



## In the Share

Delicata Squash, 1 large & 1 small  
Carrots, 1 bag  
Salsa Basket, 1 bag  
Leeks, 1 bunch  
Carmen Red Peppers, 8 long pieces  
Bell Peppers, 1 large & 1 medium  
Lipstick Peppers, 3 small pieces  
Eggplant, 1 piece  
Roma Tomatoes, 1 bag  
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch  
Tomatoes, TBA

Did you make it through all those tomatoes last week?! If you didn't, my guess is that the romas are still holding up well but the slicing tomatoes are looking pretty rough. We harvested as many slicers as we could for your shares last week, knowing the tomato days were numbered, and sorted them as usual. But when I took them off the truck for the pickup, I noticed some spots of blight that had not been visible at harvest. Of course the tomato late blight has no affect on humans, but it does shorten the shelf life of the tomato fruits. Unexpectedly, you have just a few more slicing tomatoes in your share this week. My advice is to use them up quickly. These are the last of the slicing tomatoes you will have from the farm this season and they will not last store for long.

The romas on the other hand seem to be standing up to the blight better than the slicers. They should be able to wait until you are good and ready for a batch of fresh tomato sauce on your pasta. One of my favorite ways to use them is to sauté some garlic, onion, and red pepper in olive oil. When those soften a bit, I add chopped romas and fresh basil and/or oregano. I let it all cook down a bit and then serve it over pasta with grated Parmesan. It is so simple and so much better than any red sauce I have had from a jar!

(continued on the back)

## Claire's Comments

### The Queen Bees

We took our final honey harvest off the hives last week and we will be extracting it over the weekend. Given the cool weather of the last couple of months, the bees did not put up as much extra honey as I was expecting after the July harvest. Still, we will have more honey for sale this fall than we have ever had before. Turns out that doubling your apiary can double your harvest, even in a bad year!

Beyond the honey harvest, the bees have been giving us lots to think about this fall. Sarah and I have been participating in the new Dane County Beekeepers Association since it started up in March and have been especially excited to learn queen-rearing skills from our fellow Association members. The queen is the only member of the hive that produces offspring, so she is key to overall hive health and strength. She is also an expensive little bug to replace when something goes wrong. Twenty dollars expensive, to be exact. Being able to raise our own queens will not only lower our apiary costs, it will also give us more flexibility in increasing our apiary (we are aiming for 10 hives eventually), and in improving the genetics of our bees. Plus it is exciting to learn new skills!

Earlier this year, we had to requeen both Bertha and Cinderella. For whatever reason their queens stopped laying eggs. Since we inspect the hives most every week, we noticed in time to help them out. We took a frame of fresh eggs from our strongest hive, Nevada, and placed it in the queenless hives. Within days both hives had drawn out queen cells around several of the eggs and were doing their part to replace their hive mothers. The only difference between a worker bee larva and a queen larva is the food that it receives. The queen receives a richer diet that makes her bigger and matures her reproductive organs. Thus, when we placed fresh eggs in the queenless hives, the bees were able to grow new queens from those eggs simply by controlling the eggs' diet. Since there can only be one queen per hive, when the first queen hatches she runs around and kills the other queens in their cells. Then she embarks on the most perilous part of her life, her mating flights.

The virgin queen will make several mating flights during which she mates with up to 11 male drone bees and stores up their sperm in her spermatheca. After those few days of mating, she returns to the hive and starts laying eggs. She will continue to lay eggs for years, if all goes well. If she is lost or damaged or poorly mated on her flights, we and the bees have to start all over again. With both Bertha and Cinderella, the new queens hatched, mated, and started laying right on schedule. It was incredible to witness and both hives are now going strong!

This week we had a new queen challenge. Nevada decided she wanted to swarm and grew out no fewer than 20 swarm queen cells. We wanted to prevent Nevada from leaving in a swarm, so we quickly took the larval queens out of the hive and moved them into so-called nucleus hives where a couple of those queens can mature and be mated. The process also helps stop swarming. In about three weeks we will see if it worked and we may have two new queens and two new hives!

## Peppers

Haven't you heard? Red peppers are the new tomato. They are also very high in the antioxidants Vitamins A and C.

**How to Store:** unwashed in the drawer of your refrigerator for one to two weeks.

**To Freeze Raw:** wash the pepper and sit on its end. Take your knife and slice straight down one side. Turn 1/4 and cut again. Repeat until all 4 sides are cut off. This will give you 4 flat pieces, which are easier to store. Discard the top with the seeds. Trim off any pith or seeds from the bottom and the sides. Place in a single layer on a sheet pan in the freezer. Once frozen, you can stack in freezer bags or any airtight container.

**To Roast:** coat whole peppers with a little oil and place in a single layer on a sheet pan or roasting pan in the oven at 350 for 30-40 minutes, turning every 10 minutes or so until blackened and soft. Place in a container with a tightly sealed lid (or plastic wrap). Let cool, and the skins will loosen due to steam buildup. You should be able to rub them off easily. Core and seed. Alternatively, peppers may be roasted over an open flame on your stovetop, grill, or broiler, but roast them dry as oil may encourage fire. Turn often until the skins are blackened on all sides. Roasted peppers may be frozen as above.

The following is one of my favorite stuffed pepper recipes, from *Sundays at Moosewood Restaurant*. Serves 4.

- For the stuffing: *1/4 cup olive oil, 1 cup chopped onions, 3 minced garlic cloves, 2 tsp dried or 2 TB fresh dill, 1/4 cup pine nuts, 3 chopped tomatoes, 3 cups cooked rice, 1/4 cup chopped parsley, 1 1/2 TB chopped mint, fresh ground black pepper.* Sauté onions, garlic, and dill in olive oil until onions are translucent. Add pine nuts. When they color, add tomatoes and simmer, covered, for 3 minutes. Remove from heat and combine with rice, herbs, and pepper.
- Cut 4 peppers in half lengthwise and remove seeds and pith. Leave stems on for better shape retention. Pour 1 cup tomato juice into a baking dish. Stuff peppers with rice mixture and place in baking dish. Cover and bake at 375 for 30 minutes.
- For the sauce: *1 3/4 cup milk, 1/4 cup butter, 1/4 cup flour, 1/2 tsp dried or 1/2 TB fresh dill, 1 1/2 TB chopped mint, 3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese, salt and pepper to taste.* Heat milk in a small saucepan. In another pan, melt butter. Stir in flour to make a roux and cook for a few minutes. Pour in the hot milk, stirring constantly, until the sauce thickens. Add the herbs and feta and heat gently until the feta is melted. Season to taste. Serve over stuffed peppers.

(continued from "In the Share")

In my house, the romas will certainly have to wait behind the peppers, however. With a record 13 red peppers in the share this week, the romas will be hard pressed to draw my attention way from these gorgeous and delicious gems. You have three main types of peppers in your share: Italian frying peppers (the variety is Carmen), Lipsticks (that is the variety name), and bells (a mix of several different varieties). My plan would be to eat the lipsticks fresh and raw, as in my opinion they have the best flavor for raw eating. I would stuff the bells and a couple of the Carmens according to Laurel's recipe on the left. And I would save any peppers (of any type) that I did not use those ways for roasting. Laurel has roasting directions on the left as well.

I love roasted red peppers just about as much as I love green beans! They are great on crackers with goat cheese and olives, excellent on pizza, and delicious in red pepper sauce. I have been working on this easy red pepper sauce for the past few years and I think I have it down pretty well now: Melt 1 Tbs. butter in a sauce pan over low heat. Wisk in 1 Tbs. flour and cook, whisking constantly, for 2 minutes. Wisk in 1 cup milk and 1/2 Tbs. Better Than Bouillon "no chicken" bouillon, stirring constantly, until the sauce thickens, about 5 minutes. Add 1/2 to 3/4 cup grated Parmesan and whisk until the cheese melts. Add 4 to 6 chopped roasted red peppers and mix until combined. Serve over pasta with sliced tomatoes and/or chopped fresh basil.

The good news is that the red peppers store well in the refrigerator and will happily wait for a week or two for you to use them up. But now is not the time to be frugal with peppers!

The two new items this week are the first real fall crops: delicata winter squash and leeks. The delicatas have the reputation of being the very best winter squash around. They are sweet and smooth textured and you can even eat the skin if you first bake it in the oven. One simple way to prepare them is to slice them open lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Then coat the cavity with olive oil and add a clove of garlic cut into strips and a sprig of sage to each squash. Bake on a cookie sheet skin-side down in a little bit of water until a fork can pierce the skin. Or if you are feeling more fancy, stuff the cavity with your favorite Thanksgiving stuffing before you bake it! The leeks are especially popular in potato leek soup, but can also be used as you would use an onion. Slice the shaft all the way up to the leaves.

Next week: delicata and/or carnival squash, onions, beets, cabbage or chard, and red peppers.