs removed
2 T. olive oil
1 t. minced garlic
1/2 C. onion, finely diced

3 tomatoes - peeled, seeded and finely diced, juices reserved
1 sprig Thyme
1 sprig Parsley
1/2 bay leaf
Kosher salt

Directions: *preheat oven to 450°. Line a baking sheet with foil. Place pepper halves on baking sheet, cut side down. Roast until the skins loosen, about 15 min.s Remove the peppers from the oven and let rest until cool enough to handle. Reduce the oven temperature to 275°.*

Peel peppers and discard the skins. Finely chop the peppers; set aside. In medium skillet over low heat, combine oil, garlic], and onion and saute until very soft but not browned, about 8 min.s

Add the tomatoes, their juices, thyme, parsley, and bay leaf. Bring to a simmer over low heat and cook until very soft and little liquid remains, about 10 min.s Do not brown.

Add the peppers and simmer to soften them. Discard the herbs, then season to taste with salt. Reserve a tablespoon of the mixture, then spread the remainder over the bottom of an 8 inch over proof skillet.

Vegetables

Ingredients:

1 medium zucchini, sliced in 1/16in. thick rounds
1 Japanese eggplant, sliced in 1/16in. thick rounds
1 yellow summer squash, sliced in 1/16in. thick rounds

4 tomatoes, sliced in 1/16in. thick rounds
1/2 t. minced garlic
1/8 t. fresh thyme leaves
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions: *arrange the sliced zucchini, squash, eggplant (if you have), and tomatoes over the piperade in the skillet.*

Begin by arranging 8 alternating slices of vegetables down the center, overlapping them so that 1/4 in. of each slice is exposed. This will be the center of the spiral. Around the center strip, overlap the vegetables in a close spiral that lets slices mount slightly toward center. All vegetables may not be needed. Set aside. In a small bowl, mix the garlic, oil, thyme, then season with salt and pepper to taste. Sprinkle this over vegetables.

Cover the skillet with foil and crimp edges to seal well. Bake until the vegetables are tender when tested with a paring knife, about 2 hours. Uncover and bake for another 30 min.s (lightly cover with foil if it starts to brown).

If there's excess liquid in pan, place it over medium heat on stove until reduced. AT this point it may be cooled, covered and refrigerated for up to 2 days. Serve cold or reheat in 350° oven until warm.

Vinaigrette

Ingredients:

1 T. olive oil
1 t balsamic vinegar

Assorted herbs such as thyme, chervil, basil, parsley)
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions: *In small bowl whisk together the reserved piperade, oil, vinegar, herbs, and salt and pepper to taste.*

To serve: heat the broiler and place skillet under it until lightly browned. Slice in quarters and lift very carefully onto plate with a spatula. Drizzle the vinaigrette around plate. Serves 4.

Soil & Soul - Hmmm....too many other tasks and too long of a featured recipe for this section this week. But watch next week for a discussion on **Gastrodiplomacy**. A real cliff hanger, eh?

Weekly deliveries Mid May to early July and August to September

Tuesdays – Mason City, Garner, Clear Lake

Wednesday - Belmond, Clarion, Farm

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