



Where The Land, Food, and People Come Together!

PO Box 185 Alton, IL 62002 22867 Chautauqua Rd. Elsah, IL 62028

www.threeriverscommunityfarm.com (618)374-9470

info@threeriverscommunityfarm.com

June 17, 2007

Distribution Week #6

Field Walk...

Remember last week when I mentioned all the special projects Segue and I were going to work on during the afternoons.... Well, scratch dismantling the pea trellis, setting up the pig pen, seeding cover crops and mowing the back 6 acres. Why? Because suddenly the entire farm needed irrigating! After nearly two weeks with no rain, we finally broke down and started drip irrigating everything. We made a trip to the Jerseyville Farm & Home store and bought a 500 gallon tank, put it on the back of our rusted, hillbilly Chevy 1 ton, 4x4 pick up truck (I knew we bought that beater for a reason) and started filling the tank. We rolled out endless rows of drip tape down the tomatoes, potatoes, cuke, zukes, carrots, beets, beans canteloupes, watermelons, cherry tomatoes, and started filling and emptying, filling and emptying that 500 gallon water tank all over the farm.

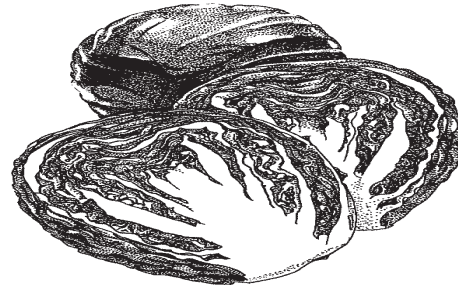
I must admit that when it comes to irrigation, I get a bit frantic. Segue and I have had the good fortune of working on several, well-established, very productive farms in the past, where with just the flip of a pump's switch and some big metal pipe with sprinklers you can irrigate acres in a day. We thought, initially and naively about doing the same thing here. But after a \$5,000 estimate from a contractor to install 2" PVC underground and above ground hydrants to different areas of the farm, we realized we would have to go with plan B for the first couple of years. There has been a lot of reverting to plan B's this season. And while it can feel frustrating and overwhelming to start so far from our final destination, at the same time we feel excited about our creative, functional, cost-effective beginnings. And that is what the first few years of starting a farm is all about. We both remember stories from our farmer mentors of when they first started out: both of them nearly twenty years ago with weedy 1 acre plots, rototillers, and flashlights searching the ground at night for cut worms. We haven't had to do any of that yet--in a big part, thanks to their willingness to teach us everything they know. These first year stories will make some future young farmer laugh twenty years from now; stories of garden hoses, generators, water tanks, the dining room table turned office, and all that grass. We can't wait to see what story the farm will come up for us this week... Amy & Segue

What's New This Week:

Radicchio: this purple and white ball is an Italian import which has a bitter flavor. Chop it up to make an excellent addition to a fresh salad or cut it into quarters, brush with olive oil and grill it for a tasty treat.

Kohlrabi: looks like a purple or white ball with leaves coming out of the top; is in the Brassica family along with its cousins broccoli, cabbage, etc. To use it, peel the purple or white skin and cut it up and eat fresh--tastes sort of like a broccoli-carrot. In Germany, this vegetable is the HOLY GRAIL!

Pick-Your-Own Crops: Parsley, cilantro, dill and CUT FLOWERS ARE NOW OPEN!



COMING UP:

cabbage
green beans
red potatoes
carrots
&
the first tomatoes!

What's For Dinner: Whipped Kohlrabi & Potatoes

from "The Real Dirt on Vegetables"

"You can't go wrong with this combination. It places your mashed potatoes in a different league than grandma's--but makes them just as great!"

1 pound potatoes (about 4)

1 pound kohlrabi (about 2)

3-4 T butter

1/4-1/2 cup milk or cream, depending on how rich and creamy you like it

1/2 tsp salt plus more to taste

freshly ground pepper

Peel potatoes and kohlrabi, then boil until tender (20-35 minutes). Drain, reserving 1/2 cup of the liquid. Mash them together in a large bowl. Add butter and cream or milk to the mash and mix in. Add 1/2 tsp salt and pepper to taste and mix until fully combined and smooth. Add another 1/4 cup of milk or cream for more rich creaminess, if desired. If you want a smoother texture, slowly stir in the reserved cooking water until it reaches the desired consistency. More salt and pepper to taste.

Roasted Radicchio w/ Gorgonzola & Balsamic Vinegar

from "The Real Dirt on Vegetables"

"Roasting brings out a concentrated, natural sweetness in radicchio. This dish is unusual, elegant, simple--and delicious. Served on a bed of risotto, it makes an attractive meal. If you're not a Gorgonzola fan, this is equally delicious with Brie, Swiss, aged Cheddar, or smoked Gouda. You can substitute lemon juice for the balsamic vinegar.

1 medium head radicchio, cut into 2-inch wedges
1/4 cup olive oil
salt
freshly ground pepper
balsamic vinegar
4-6 oz. Gorgonzola (or other cheese) sliced.

Preheat the oven to 400 F. Lightly oil a 2-quart baking dish. Brush the radicchio generously with olive oil and place in a single layer in the baking dish. Season with salt and pepper. Bake the radicchio for 20 minutes, turning wedges over once midway through cooking. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar and top with cheese. Return to the oven until cheese is melted, about 5 minutes.



new red potatoes are on their way!!!

The Pigs Are Coming!! The Pigs Are Coming!!

Our 4 piglets will be arriving Wednesday afternoon!

Kohlrabi-Carrot Slaw

from "Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini"

1 lb kohlrabi
1 T salt
1 1/4 tsp anise seeds
1 tsp pepper
3 T vegetable, corn or safflower oil
2 medium garlic cloves
4 medium carrots
2 T rice vinegar
3-4 T snipped dill

Peel kohlrabis. Cut into slices 1/8 inch thick, then cut these into very thin strips. Toss with salt and let stand for 30 minutes or more. Meanwhile, set small skillet over low heat. Add anise seeds and stir until fragrant, about a minute. Remove 1/4 tsp and reserve. Add pepper and shake often until anise darkens, 3-4 minutes. Add oil and garlic. Stir just until garlic begins to color--a minute or so. Shred carrots. Drain kohlrabi. Rinse lightly, then dry. Strain oil; discard seasonings. Combine oil, reserved anise, and vinegar. Blend. Toss with kohlrabi and carrots. Chill at least 1/2 hour or until serving time. Sprinkle with dill, toss and serve.

Weather Update/What's on Our To Do List

The week of May 11th was a hot and dry one on the farm. We are now more than 2" below normal precipitation. But this hot weather is speeding along tomato ripening and we harvested our first few tomatoes this week!! This may be a record early tomato harvest!! Hopefully rain on Tuesday, and slightly cooler temps will help wilted lettuce and wilted farmers!!

Farm to Do List:

set up pig pen; plant pumpkins; irrigate winter squash if it doesn't rain; plant last planting of lettuce for awhile; seed more beans, carrots, herbs, and beets; mow the back 6 acres; take down pea trellis; cover crop different areas of the farm; continue trellising tomatoes; weed eggplant, flowers, beets, scallions, and lettuce.

