



Urban Roots

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In the Bag

Salsa Basket, 1 bag
 Summer Squash, 3 pieces
 Scallions, 1 bunch
 Red or Green Cabbage, 1 head
 Cucumber, 1 piece
 Batavian Lettuce, 1 head
 Basil, 1 bunch

The exciting new item this week is the **salsa basket**. CSA members look forward to these every year. It's the bag with the green tomatillos, and it contains everything you need to make fresh, salsa verde. The recipe on the back will walk you through the process step by step. It is very easy and very delicious. You can eat the salsa with chips or burritos or anywhere else you normally use salsa.

The **cabbage** is the other new item, but unfortunately it is not actually very exciting. Not because cabbage itself is less than thrilling, but because this particular cabbage harvest is so disappointing. All the heads are very small. And they will never size with all the heat and dry weather we have had. So we took them now before the bugs had their way with them. The best thing to do with these is to slice them raw into your salads along with the **cucumber** and the **lettuce**.

Marcia included a great recipe for the **summer squash** and **basil**. Take a look at that on the back. And use up any leftover basil by making some pesto. The basil pesto recipe is in issue 5 of this newsletter from 30 June.

Next week look for the last of the fennel, more beets, and maybe tomatoes or beans.

Claire's Comments

Tears of Mourning, Tears of Hope

On Wednesday morning, it rained at last. And not just a sprinkle but a good, soaking, 1-inch rain. While it definitely could have come at a better time, say two weeks ago, the timing it did choose was at least poetic.

The morning started out cloudy and cool, but without any hint of what was to come. We set out on our harvest as usual, for the most part. Only Maggie and I seemed to notice that the harvest list seemed too short. We asked each other "is there nothing else, really?" No there wasn't anything we forgot to put on the list, there just wasn't any more food in the field to gather. While it was depressing to know that we couldn't harvest potatoes because they all died in the potato beetle infestation, or sweet peppers because they were not flowering due to water stress, or greens because they were not growing in the heat, I held it all together pretty well until we got to the cabbage.

As Maggie and I walked through 600 feet of plants looking for the 90 heads we needed to harvest, I started to loose it after all. Every red cabbage was too small. Every green cabbage was light and showed significant looper damage. But we had to keep searching and cutting and counting. By the time we finished, I knew I needed to work alone for a while in order not to infect the rest of the crew with what has become my overwhelming concern for the health of our crops.

So I set off to harvest the garlic and peppers for the salsa baskets. As soon as I was away, I knelt down by the garlic and cried. My more balanced attitude of a few weeks ago, the one where I recognized that some crops would do well and some would fail in any conditions that this climate handed out, was gone. All I could see was the wilt, and failure to thrive, and even the death in all that surrounded me. I cannot remember ever feeling so low about the farm ever before.

I found no comfort in the peppers. Even this heat-loving, drought-tolerant crop was just standing there letting its tiny fruits wither in the sun. Finally, as I pick up my buckets and headed back to join the crew in the wash shed, it started to rain. At first, it felt like the farm was crying with me. As the crew was shouting with joy, happy that the parched earth was at last getting a drink, I couldn't let go of the knowledge that really this rain is far too late to save our crops. Right then, for me, the rain was just hopeless weeping.

Then it kept raining, harder. No one complained though we got soaked and cold. When I left the shed to shut off the sprinklers we had set up in the morning, finally believing that the rain would continue, one of the crew saw me look at the rain guage and shouted "how much is it so far?" They all turned to look at me and I shouted back "a half inch." Their excitement at this information finally made me smile. Maybe it's not hopeless. Maybe the peppers will start to flower again. Maybe the kale will put on new growth. Maybe I can replant some things that will grow quickly and give us food to harvest. Maybe this rain can represent more than mourning. Maybe it can be hope as well.

Proceeds from the Savor the Summer Raffle will Help Buy the Farm a New Truck!

The “check engine” light is glowing on the dash and our truck is running on borrowed time. We need a new one with a better engine and a bigger bed to haul all food from the farm. When you buy tickets for the Savor the Summer Raffle, not only are you increasing your chances of winning one of the great prizes below, you are also helping us raise money to buy a new truck. **Raffle tickets are available at the farm stand, so remember to bring some money to the next pick-up and get your stash of chances.** The raffle drawing will be held at the Savor the Summer Festival on the 6th of August.

Ticket Prices: 1 for \$3, 2 for \$5, 5 for \$12, 10 for \$20, 20 for \$30

PRIZES

Troy Community Farm CSA membership (\$225 value)

Capitol Kids - \$35 gift basket

Orange Tree Imports -\$20.00 Gift Certificate

Roman Candle Pizzeria - 2 Gift Certificates

Silver Leaf Design Gallery -Decorative Pillow

Revolution Cycles - Free Tune-up

Gaston’s - Gift Certificate for \$25.00

Windemere Institute of Healing Arts - 10 massage gift certificates

Fiskar,s - pruners

Massage East - 5 gift certificates for massages

Mallards - 20 baseball tickets

Sponsorship for Rain Gardens LLC - 2 Free consultations

Bike Fed of WI - Gift pack, \$100 value

Just Coffee - Gift pack, \$100 value

Friends of Troy Gardens Gift pack

Friends of Trov Gardens T-shirt (2)

Recipes

FRESH SALSA VERDE

- Remove husks from and wash the tomatillos.
- Put tomatillos, garlic, cilantro, and hot pepper in a blender or food processor.
- Blend on low until ingredients are combined.
- Chop the onion (or scallion) separately and add to the mix with a dash of salt.
- Eat fresh with chips or burritos or tacos, etc.

Notes:

- Be careful with the hot pepper! Add it in a little at a time. Include the seeds for extra heat.
- Salsa ingredients will store well in their bag in the fridge for up to a week. Once you make the salsa, it is best if eaten within a few days.

PASTA WITH ZUCCHINI, RICOTTA AND BASIL

From Mark Bittman’s “The Minimalist” column in *The New York Times*

Salt and pepper

1/4 c. extra virgin olive oil

3 or 4 small-to-medium summer squash, rinsed and cut into 1/4- to 1/2-inch dice

1 tsp. minced garlic, or more to taste

1 pound penne or other cut pasta

1 c. good ricotta cheese

1 c. basil leaves, washed, dried and torn or chopped

1/4 c. or more freshly grated Parmesan, optional

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt it. Put olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat; when hot add zucchini, along with a large pinch of salt and a sprinkling of pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until zucchini begins to brown, then lower heat and cook until it is quite tender, about 15 minutes total. About 5 minutes before it is done, stir in garlic and begin to cook pasta.

While pasta cooks, warm a serving bowl and put ricotta in it, along with about half the basil. When pasta is tender but not mushy, remove and drain it, reserving about a cup of its cooking liquid. Use as much of this liquid as necessary, a bit at a time, to thin ricotta until it reaches a saucy consistency. Toss with pasta, zucchini, remaining basil and Parmesan, if you are using it, then taste and adjust seasoning. Serve. Yield: 4 to 6 servings

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