

Otter Hook Farms

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Traditional Family Farming



Week of August 18, 2009, Harvest Week 11

This week's share includes: Sweet Onions, Eggplant, Summer Squash, Broccoli, Beets or Carrots, Potatoes, and Beans for some

Next week should have: Summer Squash, Onions, Potatoes, Peppers, Broccoli

Herbed Summer Squash Soup

3 Cups Chicken or Vegetable Broth

1 ½ lbs (about 3 medium) Summer Squash

1 Tbsp chopped fresh dill, tarragon or basil

¾ cup (3 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese

¼ tsp salt

¼ tsp pepper

Place broth, squash and herbs in a medium saucepan, bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce to a simmer and cook until squash is tender; about 8 minutes. Puree in a blender, in batches if necessary, until smooth. Return soup to the pan and heat over medium-high, stirring in the cheese until incorporated. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper. Serve hot or cold.

Makes 4 servings, 1 ¼ cups each.

Summer has arrived! After complaining of too much rain for two months, we've gotten our wish. Hot and dry conditions have us irrigating, believe it or not, to get seeds germinating and to keep the lettuces growing and sweet. While the dry came too late to save some crops (tomatoes are gone and the summer squash have downy and powdered mildew so will have diminishing yields), others are bouncing back surprisingly well – two weeks ago I was ready to pull out the bean plants – handfuls of yellow leaves were falling off with every bean we picked. Today...the plants are getting bushy with dark green leaves and beans on them like they should have – lifting up the branches to find ten or twelve hanging together rather than the one or two we were getting. The resilience of some of these plants is just amazing, so we are happy to say that at least some of you will be getting beans again this week, and hopefully the rest will have them next week.

We attended a meeting last night for the Regional Farm and Food Project, which is undergoing some restructuring and taking on some interesting new projects – one of which is a Nutrient-Dense Food certification. Farmers would measure their food with a refractometer – a little contraption that measures mineral and carbohydrate content, or brix. High brix directly correlates to high nutrient content, and to meet the certification standard, the produce would have to meet a minimum brix reading. National and large-scale agriculture are generally not able to produce food with high brix, so this is a way for small, local farms to set themselves apart from the national organic standard.

Another project (or series of projects) they are taking on is homesteading-type projects; food preservation, lacto fermentation, root cellaring, soap and candle making, urban chicken raising, bread making, cheese making, whole grain cookery and eating local all year. The RFFP needs volunteers to join some of their subcommittees and they also need fiscal support. Check out their website and consider attending a meeting to learn more about what this organization is trying to do about food security.

Speaking of lacto fermentation, Louise Frazier reminded me after reading last week's newsletter that for vegans or anyone who doesn't have access to whey, another way to ensure proper fermentation is to put some cabbage in the bottom of any jar of anything you make. Cabbage has a lot of naturally occurring lactobacillus on it, and will work quite well. Her book about lacto fermenting is available at the Honest Weight Food Coop – [Lacto fermenting Vegetables](#) – it is a small paperback with an orange cover. None of her recipes use whey and still produce very consistent results.