



7 1/4 lbs. of potatoes from 2 squares



Zucchini at JCC Camp



Snap Peas for the munching



The Backyard Farmer

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Words from the Farmers

Time to Eat

We are now arriving at the time of year we have all been waiting for....summer vegetables. We look forward to the moment we can walk in our backyard and pick our cherry tomatoes, munch on cucumbers as we stroll through the garden, and chase Cooper away from eating the green beans right off the vine.

The number one request we have had from customers these last few weeks has been about recipes. So we are dedicating this newsletter to recipes we have discovered which will help you make wonderful meals from many of the good things from your gardens.

There are some things you should know about your summer vegetables.

1. You should not put your

harvested tomatoes in the refrigerator. This will ruin their flavor.

2. Summer squash, zucchini, and cucumbers grow extremely fast. Check them at least every other day.
3. Store basil in the warmest part of your refrigerator. This would be your temperature controlled drawer or the refrigerator door as basil does not like to be much below 50 degrees.
4. One of the best ways to use your summer vegetables is on the grill. Toss them in olive oil with a little salt. Grilling brings out many great flavors and you can save the extra grilled vegetables to be used in recipes later that week.

We hope you enjoy your harvests for these next 6 weeks. It is gonna be hot so keep looking under all those leaves. Summer things love to hide:-)



What's Growing



Tip of the Month

Japanese beetles are quite prevalent this season. Although they are pretty, they are also disgusting (Coleen's words) as they are voracious eaters. You will notice their damage by the lacy look of eaten leaves. Organic controls include handpicking by dropping them into a glass of water and then flushing, or growing a distraction crop such as a wild grape vine away from vegetable garden, as well as products such as Pyola which can be purchased from us or Gardens Alive. The beetles larvae winter over in your lawn. If you develop a severe problem with Japanese beetles, you may have to use a product which eliminates the grubs in your lawn before they hatch into beetles.



Cooper's Corner

Summer parties are my favorite. The backyard gets cleaned up from the spring, the grill gets uncovered, and I get ready to enjoy the progression of friends and family who come to my backyard to hang out. I have been perfecting my pre-grilling techniques this year. Why just this weekend I made off with two whole hotdogs before Joan put them on the grill. Score one for the Dog!!



The nature of green beans in August

Pole beans and bush beans are heat loving plants and thrive in the heat and moisture of the deep summer. They can go from tiny match size beans to huge, nearly inedible sticks in just a matter of days.

Depending on the weather, a week may be too long between harvests. Therefore, picking every other day may be very beneficial. Bush bean produce one large crop a season, but pole beans will keep producing until frost if kept picked. When pole beans produce their seeds they think their job is all done. So they stop producing and go dormant, which means no more beans. If you keep consistently picking the beans, you are fooling the plant into constant production which may last through the end of summer.

We go on vacation every year during the second week in August. Coleen literally finds 5-6 different people to pick our beans. She knows that one or two will forget, and the others just won't pick as much as we normally would. There is nothing worse than coming back from our vacation to find pole beans with giant overgrown beans. She goes into a depression because she knows it will be another month before they start producing again. Keep up the picking and they will keep producing.

Kid's Corner

"Japanese Beetle Challenge"

Sometimes adults are not as drawn to insects as children are. We are throwing out a challenge. We would like to see pictures of how many Japanese Beetles kids were able to collect in a glass. Send us your pictures and we would love to post them in the newsletter.



Recipes of the Month

Summer Rice Salad

1 C. Uncooked Basmati or long grain white rice
 6 Tbsp. Extra virgin olive oil
 ¼ C. Red wine vinegar
 1½ tsp. Minced garlic
 1-2 C. Corn kernels (cut from 2-4 ears, grilled if possible)
 1 Large ripe tomato, cored, seeded and cut into ¼ inch cubes
 1-2 C. Diced (1/4 inch) cucumber
 ½ C. Diced red onion
 ¼ - ½ C. Torn basil leaves
 Pinch Kosher salt and ground black pepper
 1 C. Thawed, frozen, cooked, shelled shrimp or shredded cooked chicken or feta, parmesan, or goat cheese

Heat 1 ¾ C. water and add rice and salt to taste (1/2-1 tsp.)
 Cook on low until water is absorbed and rice is tender (about 15 min.)

Let stand uncovered until cool, then fluff.

Whisk olive oil, vinegar, garlic, ¼ tsp. salt and ground pepper in a bowl.

Add rice, corn, tomatoes, cucumber, basil, onion and toss to blend.
 Add meat and/or cheese and dressing and toss again.
 Serve at room temperature - or can be refrigerated for a day and served chilled.
 Serves 6

Zucchini Fry Cakes

4 Large eggs
 1 tsp. Lemon juice
 ¼ C. Mayonnaise
 1/3 C. Parmesan cheese
 ½ C. Flour – white or whole wheat
 1 Small finely diced onion or 3-4 green onions
 4 C. Shredded zucchini
 Salt and pepper
 1-3 Tbsp. Butter melted and 1-3 Tbsp. Canola oil mixed together
 OPTIONAL: Sour cream and chives for serving on top of cakes

In a large bowl, beat eggs with a fork or wire whip until blended.

Beat in lemon juice, mayonnaise, cheese, flour and onion.

Stir in zucchini until well combined and season to taste with salt and pepper.

In a 10-12 inch NON-Stick pan heat 1-2 tsp. of oil/butter mixture over medium heat.

Drop zucchini mixture 1 heaping Tbsp. at a time into the pan and spread out to make 3 inch diameter cakes. Turn once set and cook on the other side until golden brown 3-4 minutes total. Makes about 30 cakes.

Coleen's favorite quick salad (from a trip to Israel)

1 Cucumber
 1 Large tomato
 Feta cheese crumbles
 Balsamic vinaigrette -Newman's is good

Dice cucumber and tomato. Add feta cheese and dressing to taste. Mix together and serve. (If using boughten cucumber, peel.)

Mint /Stevia Water or Cucumber Water

These two refreshing drinks for summer are very easy to make. For the cucumber water simply slice a large cucumber into a pitcher of water and let chill in the refrigerator for the day. It may sound strange but try it at least once. For mint water, place 5-10 mint stems and leaves in a steeping container such as a glass coffee pot. Pour boiling water over the mint. Let cool, remove mint and refrigerate. You can easily adjust the strength of the mint flavor by reducing or increasing the amount of mint you use. For a variation, add a stem or two of stevia if you are growing it or a green or brown tea of your choice.

Chard Stalks and Garlic Pasta

(A good way to use the stems when you've used the leaves for other recipes)

- 3 C. Swiss chard stalks cut into 1 inch pieces
- 1 Pkg. pasta of your choice (for gluten free use Tinkyada Brown Rice Pasta)
- 3 Tbsp. Butter
- 3 Tbsp. Olive oil
- 1 Large onion chopped (or substitute green onion)
- 6 Cloves of garlic chopped (use garlic scapes when they are in season)
- Shredded parmesan cheese for serving
- Salt and pepper to taste
- OPTIONAL: Add the chopped chard leaves as well – adds nice color and flavor and/or 1/4 C. Pine nuts.

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Cook the Swiss chard stems in boiling water until tender, about 12-15 minutes, drain and rinse with cool water.

Cook the pasta in boiling water until tender yet firm to the bite, according to package directions. Drain.

Meanwhile melt the butter with the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Stir in the onion and garlic. Cook while stirring for around 5 minutes until onion is translucent. Increase heat to medium high and add chard stalks and chard greens, if using, and cook another 5 minutes until onion is nicely browned. Salt and pepper to taste. Stir in the pasta and serve with the parmesan cheese.

Basil Pesto

- 3 C. Packed basil leaves
- 2-4 Large cloves of garlic to your taste
- 1/3 C. Pine nuts or chopped walnuts, lightly toasted
- 1/3 C. Extra virgin olive oil
- 1/3 C. Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp. Salt and pepper to taste

Place the basil leaves, salt and garlic in a blender or food processor and puree well.

Add the nuts and blend in.

With the machine running, drizzle in the olive oil.

When you have a smooth paste, transfer to a bowl and stir in the cheese.

Season with freshly ground pepper.

To serve, place the room temperature pesto in a warmed serving bowl, add pasta and toss thoroughly.

Serves 6

Joan and I like to make a double or triple batch all at once as pesto making can be a bit messy. It will keep safely in the refrigerator for weeks. Just put it in an air tight cylindrical container and cover the top with a thin coat of olive oil. Take a scoop out to spread on bruschetta, pizza crust or grilled sandwiches as you need. Use about 2-3 Tbsp. per serving of pasta.

Also, pesto freezes well. Just do not add the parmesan until you thaw it. Freeze a single servings in zip lock bags or use an ice cube tray and once frozen, remove and put in air tight freezer bag. The pesto color will darken but is not a problem.

Sage Pesto

(very tasty way to use a prolific herb in Minnesota)

- 2 oz. Sage leaves (about 1/2 cup packed leaves)
- 2 oz. (1/4 C.) Chopped walnuts
- 1/3 to 1/2 C. Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 Large clove garlic
- 2 oz. (1/4 C.) Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp. Salt

Blend all together into a paste similar to basil pesto.

Can be used as a grilled sandwich spread, on pizza, eggs, or any similar use as basil pesto.

Bean and Kale Salad with Bruschetta

Serves 4

3/4 C. Vegetable broth, boxed
2 tsp. Cornstarch
1 tsp. Brown sugar
½ -1 tsp Salt to taste
2 Tbsp. Fresh rosemary, chopped
4 Cloves of garlic, chopped
¼ C. Balsamic vinegar
½ tsp. Red pepper flakes (optional)
3 Tbsp. Extra virgin olive oil
1 Bunch kale, stems removed
1 15 oz. Can Navy beans, drained and rinsed
1 15 Oz. Can Kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1 Large tomato, diced

BRUSCHETTA

1 Whole wheat baguette thinly sliced into 16 diagonal pieces
½ C. Fresh basil
1 tsp. Extra virgin olive oil
1 Pinch kosher salt
¼ C. Crumbled gorgonzola cheese (1/2 oz.)

Put a large pot of water on to boil for the kale. In a small sauce pan, combine broth, cornstarch, sugar, salt, rosemary, and garlic. Stirring constantly, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer gently until thickened. Add vinegar, pepper flakes and oil and simmer briefly, then remove from heat.

Chop the kale and drop in boiling water. Cook for 2 minutes after the water returns to a boil. Drain and press out the water. Rinse and drain the beans and lay them on a towel and gently roll to dry. Put beans and kale in a bowl and gently toss with dressing.

To make bruschetta, preheat the broiler. Place baguette slices on a baking sheet. Chop the basil finely, and mix with 1 tsp. olive oil in small bowl. On each slice add a portion of basil and gorgonzola. Broil for 1 minute, watching carefully, just to melt and brown the cheese.

Kale Chips

20 oz. curly kale (2 good sized bunches), stems removed, leaves torn into 2 inch pieces.
2 Tbsp. Extra virgin olive oil
5 tsp. Sriracha sauce or more if desired (optional)
Coarse salt

Preheat oven to 300 degrees with racks in upper and lower thirds.

Wash and dry kale and put in large bowl. In small bowl, stir together oil and Sriracha and drizzle oil over kale and use your hands to massage oil mixture into the kale. Divide between two rimmed baking sheets and season with salt. Bake until kale is crisp and just beginning to turn brown at the edges-usually about 35 minutes- tossing kale every 10 minutes. (Kale will shrink as it cooks) Let cool on sheets on wire racks. To store, keep in large zip-lock plastic bag at room temperature, up to 3 days.