



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

October 1, 2007

Distribution Week #21

Field Walk...

One of my favorite farming journals, "Growing for Market" posted a job opportunity in their classifieds that read "the farmer, in addition to using a holistic farm management approach, will have experience growing for a comparable-sized organic operation in an *arid, high desert environment*." The name of the farm is *Hidden Springs* and is located in Boise, Idaho. Segue and I laughed hard at first, then not so hard. That could describe our climate. Did you know our last soaking rain of over an inch fell on June 29th and 30th?--three long months ago. Since then we have picked up just an inch and a half scattered over four different rains. For Jersey County, we are now six inches below normal rain fall. But what is normal anymore? I know so many of us are asking these questions. And for the first time ever, I heard the weatherman use a phrase that sent chills down my spine: "the Arch effect." He described this effect as when approaching storms encounter the heat island that is known as St. Louis, they just dissolve, dry up, evaporate in thin air! Doesn't it seem like even the leaves are giving up on this year too? Already, the streets are sounding that clatter of dry leaves, but no color; just hues of gray and muddy brown that mirror parched soils.

Well, we haven't given up! Segue and I are back to irrigating everyday, all day. And our water bills reflect this effort, although are not as bad as we thought--about \$200 a month. We are watering very heavily the spinach, carrots, cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower, hoping for big harvests of these crops in about three weeks.

But we are also thinking about how we will beat this heat and drought next year if we are hit again. We've come to the conclusion to plant very heavy in the spring and early summer when we can expect (I say that cautiously of course!) good rains. We are going to plant enough beds of carrots and beets to last through the summer instead of planting successions every month or so. And plant our winter squash earlier so that they will have enough water to produce larger, fuller squashes. We are going to focus a lot more on the summer fruiting crops, planting many more successions of tomatoes and melons. And consistently drip irrigate crops like peppers and eggplants to have good size peppers all season. Still, we are very proud of our production this season considering the drought. If this is as bad as it gets, I hope you will agree that your CSA investment has been worth it!

Enjoy the harvest, Amy & Segue

What's For Dinner?: Caramelized Leek Salad (w/pear, cheese and toasted walnuts) from "The Real Dirt on Vegetables"

1/2 cup toasted walnuts
1 T unsalted butter
5 T olive oil, divided
2 leeks, white and green parts sliced
4 cups mixed salad greens
1/4 tsp salt
freshly ground black pepper
1 1/2 T balsamic vinegar
2 pears, cored, sliced
4 oz cheese, crumbled

heat the butter and 1 T of oil in a skillet. Add the leeks, cook until golden color. Drain and cool. In a large bowl, toss the greens with salt, pepper. Add vinegar and toss; add the remaining olive oil and toss. Sprinkle with the caramelized leeks, walnuts and pears. Sprinkle with cheese. Serves 4.

Our Best Guess for what's in your Share:
lettuce, salad mix, green beans, sweet potatoes, leeks, peppers, beets, broccoli?, and...

Pie Pumpkins: Good for Halloween decorating, making into a delicious pie, (see recipe), roasting the seeds, or baking and using like any winter squash.

Spinach: Our fall crop is just starting to come on. There will be small amounts to start with more available in weeks to come.



What's For Dessert: Pumpkin Pie

from "Asparagus to Zucchini"

Basic Pie Dough (9 inch shell)

1/4 cup brown sugar
2 cups pumpkin puree
1/2 tsp salt
3 eggs
1 1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 1/2 cups evaporated milk or heavy cream
1 tsp powdered ginger
1/2 tsp nutmeg
1/4 tsp ground cloves
1/4 tsp ground allspice

Preheat oven to 450. In a large bowl, beat together the pumpkin puree and eggs. Add the evaporated milk and sugar, then the salt, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves, and allspice. Beat until the mixture is smooth. Pour into the pie shell and bake for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 300 and continue baking for 30-40 minutes, until the filling is almost set; a sharp knife will come out clean. Makes 8 servings.

Time to Renew Your Share!

Renewal forms will be available at pick up or if you don't pick up this week, in your mailbox! Please send us your renewal forms along with deposit by November 1st. Our mailing address is Three Rivers Community Farm, PO Box 185 Alton, IL 62002. Or you can drop it off at the barn on Tuesdays or Fridays!