

Guldan Family Farm



NOTES FROM THE FARM

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This week's share... Our best guess

Rhubarb – This cool weather crop is a perennial meaning it does not die each season, but re-grows from the original plant each spring.

Scallions, sometimes referred to as “green top” onions are at their peak season in spring and early summer.

Asparagus - tasty perennial spears that we are hoping to include both this, and next week.

Garlic chives - this perennial member of the onion family is a delicious garnish to many summer favorites. Chopping them up to add to any form of potato is guaranteed to be yummy!

Red radishes (hopefully) - These brightly colored red globes are easiest to grow before the arrival of hot weather.

Leaf lettuce—a couple bags of green and mixed greens for our full share members this week.

Jam CSA members

Your first selection is Raspberry Peach Jam. It's a raspberry preserve with, you guessed it, peach undertones!

WEEK 1: WELCOME!

Welcome new members and welcome back returning members! As in past seasons, our first newsletter will highlight some guidelines and will be somewhat of a repeat for those of you who've been with us in years past. We hope this will be a mouth-watering “eating in season” experience for you this summer and early fall. For those who are new to our program, you'll notice that your share is packed into a reusable tote bag. Please remember to bring the empty bag along with you each week to your pickup point. Next week your share will be pre-packed into a 2nd tote. In this way, we will rotate the 2 bags each week throughout the season. Full share members will eventually have 2 totes for a total of 4. If it is your pickup day and you've suddenly realized that you totally forgot to pick up your share, you must call us at 359-2543 that evening or the next morning to make arrangements for pickup. Please do not email as our email is not checked late at night or in the morning when we're in the field. Our phone messages are checked often, so please leave a voice mail. If we have not had a phone call from you by noon the following day, your share will no longer be available. If you know in advance that you will be unable to pick up your share on a particular day, there are several ways we can work with that.

1. Arrange for friends to pick up your share for you to enjoy or save upon your return.
2. Let us know in advance, and we can prepare a double share for you on the previous week or another week that you choose.
3. If you are available a different day that week, you may pick it up at the farm, but we need to know in advance before your scheduled pickup day.
4. We can donate it to the food shelf.

As many of you are well aware, Minnesota's “typical” growing season, is anything but typical. All winter/early spring there was talk of drought, drought, and more drought. Ummm, that definitely didn't happen (then again, we'll see what June and July have in store.. but I digress)! We've been battling to get into the field in a timely manner when needed and so far things look to be in order. The weeds are growing especially well! If it's too wet to plant, it's also unfortunately too wet to hoe or cultivate. The good news is that what IS in the field is looking fantastic and there's much more to come!

ALWAYS A GUESSING GAME

“Our best guess” – Since I'm usually writing this newsletter the Sunday before your pickup date and anticipating what will be harvested a few days before it is actually being picked for you, occasionally we may have guessed wrong. We have CSA pickups on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. We can only try our best to guess what items will be available for the week. Occasionally the shares at different pickup points will vary. We may have to make last minute substitutions or choose that one pickup point gets a specific item one week, and another pickup point receives that item the following week. If you're seeing us at a farmers' market, you may sometimes notice that we have produce for sale that has not been included in the shares that week. Most likely this is because it's season has just begun and there is not nearly enough available for the shares. Our plan is to include a selection each week of what is in season and to not overwhelm you with any one thing in particular. Some varieties of produce have a long harvesting season and you will probably see them more often than varieties that aren't as common or have a short harvest season. These first few weeks will likely be “lighter” shares. Don't worry, the later season shares will more than make up for the difference!

IDEAS FOR THE COOK

This regular column will recommend tips on storing and using the produce you have received each week.

First of all, this week everything should be stored in your refrigerator as soon as you get home. If it's not already in a plastic bag, it would be best to place the produce in something airtight. We are trying to limit the plastic bags used to package your shares. We will always separate green onions from other "taste sensitive" items in your share and bag up small items like peas and beans that are best contained in one bag. Most produce will be rinsed to remove the first layer of "field dirt." It may look fairly clean; but as any produce, you should wash it thoroughly before eating. Delicate items like leafy greens will also be bagged. On that same note, we had several requests in past years from members asking us to *not* rinse the lettuce. If the conditions allow and it is fairly clean, we will not rinse it. We know that it will store longer for you if we don't rinse it.

Rhubarb ~ dessert time, of course! Years ago, most homes had a rhubarb clump in the corner of their yard somewhere. Now, it's not so common - and quite expensive to buy in a grocery store.

Asparagus—don't cut off the bottoms! Our asparagus is picked above the tender point, so there is no need to cut off the bottom portion as is often required when purchasing from grocery stores.

Asparagus Casserole

For our new members, I'd like to introduce this gem of a recipe. This was mom's (Janice) favorite way to make asparagus when she had the time, it has been a family favorite ever since!

1 bundle of asparagus, chopped
3 cups of cubed ham or grilled chicken
-Toss these together in a 9x13 inch pan
1 can cream of celery soup, mixed with 1/2 cup milk
-Pour this on top of the meat and asparagus
1 cup of shredded Swiss cheese sprinkled on top
1pkg of stove-top chicken dressing mixed with 1.5 cups hot water
- Allow the water to soak in, and sprinkle over the casserole
Finally, bake at 350 degrees for 30-40 minutes. Enjoy!

ON THE FARM

It wouldn't be a newsletter without somewhat of an update each week of what has been happening on the farm. As with each year, we'll probably talk a lot about the weather and you'll probably think we're obsessed with the weather. Truth be told, we probably are. We're farmers. Our livelihood depends on it.

Each planting of crops like peas, beans and corn are harvested for about a week at their prime so these crops are planted on nearly a weekly basis through the spring and early summer months to provide a regular supply for a long harvesting season. Crops like cabbage, broccoli and kohlrabi are planted every 2 to 3 weeks and most other vegetable varieties several times throughout the season. Winter squash, potatoes, eggplant, peppers and tomatoes are only planted once because of their long growing season to maturity. So we only have one chance on those.

One of the goals of a CSA is to help you enjoy eating seasonally. Our hope is that this newsletter will make that easier for you. Enjoy your first week of fresh eatin'! **The Guldans**

RECIPES OF THE WEEK

Rhubarb Cream Dessert

This is simply delicious!

4 cups chopped rhubarb (this should be about what you'll find in your share)
4 Tbsp butter
2 & 1/2 cups sugar
4 slightly rounded Tbsp corn starch
4 eggs, well-beaten
1/2 cup cream or milk
3/4 cup brown sugar
1 & 1/2 cups oatmeal
1 & 1/2 cups flour
1 & 1/2 cups shortening
3/4 tsp salt
1/2 tsp baking soda

Melt butter. Add two cups of sugar and rhubarb, cook slowly until the rhubarb is tender. Combine 1/2 cup of sugar, corn starch, eggs, cream, and 1/4 tsp salt. Add this to the rhubarb. Cook until thick. Combine brown sugar, oatmeal, flour, shortening, 1/2 tsp salt, and soda. Put half of this into a 9x13 inch pan. Pour in the rhubarb mixture. Add remaining crumbs on top. Bake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes.

Honey Topped Radishes

As discovered by Brooke Guldans

Yes, this is just that. Yes, it sounds really weird. Trust my wife, she's a nurse. Add a small plop of honey on top of a red radish. It's quite tasty and helps cut the heat if it happens to be on the kickin' side!