



THE RADISH BUNCHER

CSA NEWSLETTER

October 20, 2015

IN THE BOX

- ~Sweet Potatoes
- ~Red & Yellow Onions
- ~Savoy Cabbage
- ~Sweet Peppers
- ~Watermelon Radishes
- ~Purple Daikon
- ~Salad Mix
- ~Kale
- ~Winter Squash
- ~Hot Peppers

We did have a killing frost and freeze both Friday and Saturday nights. I think this is the latest frost I've had on this farm. Usually we get a light frost the third week of September with a killing frost a week or two later.

Over the last couple of weeks there has been a hoophouse project going on at the farm. We needed to replace the plastic on one hoophouse. It was also time to replace the baseboards and make some other changes. Last week it was time to pull the plastic over the hoophouse. I had 11 people lined up to help but the job can only be done if there is no wind. Even a small breeze can turn 5000 square feet of plastic into a giant sail that makes you wonder if you will land

in the next county. But we got lucky. In a week where many days had extremely high winds, we picked the one day that was perfect. We had a little challenge with the second layer of plastic, but it generally went very well. My thanks to all who helped out and especially to Jerry and Hal who spearheaded the project and did the construction work so I could focus on harvesting.

Final Words

This is the final box of the CSA season. I think it has been a good harvest season. The weather was a little cool so some of our hot weather crops came in a little late. But we had timely and sufficient rainfall so we didn't have to irrigate too much.

Every year there are some crops that do well and some that do not. I feel like the lettuce and salad mix were terrific this year. We were able to put salad greens in every box this season. Herbs were good. Tomatoes started out great, but fizzled out sooner than I wanted them to end. Garlic was a complete failure. I raised garlic very successfully for 22 years, but the last 4 years have been failures. I have purchased new garlic seed to try again for next year.

One of the big changes this year was the installation of the deer fence. It is amazing how well crops will do when

they are not being nibbled down to the ground. I think this is why we had great lettuce, good peas, peppers and sweet potatoes. The fence is definitely worth the investment.

You all hear from me every week, but there are many other folks involved in making this farm hum along on a day to day basis. First of all I have a fabulous field crew that works in all kinds of weather. I thank them from the bottom of my heart for another wonderful season that included lots of laughing as well as work. I also want to thank the folks who host the pick-up sites and help you all get your boxes. And finally, I have a great crew that comes very early on Saturday mornings to help me set up and sell at the farmers market. Thanks to all who make my job and life easier.

THIS WEEK'S RECIPE

Sweet Potato Pancakes *(Moosewood Cookbook)*

1 packed cup grated sweet potato
1 packed cup grated white potato
1 packed cup grated carrot
2 tablespoons grated onions
¼ cup chopped parsley
5 beaten eggs
1/3 cup flour
Juice of ½ lemon
1 teaspoon salt
Dash of black pepper
Dash of nutmeg
1 clove crushed garlic (optional)

Place grated sweet and white potatoes in a colander over a bowl. Salt lightly and let stand 15 minutes. Rinse and squeeze out well to get rid of the extra water.

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Fry in butter or oil in a heavy skillet until brown and crisp. Serve immediately topped with yogurt or sour cream and fresh-chopped green onions or herbs. 4-6 servings.

My Winter Plans

Every fall I get asked how I will spend all of my down time in the winter. It always makes me chuckle as there is lots of winter work.

First of all, I still have 3 outside farmers market to attend. Then the market will move inside to Monona Terrace. I will attend market through at least Thanksgiving, but maybe as long as mid-December.

So in addition to harvesting every week, I will start doing field clean up. All the black plastic has to be lifted up and miles of irrigation lines must be rolled up. All of this needs to be done before the ground freezes. Otherwise it has to be done in the spring when we should be planting.

Once the outside work is done it is time to clean out the hoopouses. Then the beds need to be prepped and readied for next year.

Then there is paperwork and more paperwork. Ordering seeds takes about 40 hours. Plus there is all that stuff to do for the IRS and the CSA brochure.

Before I know it February is here and it is time to start seeds in my basement grow room and the cycle begins again.