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News from the Fields of Driftless Organics

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Week #8! Things on the farm are well.... and we are chugging right along with harvesting and more harvesting... Garlic is DONE!!! And now, onto the onions. We have about an acre of onions that are due to be harvested this week. We hope you all are enjoying the boxes and enjoying the summer as well.

Let's get serious for a minute or two and talk about the future of our food.

Food comes from plants which, of course, come from seeds and that's where the trouble begins. One of the latest bits of news in the seed world has to do with the impending introduction of yet another GM (Genetically Modified) crop: Sugar Beets. This hits home to the Minnesotans among us (to a certain extent) as Minnesota produces a large portion of the nation's sugar beets.

When I start reading or hearing about the current state our nations' seed sources and seed security, I get scared. When I hear factoid tidbits like how Monsanto, the agri-business giant, owns most of the world's seeds, or about the latest lawsuit brought against small farmers for using "patented" seed, I get terribly frightened for our future.

But, rather than having me blab on about the subject, resulting in an all too opinionated and political newsletter, I'd rather give you all a list of some different "good reads". So, when you have a minute or two, read a blog entry; or if you are real interested, check out one of these books. But be warned, you may be become as scared as I am...



GOOD READS:

Seeds of Deception: Exposing Industry and Government Lies About the Safety of the Genetically Engineered Foods You're Eating by Jeffrey Smith

Recent news headlines have focused on the disagreement between the U.S. and Europe over genetically modified foods: the U.S. exports them, but the European Union doesn't want to import them, believing their safety remains unproven. Are genetically modified foods safe? Longtime anti-GM foods campaigner Smith presents the "opposing" case. The cases Smith presents are scary and timely, but he explores only one side of the story. Readers looking for a balance consideration of genetically modified foods will want to look elsewhere. *Uncertain Peril: Genetic Engineering and the Future of Seeds* by Claire Hope Cummings

Claire Hope Cummings exposes the stories behind the rise of industrial agriculture and plant biotechnology, the fall of public interest science, and the folly of patenting seeds. She examines how farming communities are coping with declining water, soil, and fossil fuels, as well as with new commercial technologies.

Seeds of Destruction: The Hidden Agenda of Genetic Manipulation by William F. Engdahl

This skillfully researched book focuses on how a small socio-political American elite seeks to establish its control over the very basis of human survival, the provision of our daily bread. Control the food and you control the people. Engdahl takes the reader inside the corridors of power, into the backrooms of the science labs, behind closed doors in the corporate boardrooms. The author reveals a World of profit-driven political intrigue, government corruption and coercion, where genetic manipulation and the patenting of life forms are used to gain worldwide control over food production. The book

the BOX!

Arugula
Broccoli
Carrots
Fresh Garlic
Green & Purple Beans
Gypsy Frying Peppers
RedLeaf or Iceberg
Lettuce
Parsley
Radishes
Yellow Onions
Zucchini

CHOICE: BASIL

is an eye-opener, a must-read for all those committed to the causes of social justice and World peace.

GOOD BLOG ENTRIES:

When you are surfing net, check out these blog entries:

http://www.organicconsumers.org/articles/article_13772.cfm

<http://gristmill.grist.org/story/2008/6/6/82019/26162>

<http://www.kqed.org/quest/blog/2008/03/13/seed-banking-saving-both-agri-and-culture/>

MISCELLANEOUS

Next time you're visiting YouTube, do a search for: "The World According to Monsanto" - This is an interesting 27 minute clip.

As I've posted on the "Cropaganda" page of our website, the movie *The Future of Food* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez goes into great detail about GMOs and food security.

Great Websites:

www.organicconsumers.org
www.saynotogmos.org

Obviously, this is just a teaser of the wealth of information that's out there, but hopefully, it'll spark your interest... take care!

---Mike

YOUR BOX!

ARUGULA - is a delightfully peppery green. It doesn't keep long, so store it in the fridge and eat it up within a few days. Fresh arugula adds zest to salads and sandwiches. If you're going to cook arugula, it's best barely wilted (simply wash leaves and throw them into a hot frying pan; stir a few times until wilted; the water left on the leaves in essence flash steams the greens) and eaten by itself with a splash of lemon juice, salt, pepper, and topped with some thinly sliced aged cheese (like Parmesan or Manchego). Or you can add wilted arugula to eggs, pasta, pizza, whatever. You can also add it to a stir-fry or soup at the last second.

BROCCOLI - the broccoli bounty continues!! If it's piling up and you're sick of it, freeze it! Simply steam blanch it: toss uniformly sized florets and peeled stems chunks in a steamer basket and steam for 4-5 minutes, rinse with cold water, toss it into a bowl of ice water for a few minutes, drain, then pack into freezer bags, sucking all the air out when you close it. Frozen broccoli is best in soups and casseroles.

CARROTS - everyone knows what to do with carrots, right?

FRESH GARLIC - Next week, the garlic will be sufficiently cured and will store longer...

GREEN & PURPLE BEANS - holy buckets of beans. It's been a bumper harvest - hurrah! If you can't keep up, beans are super easy to freeze - you don't even have to blanch them like the broccoli. Simply snap off the stems put into freezer bags either whole or cut into a few pieces (I usually chop them the right size to throw right into winter time soups and stir-fries) - that's it! Frozen this way, they should be used within six months.

GREEN ZUCCHINI OR YELLOW SUMMER SQUASH - the summer squash season has officially begun! Delicious sauteed with garlic (and some of that fennel you still haven't used!) and tossed with pasta and pesto; in fajitas with the gypsy pepper, onions, garlic, cumin, coriander,

and hot red chiles; or pasta sauce or scrambled eggs.

RED LEAF OR ICEBERG LETTUCE - Any farmer will tell you that you can't grow lettuce in the middle of the summer. Well, we tried and we have some for you, but it may have a bit of rust at the base. Just trim off and there you go!

GYPSY FRYING PEPPERS - these mild peppers are great in stir-fries, fajitas, eggs, anything you'd use a green bell pepper in.

RED RADISHES - a nice midsummer surprise with spicy bite! If you're not crazy about them fresh, try them sauteed in butter with garlic and salt and pepper or in sesame oil with ginger. They can also be sneaked raw into potato or asian-style salads.

RED or GREEN SAVOY CABBAGE - are the most lovely of cabbages. Use as you would regular cabbage or Napa cabbage - coleslaws, salads, stir-fries, braised, etc. Or you can steam individual big leaves and stuff them with just about anything (in Greece they stuff them with spiced ground meat).

PARSLEY of the Italian flat leaf variety is the tastiest! It's also super high in iron and vitamins A and C. Fresh stuff like this has a rich mineral flavor & lush dark green color that enhances just about any meal - salads, pastas, soups, pestos, any kind of meat, beans, grains, eggs - you name it, parsley can be put on it.

YELLOW ONIONS these are uncured and will keep for about week at room temperature or much longer in the fridge. Best to cook with unless you like a raw onion with lots of bite (use the sweet onions from last week raw). Many more onions to come - harvest has just begun.

EXTRA ITEM: BASIL - Now's the chance for all you pesto lovers to stock up!!! Check out the classic pesto recipe. It freezes great for use in winter pastas and pizzas. The Red Opal Basil works just the same - it just gives you a purple pesto!

CLASSIC PESTO*

- 6 c. loosely packed fresh basil or red opal basil (I include small stems)
- 4-5 cloves garlic
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 1 c. Parmesan, grated
- 1 c. pine nuts or walnuts
- 2/3 c. olive oil

In a large food processor (do it in 2 batches if you have a small one), pulse basil, garlic, salt, pepper, & nuts until coarsely ground. Add Parmesan & pulse a few more times. With processor running pour in oil in a thin stream until it looks like pesto! Store in air-tight container (press plastic wrap onto the surface of or pour a layer of olive oil over the pesto to prevent discoloration). Keep in refrigerator for about a week or freeze (most recipes say to leave the cheese out if you're freezing it but I've never had a problem).

* This classic recipe can be altered to match your ingredients - simply use the same proportions and substitute other fresh herbs or mixtures of herbs (cilantro, rosemary, parsley, oregano, etc.) any dry aged cheese (asiago, romano, etc.), & any nut or seed (slivered almonds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, etc.). I also sometimes add a splash of lemon juice to liven it up.

