



ONE POTATO TWO

NEWS FROM THE FIELDS OF DRIFTLESS ORGANICS

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Week Nine! So, where does all of our produce go? Well, most of it goes to you all - but we also sell to some stores, farmer's markets, and to folks like my wife, who is running her very own catering company!

ROOTED SPOON!!!

I i there, Mike's wife Dani here. Mike asked me to write this newsletter to talk about the joys & challenges of using primarily local food (from Driftless Organics whenever possible, of course!) in my catering business, Rooted Spoon Culinary (check out the pretty web site Mike made for us at www.rootedspoon.com). Like all you CSA members, my business partner Macon & I feel strongly about using local produce, meat, dairy, & oil for lots of good reasons: we like supporting local farms, knowing our food is healthy & where it comes from, having stories to tell about it, keeping our money in our local community & the Midwest, encouraging sustainable growing practices... And most importantly, we like using local food because it's just plain fresher & tastier than food from farther away.

We cater a lot of weddings, fundraisers, special dinners, barmitzvahs, etc. & it's so fun & easy to wow people when you use really good ingredients. It helps that people generally have low expectations for large catered events - so much of what you see is heavily processed, conventional, & pretty generic. With fresh local stuff, we barely have to do anything to it & it comes out shining.

Another cool thing about using fresh, local food at catered events is the opportunity it presents to spread the word about the local food movement. I've been working the produce department at our local food co-op in Viroqua for the last 10 years & have always been very proud of our local program & happy to have customers who appreciate it. But about 80% of our sales at the co-op are to members, so for the most part we're preaching to the choir & simply providing what members already want. At the average 200 person wedding, though,

only a small percentage of the guests will be local foodies & the rest probably have never thought much about the local food movement. So when the food is really good/fresh/beautiful & these guests find out it's because it's all local I like to think some light bulbs might go on & make a convert or two. We really encourage our customers to have printed menus that make a statement about why they chose to have local food at their event & what farms/producers everything came from so guests can know & appreciate what they're doing.

It's not always fun & la-la feel-good to try to stick to local ingredients, though. Almost every job involves some stressful scramble or other for ingredients that unexpectedly become unavailable because of cold/heat/rain/drought/hail/tornado/flood/accidental plowing under/bugs/raccoons/truck or tractor or equipment breakdowns - you name it, it can & often does go wrong on a small farm. So, we spend a lot of time making frantic phone calls to various growers we know & asking them to do big favor to help us provide a seasonal menu as planned. It also takes some work convincing customers to give up the cucumber salad they want in May or the asparagus they want in November, but they usually come around. The harder sell

THIS WEEK'S BOX

- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Cucumbers
- Fresh Garlic
- Green Beans
- Green Top Red Beets
- Green Zucchini
- Sage
- Sungolds or Red Saladette Tomatoes
- Yellow Summer or
- Patty Pan Squash
- Yellow Onions

is often the cost. As we all know, it costs more to produce good quality, nutritious, organically raised food on the small farms we want to exist than it does on the huge scale monoculture farms, & that cost gets transferred into our estimates.

Luckily we live in a community that has a critical mass of people who love good food & understand the cost of it so for every potential customer who wants cheap food we get a couple more who appreciate what we do.

So, if any of you have weddings or some other special event coming up & you want to come on over to the lovely Driftless region, we love connecting with local farms' CSA members to hook them up with catered food from "their farm"!



Chefs Dani Lind and Macon Luhning of Rooted Spoon Culinary

Baked Zucchini Sticks with Onion Dip

adapted from a recipe found on www.kingarthurflour.com

Dip

1 tablespoon butter
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
salt and pepper to taste

1 medium yellow onion,
2 tablespoons honey
1 cup mayonnaise

Zucchini sticks

3 medium zucchini or summer squash, unpeeled, cut into 3"-long sticks (you can even use the patty pans if you are creative with your chopping)
1 tablespoon salt
1 cup Panko bread crumbs (you can use regular bread crumbs, but Panko work better)
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon chopped sage
1/2 cup egg substitute; or 2 large eggs; or 3 egg whites, lightly beaten

To make the dip: Melt the butter in a medium frying pan over moderate heat, and add the sliced onions. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions soften, then caramelize. This should take between 10 and 15 minutes. The lower the heat, the longer it takes, but the less likely you are to burn the onions. Once the onions are a medium brown, remove from the heat and add the vinegar. Place the onions and vinegar into a small food processor. Add the honey and mustard, and process or blend until smooth. Add the mayonnaise and salt and pepper to taste, stirring to combine. Refrigerate, covered, until ready to serve.

To make the zucchini sticks: Place the zucchini/summer squash sticks in a colander over a bowl and sprinkle with the tablespoon of salt. Let them drain for 1 hour or longer; rinse and pat dry. Combine the Panko bread crumbs, Parmesan, and sage; set aside. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment, and coat with olive or sunflower oil. Dredge sticks a few at a time in the egg, then roll in the crumb mixture. Place the sticks on the prepared baking sheet.

Bake sticks for 12 minutes, turn over, and bake for an additional 8 minutes, until golden brown and crisp.

Serve immediately, with onion dip.

Cucumber, Tomato & Roasted Beet Salad

1 bunch red beets (4 - 5 medium beets), cut into 1/8" thick half-moons (do not peel)
2 Tbsp. oil
salt & pepper to taste
1 clove garlic, minced
1 lemon, juice & zest
3 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
1/4 c. olive or Driftless sunflower oil
2 Tbsp. honey
1 tsp. dried oregano (or 1 Tbsp. fresh)
salt & pepper to taste
1 large cucumber, quartered lengthwise, seeded, & sliced
1 cup assorted tomatoes, chopped
1/2 fresh onion, thinly sliced
1/4 cup oil cured olives (optional)
fresh basil or Italian parsley for garnish (optional)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Toss sliced beets with 2 Tbsp oil, salt & pepper & pour onto rimmed baking sheet. Roast for about 20-30 minutes, stirring once or twice, until starting to caramelize & become tender. Remove from oven & let cool. Meanwhile, combine garlic, lemon juice/zest, vinegar, remaining oil, honey, oregano, salt & pepper in a large bowl & whisk until emulsified. Add cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, cooled beets, & garnish & toss to coat. Serves 4-6.

THIS WEEK'S BOX

Broccoli - quite possibly the funkier looking broccoli we have ever grown - and we are attributing this to the crazy heat waves we've been having. If you can't keep up with all the broccoli, remember it's easy to freeze it by blanching it for about 3 minutes, dunking in ice water to cool, then draining & packing it into a freezer bag. Come winter time, you will be happy to have it for soup!

Carrots - what a great carrot season so far, these are beauties! Great for snacking on raw or adding to stir-fries, curries, salads, etc. Store in plastic in the fridge.

Cucumbers - are what your salads are made of in the hot dog days of summer when salad won't grow. Try the recipe, below. Keep in the warmest part of your fridge (usually the door or the front top shelf) & use up within a few days.

Fresh Garlic - won't store for as long fresh as after it's cured, so eat it up! Should be fine on the counter for a week or two.

Green Beans - I love green beans!!! My favorite things to do with them are to steam them for just a few minutes & then drizzle

them with fresh lemon juice & olive oil or butter, or saute them with garlic & chopped tomatoes, or eat them raw (best raw within a day or two). Store in the fridge & best eat them up within a few days.

Green Bell Peppers - Green bell peppers are a super versatile veggie that are great in salads, stir fries, with dip, on pizza, in scrambled eggs or pasta sauce. The sky is the limit! Store in the crisper drawer of your fridge.

Green Top Red Beets - Don't forget about those tops! They are wonderful steamed or mixed in at the last minute with a scramble or stir fry. The beets are wonderful in the above recipe or grated on salads. Store tops separate from the beets and they will both last longer.

Green Zucchini - So now is about the time where we start to get kind tired of zucchini and really have to start using our imagination. An old standby: zucchini bread! Also try the recipe above!

Sage - most people only buy sage at Thanksgiving, but it is super nice on pasta & pizzas, or sliced into a thin chiffonade & sprinkled over grilled veggies.

Sungold or Red Saladette Tomatoes - The season is just beginning, so look forward to lots more. Please don't store your tomatoes in the fridge, as it can make them mealy. They're best on the counter, loose or in a paper bag.

Mixed Tomatoes - You will be getting a fair amount of romas (great for sauce) and a couple slicers (red and round and great on sandwiches). The yellow guys are called Taxi and are a low-acid tomato that are wonderful and colorful additions to salads. If you are wondering about the different types of tomatoes we grow you can check out the tomato recipe page on our website!

Yellow Onions - It turned out to be a really wonderful onion year and these yellow are testament to that. These are much stronger than the sweet onions from last week - and are best used for cooking. They are to be stored in the fridge, as they are a fresh (uncured) onion.

Yellow Summer Squash & Patty Pan Squash - If there isn't enough zucchini for the recipe above, these will work just the same. Also work in zucchini bread!