

Otter Hook Farms

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Traditional Family Farming



Week of August 4, 2009, Harvest Week 9

This week's share includes: New Potatoes, Broccoli, Cabbage, Summer Squash, Green Tomatoes, Eggplant, Parsley & Sweet Basil

Our plans for next week include: Broccoli, Cabbage, Summer Squash, Peppers, Eggplant, and Basil

Steamed Cabbage with Rosemary

1 Small to medium head green cabbage, cored and cut into 4 or 6 large wedges
2 fresh rosemary sprigs
3 tablespoons olive oil
Sea salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

Place cabbage wedges in medium saucepan over medium heat with 1 ½ cups water and the rosemary sprigs. Drizzle with the olive oil and season with the salt, pepper and red pepper flakes. Cover and steam for 15 to 20 minutes, until almost all the water has evaporated and the cabbage is tender. Serve immediately.

Sweet Basil Vinaigrette

½ cup balsamic vinegar
Juice of one lime
5 to 7 fresh basil leaves, cut into thin strips
Sea salt and fresh ground pepper to taste
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Whisk together everything but the olive oil in a small bowl. Slowly add oil, whisking until it is all incorporated. Season with more salt and pepper, and serve immediately.

Nature's resilience never ceases to amaze me. We walked together through the gardens Monday, assessing the damage of our incredibly rainy last two months. I was noticing the negatives – the stunted growth of the squash (both summer and winter), the yellow leaves and diminutive size of the beans, the hacked-apart diseased tomato plants, the tiny cucumber plants whose blossoms still sit, and the miniature pepper plants whose fruit will soon rival the plants in size. All in all, kind of depressing. Then, Chris comes out with, "Look at the way these plants never give up! Even under the worst stress, they keep on trying." He is right, you know. The weed whacked potato plants I told you about last week are sending up new green tops. We'll just have to wait and see whether that means that the tubers will keep growing under there or not. Those ill green bean plants have flowers on them, as do the impossibly small squash plants. Tiny greens sending up tall seed stalks. All of these just trying to make new seeds; the need to reproduce trumping all other needs and taking all the energy the plant can muster. It truly is amazing and humbling to see. We will again keep hoping for dry weather and sunny days – if this week's forecast holds true, we should be able to plant by the end of the week; greens, turnips and other short-season root crops for fall. And maybe with some sun and dry weather, our plants will show further resilience and get back more of their healthy green glow and produce more. In the meantime, we will have to make due with what they are able to give us – evidenced in the small size of the share for coming weeks. We wish we could give more, but we have done our best.

Fried Green Tomatoes

½ cup flour
½ cup yellow cornmeal
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
1 large egg
½ cup buttermilk
4 Green Tomatoes, cored and cut ½ inch thick
Canola oil for frying (about ½ cup)

Preheat oven to 200 degrees. Line a baking sheet with paper towels. Stir together dry ingredients in small bowl. Whisk milk and egg together in a separate bowl. Pour enough oil in a large skillet to fill to ¼ inch deep and heat over medium-high heat to about 375 or until the oil sizzles when you drop a drop of water into it. Dip tomato slices in egg/milk mixture, then dredge in flour mixture. Place in hot oil. Repeat with enough tomato slices to fill pan without crowding. Fry until undersides are golden – about 2 minutes – then flip and fry the other side. Transfer to the prepared baking sheet to drain and place sheet in the oven while frying the rest of the tomatoes.

We like to serve these with a sweet chutney or relish, drizzled with a savory vinaigrette or salsa verde.