

# PINE GROVE PASTURES

CSA Newsletter, Week 9



## In Your Box

- \* Bell Peppers
- \* Hot Peppers
- \* Tomatoes
- \* Celery
- \* Carrots
- \* Kale
- \* Onions
- \* Kohlrabi
- \* Cucumbers
- \* Garlic



Tree-ripened plum. August 2016.

## Of Mice and Men

A new war is being waged here at Pine Grove Pastures. A war between men and mice. They are invading our fields, hoop house, and barn. There must be hundreds of tiny infantry on the march ravaging the tops of carrots (as you might notice in your box this week), tomatoes, peppers, and anything else near the ground. Where is Lennie when you need him?

Napoleon famously concluded, "an army marches on its stomach." Therefore I could burn the fields to destroy the enemies food source, but my own army and all of you might rebel. So in this case the best offense is a good defense. My counter attack has already begun as I saw our sniper tomcat, Murphy, heading out for night guard duty. I would call in reinforcements but cats on farms tend to multiply quickly and I'm not much of a cat person. Instead I'll deploy the tried and true method of placing mouse traps all over the place, surely snapping my fingers more often than mice.

A large part of the mice problem is they've found substantial cover amongst all the weeds, making it difficult for natural predators to see and dispatch them. Next year I plan on getting ahead of the weeds a bit better by hosting a Weed and Feed event. The idea is CSA members can come out and weed for an hour or two with us and then we'll eat the best farm fare we can provide and have some drinks while relaxing on the farm. I'll be the first to admit weeding is not fun, but I'll also be the first to admit that I also "march on my stomach" so where there's good food, people will gather. It's all a part of livin' offa the fatta the lan'.

Matt & Krista - Pine Grove Pastures

## Rookie Mistake

Plant more of everything, especially where wildlife abounds.

### *Quote for the week:*

"Why not go out on a limb? Isn't that where the fruit is?"

- Frank Scully

## Fruit on the Farm

Over the weekend, our younger son tried his first fresh-from-the-tree plum. As he bit into the deep purple flesh and the juices dribbled down his chin, it was impossible to keep from contemplating the nutrition in that plum versus the ones we had purchased at the store the week before. This is one reason we made it a point to plant as many fruit trees and bushes around the farm as we could afford this year. Raspberries, blueberries, cherries, plums, apples and strawberries. And while we won't be able to share all of the fruity goodness with our CSA members due to quantity, at a minimum we plan to share our wealth of Honeycrisp apples this year as well as strawberries and another stab at melons starting next year. We hope you'll enjoy!

# About your veggies

**Tomatoes:** Sun ripened, local tomatoes have a flavor that is incomparable to store-bought tomatoes. Each variety has its own unique texture and flavor. Rejoice in the beginning of a great season! Store in a cool but not cold place; refrigerate only if necessary.

**Onions:** The benefits and uses of onions are seemingly endless. They are anti-bacterial, anti-microbial, good for colds and infections, and good for the colon and blood. Almost any cooking method is appropriate: steam, boil, saute, braise, bake, grill, roast, etc. Keep in a cool dry place with plenty of air circulation, away from moisture-giving vegetables like potatoes.

**Kohlrabi:** Close relative of broccoli, kohlrabi means cabbage and rabi means turnip, which describes what to expect from this delicate and unusual vegetable. Very nutritious and can be consumed both raw and cooked. Refrigerate in plastic bag; will last up to a month. See below for ideas.

**Green Peppers:** Sweet, crisp, and slightly acidic, peppers are high in fiber and vitamin C. Store whole peppers in the refrigerator for up to a week. Great with scrambled eggs.

**Cucumbers:** These store best around 50 degrees, but the refrigerator is fine. Chop raw into your salads, sauté in butter or ghee with red onion, try in a smoothie or stir fry. Try our Veggie Sandwich below for a deli-style lunch.

**Celery:** Crunchy, crisp, and green, the celery in your box is beautiful and may be a bit stronger than the hydroponically grown grocery variety. Store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator or trim, remove the leaves and base and just store stalks by the same method. Stuff with your favorite pairing: goat cheese and dill, egg or tuna salad, cream cheese with pesto, peanut butter with raisins or chocolate chips.

**Kale:** Refrigerate in a plastic bag. Or, for easier use, trim and wash, pat or spin dry, and keep in an air-tight container with a piece of paper towel. Have you tried kale chips yet?

**Carrots:** Remove greens and refrigerate in plastic bag. Will last 2-3 weeks. Try using carrot tops and end pieces in soups or stock. Here are the farm, we canned 52 quarts of chicken stock with some donated organic chicken bones! Good way to use up those celery and carrot tops!

## Recipes

### Cuban Picadillo

Adapted from 'allrecipes.com'

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1 to 1&1/2 pounds ground meat | 1 cup raisins, preferably golden                |
| 1/2 onion, chopped            | 1 8 ounce jar green olives, drained and chopped |
| 1 tablespoon garlic, minced   | 1 6 ounce jar tomato paste                      |
| 1 bell pepper, chopped        | 1/4 cup water                                   |

Brown the ground meat in a Dutch oven or large pot over medium-high heat until crumbly and no longer pink, about 10 minutes. Pour off any excess grease, if desired, and stir in the onion and garlic. Cook 2 minutes and add the pepper, raisins, olives, tomato paste, and water. Bring to a simmer, reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for 10 minutes, until the peppers have cooked to your liking. Serve with rice and black beans.

### Bread and Celery Stuffing

Adapted from 'allrecipes.com'

|                                      |                               |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 (1 pound) loaf white bread, sliced | 2 teaspoons poultry seasoning |
| 3/4 cup butter                       | salt and pepper to taste      |
| 1 onion, chopped                     | 1 cup chicken broth           |
| 4 stalks celery, chopped             |                               |

Let bread slices air dry for 1-2 hours, then cut into cubes. In a Dutch oven, melt the butter over medium heat. Cook onion and celery until soft. Season with poultry seasoning, salt and pepper. Stir in bread cubes until evenly coated. Moisten with chicken broth. Mix well. Chill and use and turkey stuffing or bake in a greased casserole dish at 350 degrees for 30 to 40 minutes.

### The Veggie Sandwich

'Pine Grove Pastures'

|                                      |                               |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 2 slices of bread- we use sourdough  | 1 small tomato, sliced        |
| 2 tablespoons cream cheese, softened | 1 leaf lettuce, optional      |
| 6 thick slices cucumber              | 1 ounce pickled hot peppers   |
| 1 tablespoon olive oil               | 1/2 avocado, mashed with salt |
| 1 teaspoon red wine vinegar          |                               |

Spread each slice of bread with half the cream cheese. On one slice, arrange cucumber slices in a single layer. Sprinkle with oil and vinegar. Later tomato slices, lettuce and hot peppers. Spread other slice with mashed avocado. Close and serve.

## Farm for the Community

At this time of year, a farm in northern WI is, as you might expect, bursting at the seams with life. From our over-flowing gardens to our rascally piglets to our hummingbirds and bees, August is a great time for a farm visit. If you haven't had a chance (or are looking for some work to do!) give us a call to set up a farm visit. We are here to farm for the community, and one sure-fire way to develop that feeling is to visit!

Just give us a heads up and tell us if you're looking for a tour, some "get down and dirty" work, or just a leisurely walk to the woods!

Next year we hope to incorporate more on-farm events (insurance allowing) in addition to a few worker shares, volunteers, and possibly a short-term employee in order to accommodate our additional CSA share weeks and offerings. If interested, give us a call!

