

Johnson's Backyard Garden, Fall Session Week #5
November 5th, 2007

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1) In your box this week:

Eggplant – Megal, Raavayya, Orient Charm, Ichiban Japanese
Peppers –Cubanelles, Chocolate, and maybe a Jalapeno or two
Mei Quing Choi – Baby Bok Choy
Turnip Greens
Arugula
Green Garlic
Baby sweet potatoes
Sugar snap snow peas
Pecans
Salad mix with a few sun gold cherries

**next week should be the first of the broccoli and large tomatoes

How to store this week's bounty: all - except the pecans and sweet potatoes go in the fridge as soon as you arrive home. It is best to use the eggplants as soon as possible, preferably within a day. Do not store the eggplants at temperatures less than 50 degrees. Check out our [storage tips](#) on our website.

2) Farm News

Potluck

Sorry for the late newsletter this week but this was a busy weekend for us. Beth and I really had a lot of fun meeting everyone that came out to the potluck. Thanks to everyone for coming and checking out the farm. The weather could not have been better and the food was excellent. I also enjoyed the Honky Tonk tunes provided by our friends, Horse Opera. I am already looking forward to another event this spring. Part of what makes the farm enjoyable work is having CSA members that are interested to come to the farm and connect with the place their food is grown.

For those that could not make it Saturday we hope to see you this spring. Also you missed out on a fancy farm tour! Instead of a hay ride, Brad had to make do with using our harvest

crates and having a harvest box ride on the flat bed trailer to show people the back part of the farm...Pretty soon we will be breaking ground on the pasture where the cattle are bringing two more fields into production. I am just glad we will now be breaking ground with the tractor and not with the walk behind tiller like last year.

New Transplanter

On Sunday morning a good volunteer crew showed up and we ended up transplanting 600 row feet of garlic and over 2500 broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, cabbage and collard greens. We also tried out the new [water wheel transplanter](#) for the first time. Surprisingly it was pretty easy to use. The hardest part was driving the tractor straight. We use the water wheel transplanter to plant through the plastic mulch. It is neat the way that it works. It has two wheels with punches that poke holes in the plastic when the tractor moves down the row. At the same time the holes are punched, water flows out a water tank on the transplanter and fills up the holes punched in the plastic. Two workers sit on the transplanter on seats just a few inches above the bed. It takes a quick hand since our tractor does not have a creeper gear to go super slow but with practice we were able to place the plants in the holes without skipping too many and having to come back and fill them in. Once the plants are placed in the hole the water mudds in the plants and helps get them off to a good start.

New Farm Crew Member and Interns

This Tuesday we are expecting a new arrival to the farm. Matthew Yoder from Lancaster County Pennsylvania will be joining the farm crew. He has just finished up working on a 20 acre organic vegetable farm in West Virginia for the year. Since we grow year-round here, Matthew has decided to head south and work with us for the winter and possibly next season. We are also planning on taking on one or two interns to live and work on the farm. We have had a lot of interest but I am planning on waiting till after the first of the year when I am farming full time so that I will have adequate time providing instruction and sharing my farming experience as part of the apprenticeship.

Computer Expertise Needed

We need someone to help us figure out a way to automatically subscribe and unsubscribe members to our newsletter email list. If you have the skill and time to help us with this please send us an email to farm@johnsonsbackyardgarden.com. We spend a lot of time doing this manually and if we could automate this it would free up more time for the important stuff...Farming!

3) Recipes

This section is contributed weekly by CSA member, Elaine DiRico. This week I asked her to focus on some of our Asian vegetables that we are growing this fall and winter.

Mei Quing Choi – Baby Bok Choy

Mei Quing Choi looks like the familiar green and white bok choy but is petite (4-8 inches) and the stems and leaves are all a soft green. On the grill, I like to split them, brush them with a garlicky oil and grill them cut side down. The browning sweetens them, and the

smoke adds flavor. They can be served just like that, or sliced up and tossed with a vinaigrette and a pinch of sugar for an exotic take on coleslaw. As a side dish, I love them with cherries in the winter.

Baby Bok Choy with Cherries

Serves 4 as a side dish

4 or more baby bok choy, depending on size
1/4 cup canola oil
1 Tablespoon grated fresh ginger
1 teaspoon minced garlic
2 Tablespoons soy sauce
1/4 cup broth or water
1 1/2 Tablespoon cornstarch
1 1/2 cup pitted sweet cherries

Split the bok choy lengthwise and rinse and dry well. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium high, and sear the bok choy, cut side down for 1-2 minutes until golden brown. Pour off any oil, add the garlic and ginger and stir, off the heat, to distribute well. In a small bowl, mix the soy sauce, broth and corn starch to form a paste, and pour over the vegetables. Return to medium low heat and cover. Cook for five minutes or so, until tender, stirring once or twice as the sauce thickens. Add the cherries, let them heat through, and serve.

This is also very good done with shitake mushrooms rather than cherries. Just sauté the sliced mushrooms with the bok choy, and follow the directions. If dehydrating dried black mushrooms, pour boiling water over them, and save some of the drained liquid to use instead of broth.

Tatsoi

Tatsoi, also called spoon mustard, because of its spoon shaped leaves, has a subtle, slightly citrus flavor and creamy texture. It is a wonderful winter salad and welcome addition to any stir fry. I love it chopped and served raw over stir fried vegetables to add an extra layer of texture. It is also used with a sesame dressing in a Korean appetizer, Yook Huei, that is always the first thing to disappear from a buffet table. Here is a recipe for the salad and dressing. To make the appetizer, top it with very fresh, chopped beef tenderloin, raw, or my preference, tuna, and top that with a raw egg yolk.

Yook Huei Salad

1/2 cup julienned carrot
1/2 cup scallions, sliced on the diagonal
1 cup shredded Chinese cabbage
1/2 cup cilantro, leaves only
1 cup or more tatsoi leaves
1 Tablespoon black sesame seeds (or whatever kind you have)

Mix the salad, (except the sesame seeds, and soak in ice water for one hour. Drain and dry very well. Place in a salad bowl or arrange on four salad plates. To serve toss with the dressing and garnish with sesame seeds.

Dressing:

- 1 1/2 Tablespoons tahini (sesame seed paste)
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons applecider vinegar (or rice wine vinegar if you have it)
- 2 Tablespoons grated ginger
- 3 cloves crushed garlic
- 2 Tablespoons honey
- 1 Tablespoon roasted sesame oil
- 3 Tablespoons canola or other neutral oil

Whisk everything together and let stand at room temperature for at least half an hour before serving to let the flavors meld.

Chinese Cabbage

Chinese cabbage can be substituted for familiar head cabbage in any recipe. Alton Brown (my heart throb...) has a glorious recipe for Asian Slaw, available at <http://www.foodtv.com/>. I'll admit that I am in a bit of a rut using cabbage, because that recipe is so good. With Thanksgiving coming, here is a good way to use leftover turkey, and different enough to be a good disguise. In southern Wisconsin, this is a traditional 'Hot Dish' on Thanksgiving weekend, I am told.

Turkey *Golumpkis*

- 2 cups cooked rice (or substitute left over dressing if you have it)
- 2 cups chopped cooked turkey
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup raisins
- salt and pepper (lots of pepper!)
- 1 medium head cabbage

sauce:

- 1 can tomato paste
- 1 tomato paste can of water or dry white wine or beer
- 1 tomato paste can plain yogurt or sour cream

Boil a large pot of salted water. Mix the meat (or use all dressing for a vegetarian dish) rice, onion and raisins in a large bowl, and salt and pepper to taste. Gently peel off individual leaves of cabbage, and blanch for 5-10 seconds in the boiling water, just until soft enough to bend easily. Drain well. Place 2 Tablespoons or so of filling, depending on the size of the leaf, in the middle of a blanched leaf, and roll like a burrito: Make a sausage roll with the filling in the center until 1/2 way down the leaf, then tuck both sides into the middle and continue rolling. Put in an oiled, ovenproof casserole, loose end down. When the casserole is filled, mix the sauce, and pour evenly over the *golumpkis* and bake at 325 for 45 minutes. Serve with rye bread, pickles and kraut. *Kielbasa* optional.

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