

Guldán Family Farm



NOTES FROM THE FARM

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This week's share... Our best guess

Banking on our ability to continue to get all of your goodies picked, as well as the weather cooperating, here's what we're hoping to include this week!

You will hopefully recognize...

Cucumbers, broccoli, cantaloupe, red/yellow watermelons, egg plant, tomatoes, and grape tomatoes.

Full share members will also receive some summer squash or zucchini, and a green bell pepper.

New for everyone? Red bell peppers! These are the fully matured green bells. Once this color, their flavor is exceptionally sweeter than before. Did you know that Red, Yellow, and Orange bell peppers all start out green? Each variety turns their own color/shade at maturity :) **Enjoy!**

Jam CSA Members

This week's selection is Peach Jam. As with my award winning peach salsa, the Peach Jam is made with Colorado peaches when they come into peak season... that is, when Hy-Vee has their week-long fire sale knocking the price down to .99/lb

WEEK 13: WELL, HERE GOES NOTHING

Formalities first: Here's a friendly reminder to please please PLEASE bring back your CSA bags. We are running very low on our supply (which should have more than an ample cushion of extras) and are on the verge of having to use good-old-fashioned plastic T-shirt bags for your veggies.

This is always one of my toughest weeks mentally, and for Dad and Dani - physically. The school year has officially arrived - our awesome crew members (all of which this year attended CHS or MVL) start their classes, and I start my workshops. No, it's not the workshops that challenge my mental stability... it's the knowing that there is much work to be done, few hands to do it, and there I am sitting in the air conditioning for hours on end. Well, sunrise is at 6:38, so I'll be taking advantage of that and attempt to put in an hour's worth of work before I need to hit the highway each morning to lighten the load as best I can, and doing the opposite when I get back in the late afternoon. It's something we deal with each year, but as Dad puts it, "We get done what we get done, that's all we can do."

Any how, as per a few veggie/field updates... I really shouldn't have said anything last week. I believe I wrote something along the words, "We finally got ahead of the raccoons" last week. I wrote that Sunday. Come Monday morning, 1/3 of the next planting was destroyed. Knowing that this would not end well, Dad recommended that on Tuesday I pick all the corn needed for the shares for the week. I did. This particular planting was 20 rows wide, and not quite 100 yards long - each row should yield at least four crates of corn. After picking and much profanity Tuesday, I had four rows remaining (these happened to be untouched by the vermin). So on Wednesday morning, I thought I'd go and pick it clean in hopes that I would have *something* to sell at Thursday's farmers' markets. They left me a crate and a half... It's to the point where we're having honest discussions about quitting growing corn. I love our corn. Our customers love our corn. But when we go through the work only to have over half of it stolen the day or two before it's ready... we're frustrated. I've got one last idea that I'm looking to try, but it'll set me back a pretty penny first. As I've informed you before, we currently have an electric fence system in place. Currently, the raccoons are willing to run between the wires and risking one heck of a shock. I'm contemplating purchasing enough chicken wire to surround the field to be set a few inches past the electric wires. This will prevent them from running through, while constantly zapping them as they try to find a weakness. I think it'll work... but there's a definite catch - most chicken wire runs about a buck a yard or so. The perimeter of our corn field is probably close to 3/4 of a mile, if not more. Do the math and it would seem that well over a \$1000 would be invested on a "hope it works" plan. There's a smaller section of later plantings that are just starting to tassel, so I'm contemplating buying enough wire to do that section. It'll have to be this week if I'm gonna take the plunge. If it works, it'll be an investment that'll pay itself off in the first use. If you see me advertising chicken wire for sale, it'll probably be for the best if you don't bring up the topic... **-The Guldans**

IDEAS FOR THE COOK

Hooray for watermelon! These are probably one of my most looked forward to fruits of any summer. The watermelons in your share will be one of two varieties. If it has a light green backing with mild green stripes, it will be a yellow watermelon of the “Yellow Doll” variety. If it has mild green backing with dark green stripes, it will be a red melon of the “Smile” variety.

This will likely be the last time that we are able to include eggplant this season for everyone. Have you tried making Eggplant Parmesan? A customer at the farmers’ market this past week recommended making Stuffed Eggplant. The way she described it sounded very tasty. Check a recipe on this page!

Are you craving/wondering where the heck are the potatoes? We had been hoping to include them for the last three weeks... but it keeps raining. If you scour back into our facebook page for a video from a few years ago, you’ll see how we dig them using an old horse-drawn machine that Dad retrofitted to work with our 1948 Ford 8N tractor (it’s really something to see). Unfortunately, it, like pretty much all machinery, does not work well in mud.

Caramelized Bell Peppers and Onions

From Allrecipes

1 red bell pepper, cut into strips

1 onion, cut into strips

1/2 tablespoon olive oil

1/2 teaspoon butter

1/8 cup red wine (optional)

1 pinch salt

1 pinch ground black pepper

1 pinch dried basil

In a hot saucepan over a medium heat, combine red peppers, onion, oil and butter; saute for 2 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until the onions and peppers soften.

If desired, stir red wine into the vegetables and cook until the wine evaporates; approximately 30 minutes. Season with salt, pepper, and basil.

RECIPES OF THE WEEK

Stuffed Eggplant

From Food Network

1 large eggplant

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

1/2 pound ground beef

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 onion, small diced

1 red pepper, small diced

3 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 cup freshly chopped parsley leaves (recommended, but optional)

1/2 cup freshly chopped basil leaves, chopped (recommended, but optional)

1 1/4 cup grated cheese

1/4 cup bread crumbs

1 egg

2 chopped tomatoes

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Cut the eggplant in half and scoop out the center, leaving enough meat inside the skin so that it holds its shape when baked. Boil the scooped-out center part until very soft, about 10 to 12 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a medium saute pan heat 1 tablespoon olive oil over medium heat. Season the beef with salt and pepper. Add the seasoned ground beef to the pan and saute until all of its liquid is evaporated and the beef begins to brown slightly. Drain the beef, removing the extra, unnecessary fat. Let cool briefly and chop the cooked beef so that there are no large chunks of meat. In another medium saute pan over medium heat add the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil and saute the onions, peppers and garlic together.

In a bowl mix together the cooked eggplant, vegetables, cooked beef, herbs, 1 cup of the cheese, bread crumbs, and the egg.

Fill the scooped-out eggplant halves with this mixture, dividing it evenly among the 2 halves.

Top with chopped tomatoes and the remaining 1/4 cup of grated cheese, season with salt and pepper, place on an oiled oven tray or baking dish, and bake for 50 minutes in preheated oven. Let cool briefly, slice widthwise and serve.

Broccoli Salad

So simple, yet delicious

10 slices bacon

2-3 cups broccoli cut into bite size pieces

1/4 cup red onion, chopped

1/2 cup raisins

3 tablespoons white wine vinegar

2 tablespoons white sugar

1 cup mayonnaise

1 cup sunflower seeds

Place bacon in a large, deep skillet. Cook over medium high heat until evenly brown. Drain, crumble and set aside. In a medium bowl, combine the broccoli, onion and raisins. In a small bowl, whisk together the vinegar, sugar and mayonnaise. Pour over broccoli mixture, and toss until well mixed. Refrigerate for at least two hours. Before serving, toss salad with crumbled bacon and sunflower seeds.