

Erehwon Farm

Week 14-September 06, 2009

Farmer Tim Reports

Hello from Erehwon!

Warmer weather last week gave a boost to summer squash and eggplant and beans are finally turning ripe. Our new field is a sea of green with enormous spreading vines of winter squash, pumpkins, and gourds. We are continuing to transplant fall seedlings in outside beds and preparing to plant winter crops in the hoop houses.

Farmer Tim has long been toying with the idea that a small farm could be run by one or two people and provide same with a reasonable livelihood. He has Jeremiah B. helping three days a week as a paid intern and Beth helping by running the markets, making deliveries, and keeping track of the CSA details.

Now about a month ago Jeremiah took responsibility for planting and keeping the beds productive and preparing for a rumored late fall CSA program. Farmer Tim has concentrated on harvesting. Well, Jeremiah has vastly exceeded Farmer Tim's expectations and nearly every bed has a healthy crop coming along. Now this is great news for the farm but there is a slight problem for Farmer Tim: he isn't able to harvest everything that is ready for the CSA distribution or could be sold at the market.

So last week Farmer T. was observed exhibiting more unusual behaviors than usual. We peered over his shoulder as he was filling page after page in his farm journal with flow diagrams, charts, graphs, Pareto charts, drawings, calculations, and doodles. His flip chart pages are crowded with various sizes and colors of sticky notes, decipherable only to him. There is a growing concern that he might learn to use PowerPoint and

force everyone to sit through endless and boring presentations; luckily there's no computer at the farm.

On Saturday, peering from behind some almost-flowering Jerusalem artichokes, we watched him, muttering, "Gotta be more efficient...what happened to my eye-hand coordination?" Stopwatch and clipboard in hand, working his way down a row of sun gold cherry tomatoes, he was squinting into the vines and pulling off a few orange globes from each ripening cluster and letting them drop into a box below. Scrape, clatter. Scrape, clatter. Scrape, clunk (must have been a rotten one.). Soon he was back in the shed sorting tomatoes and scribbling notes in his journal. Later we took a peek and found this: "Pick time: four minutes, 22 seconds. Total yield: 17.75 ounces. After subtracting water splits, rotten, green, final yield: 6.5 ounces. Process needs further work." We'll say it does! Don't quit your day job Farmer T.!

This week for Tuesday delivery we are projecting fingerling potatoes, summer squash, cucumbers, radishes, and spinach. Also, expect a small bag of Farmer Tim's Health Mix: leaves from baby lettuce, baby collard greens, baby radish greens, baby beet greens, well reds, actually, and baby kohlrabi greens. Grandma Beth tried some last night and said (after a little prodding), "Tastes great, looks nice, and is very healthful."

We Get Mail

What happened to the swap boxes?
We don't like melons! :)

Kris

Yep, the cantaloupes were a little weird as most of the plants died a horrible death by what looked like downy mildew. Probably no more melons unless we get some fall heat. Okay, swap boxes (Help! Where are all our boxes?) or maybe swap bags are back now that Farmer Tim has gained remarkable efficiencies and has time to make them up. ;-)

In your boxes this week

This week for Tuesday delivery we are projecting fingerling potatoes, summer squash, cucumbers, radishes, and spinach. Perhaps some eggplant, maybe some beans. Also, expect a small bag of Farmer Tim's Health Mix: leaves from baby lettuce, baby collard greens, baby radish greens, baby beet greens, well reds, actually, and baby kohlrabi greens. Grandma Beth tried some last night and said (after a little prodding), "Tastes great, looks nice, and is very healthful."

U_Forage: Check the two elderberry bushes for ripeness, lamb's quarters, purslane.

U-Pick: Herb garden, arugula, squash blossoms, cherry tomatoes, and late in the week snap beans (maybe), and weeds in the baby lettuce bed.

U-Catch: Cabbage moths. Note that the record of 15 set by Jeremy B. was recently eclipsed by an amazing 22 by Kris S. Put out an effort and pull up a potato plant or two!

U-Spot: Giant pumpkins just south of the C9 Sun Gold bed.

U-Volunteer: If you have 15 or 20 extra minutes when you come for your pick up and would like to help out at the farm, we are designing small volunteer tasks. This week's project

will be weeding the u-pick herb garden. Even 5 minutes of help will be appreciated.

Delivery Schedule

1:00-1:30—van leaves farm
1:45-2:15—delivery at Lombard
2:15-2:45—delivery at Wheaton
2:45-3:15—delivery at Bartlett
3:15-3:45—delivery at Elgin

All times are approximate and may vary.

Pick your own!

Belles Berries (Jenny Gresko, Izabella Kowalski) will have pick you own berries throughout the season. If you are interested in picking your own berries to freeze/preserve or simply to snack on please contact them at BellesBerries@gmail.com or Izabella at 630.313.9632. Berries will also be available for purchase during CSA pick-up on Wednesday and Fridays. Erehwon CSA subscribers will get a discounted rate of \$3 for a 6oz. freshly picked clamshell. **You must contact them prior to coming to the farm.**

Corn 101 lecture by Chuck Bauer is Sept 20

On Sunday, September 20th at 2pm, museum volunteer and long time farmer, Chuck Bauer, will give a lecture on the history of corn. There will be discussion of the type used in the 1840s and how farmers manipulated corn to create the variety we have today.

In the early nineteenth century, corn was a staple of people's diets, as well as their livestock. Not only were the corn kernels edible, other parts of the stalk, husk, and the cob, all had several uses, as well.

Growing up in north central Ohio, Mr. Bauer always had an interest in farming and animals. Chuck took a special interest in corn while demonstrating the Garfield's corn sheller at one of the museum's Harvest Days events. He has grown several varieties of corn, including pod

corn.

The cost of the lecture is \$6 and refreshments are included. For reservations, contact the museum at (630) 584-8485 or info@garfieldfarm.org.

Ox Driving Seminar is Sept 26 by Bob McCann and Chuck Bauer.

Leave the hustle and worries of the 21st century behind and step into the rhythm of life in the 1800s. Join instructors Chuck Bauer and Bob McCann on Saturday, September 26th, at Garfield Farm Museum for an Ox Driving Workshop, 9:00am - 3:00pm.

Oxen were the driving force behind farming from the beginning of animal power until the mechanization of agriculture. The ox team was absolutely essential for the Illinois prairie farmer. Breaking new fields required a lot of power. Heavy draft horses were not being imported yet and riding horses did not have the strength to pull a plow through the heavy prairie grass roots. Oxen (mature cows or steers that had been trained to work), were readily available, easy to equip and cheap. A well-conditioned ox team could be expected to plow about an acre a day and could pull 2/3 of their own weight. Because working the prairie was so hard, it often took 2 to 3 or more teams working together to pull the plow. There were teamsters that made their living going from farm to farm breaking new fields.

The workshop will teach participants how to groom, yoke and drive both teams and single oxen. Instruction will also be given on the selection, feeding, and training of calves.

The cost of the full day workshop is \$60. Lunch is included. To reserve contact (630) 584-8485 or email at info@garfieldfarm.org.

Harvest Days at Garfield Farm October 2 and 4

If you know of any elementary/middle school teachers who should bring their students to Oct 2 Harvest Days or

a field trip this fall - please have them get in touch with us as soon as possible. (630) 584-8485 or email at [LINK"mailto:info@garfieldfarm.org"info@garfieldfarm.org](mailto:info@garfieldfarm.org)

Free Screening of the Documentary "Fresh"

On Saturday, September 19, 2009, the Geneva Green Market will be hosting a free outdoor presentation of the documentary "Fresh" at River Park in Geneva. The GGM invites the public to come at 7:00 p.m. to get settled in with blankets. Desserts will be available for purchase by the Inglenook Pantry. Proceeds from the dessert sales will go to the Geneva Green Market, NFP.

Beth's Buzz

One of the jobs I enjoy most around the farm is making the bouquets that I sell at the market. For a good portion of this summer that job was made more enjoyable because the shrubbery next to my flower area was inhabited by what sounded like a whole choir of wrens who serenaded me while I work. Such a big beautiful sound to come out of such a tiny, nondescript bird!

One day I noticed the wrens flying around under the canopy and giving their dry, harsh warning call. Upon investigating I found that they had built a nest in a fold of plastic under the canopy—dry, out of the wind, safe from predators. They would become very agitated when I was under the canopy, especially after the babies hatched. To avoid upsetting the little dears any more than I had to, I would rush through my tasks and leave as quickly as possible.

Eventually the young wrens fledged and shortly thereafter, in the way of birds, the family moved away from that little patch of brush. Now, while I no longer have to worry about disturbing mom and pop wren, neither am I serenaded by that feathered choir. Oh, well—in the age-long words of Cubs fans—there's always next year! Wrens often return to the same place each year, so I can be optimistic.

Eggplant

Historians believe the eggplant may have its origins in India, but early written accounts from a 5th century Chinese record on agriculture called the *Ts'i Min Yao Shu* indicate its cultivation in China.

Eggplant received its English name in the 18th century when the most common variety found in England was white in color. However, now eggplants are generally dark purple. Eggplants can treat many health issues, including high cholesterol. Read on to find out more about eggplant nutrition information and all the health benefits of eggplant.

Eggplant nutrition information shows that it is high in fiber, potassium and B Vitamins. Many of the health benefits of eggplant are contained in its dark purple skin. The skin of an eggplant contains a high amount of phytonutrients that help protect the lipids in your brain cell membranes. Eggplant also contains lots of antioxidants. Nasunin is an antioxidant that helps protect your cells from free radical damage. Phenolic compounds are also antioxidants that help protect against oxidative stress and bacterial infections.

For people with arthritis and related problems of the bones and joints, some physicians suggest patients eliminate foods of the nightshade family. Because this food group contains solanine, a calcium inhibitor, consuming it can further enhance mineral imbalance and add to joint pain and swelling. Doctors suggest eliminating nightshade vegetables from the diet for six weeks, then adding them back one at a time to see if the body is able to tolerate them.

Members of the nightshade family include eggplant, tomatoes, potatoes, and all peppers with the exception of black pepper. These foods contain a toxin called solanine, an alkaloid that may cause diarrhea, heart failure, headache, and vomiting in some sensitive people.

For people who tolerate eggplant well, the medicinal benefits are many. Eating the fruit can reduce swelling, clear stagnant blood, reduce bleeding, comfort bleeding hemorrhoids, and treat dysentery.

Eggplant's ample bioflavonoids may be beneficial in preventing strokes and hemorrhages. The fruit contains the phytochemical monoterpene, an antioxidant helpful in preventing heart disease and cancer. The National Cancer Institute has been examining vegetables of the nightshade family, especially eggplant, to see if they may inhibit the production of steroidal hormones that encourage tumor growth. Eggplant may also prevent the oxidation of cells that leads to cancer growth.

Eggplant is extremely high in fiber and this can help prevent constipation, colitis and hemorrhoids. Eggplant also helps lower your risk for coronary heart disease. In certain situations eggplant can help reduce swelling or

bleeding and has even been used to treat dysentery. All of the health benefits of eggplant and antioxidants in eggplant make it a powerful cancer fighter.

Eggplant has been used to help lower cholesterol levels. In some studies, the test results of subjects that were given eggplant juice showed that the levels of cholesterol in their artery walls and aortas had gone down by a significant amount. The blood vessel walls relaxed and blood flow actually improved. However, further research still needs to be done on eggplant nutrition information to establish exactly how effective eggplant juice can be in lowering cholesterol levels.

For scorpion bites, apply raw eggplant directly on the affected area. For frostbite, prepare a tea of eggplant, bring it to room temperature, and apply a compress to affected areas.

Eggplant Delight

3 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 medium eggplant, sliced into 1/2 inch rounds
1 medium onion, sliced into rings
1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion, and saute until browned. Remove the onion to a bowl, and place eggplant slices in the hot skillet. Fry on both sides until browned and tender. Season with salt and pepper. When the eggplant is tender, top slices with onion, and then cover with cheese. Allow cheese to melt for a few minutes before placing on plates and serving.

Baba Ghanoush

1 eggplant
1/4 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup tahini
2 tablespoons sesame seeds
2 cloves garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste
1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Lightly grease a baking sheet.

Place eggplant on baking sheet, and make holes in the skin with a fork. Roast it for 30 to 40 minutes, turning occasionally, or until soft. Remove from oven, and place into a large bowl of cold water. Remove from water, and peel skin off.

Place eggplant, lemon juice, tahini, sesame seeds, and garlic in an electric blender, and puree. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Transfer eggplant mixture to a medium size mixing bowl, and slowly mix in olive oil. Refrigerate for 3 hours before serving.

Grilled Eggplant and Tomato

1 eggplant, peeled and halved lengthwise
1 tomato, halved
1 pinch garlic salt
ground black pepper to taste
2 teaspoons olive oil
2 sheets heavy duty aluminum foil

Preheat an outdoor grill for medium heat.

Place one eggplant half and one tomato half on each sheet of aluminum foil. Sprinkle with garlic salt and black pepper. Drizzle with the olive oil. Fold the foil up to form packets. Grill the packets until the eggplant and tomato are very tender, about 15 minutes.

Eggplant Chips

1 eggplant, sliced into strips
½ cup soft bread crumbs
1/8 cup grated Romano cheese
1 clove garlic, chopped
2 sprigs fresh parsley, chopped
½ teaspoon dried oregano
salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C).

Cut eggplant strips in half again, lengthwise. Lay strips on a baking sheet.

In a small bowl combine bread crumbs, Romano cheese, garlic, parsley, oregano, salt and pepper. Sprinkle over eggplant strips and drizzle with oil. Bake in preheated oven for 25 minutes, or until crispy.

Eggplant Rounds

½ cup cornmeal
½ teaspoon chili powder
1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
salt to taste
1 eggplant, sliced into ½ inch rounds
1 quart vegetable oil for frying

In a shallow dish, combine corn meal, chili powder, oregano and salt. Dredge each eggplant slice in this mixture until coated on both the sides. Shake off excess.

Heat a small layer of oil in a large skillet. When the oil is hot arrange a layer of the eggplant rounds in the oil and fry uncovered for 2 to 3 minutes. Flip the rounds over fry until golden brown. Continue adding oil and frying the rounds until they are all fried. Serve either hot or cold.

Glazed Radishes

1 lb. radishes, trimmed
1 tbsp. unsalted butter
1 tsp. sugar
½ tsp. salt
2 tbsp. minced fresh parsley leaves

In a heavy saucepan wide enough to hold the radishes in one layer cook the radishes in the butter with the sugar and the salt over moderately low heat, stirring, for 1 minute. Add ½ cup water, simmer the radishes, covered, for 10 to 15 minutes, or until they are tender, and boil them, uncovered, shaking the pan occasionally, until the liquid has been reduced to a glaze. Cook the radishes over moderate heat, swirling them, until they are coated with the glaze and sprinkle them with the parsley.

Zucchini Crust Pizza Recipe

Described as a quiche-like zucchini crust, perfect for lunch and brunch.

3 cups shredded zucchini
¾ cup egg substitute
1/3 cup all-purpose flour
½ tsp salt
2 cups shredded part skim mozzarella cheese
2 small tomatoes, halved & thinly sliced
½ cup chopped onion
½ cup julienned green pepper
1 tsp dried oregano, or ½ tsp chopped fresh
½ tsp dried basil
3 Tbsp Parmesan cheese

In a bowl, combine zucchini and egg; mix well. Add flour and salt; stir well. Spread onto the bottom of a 12" pizza pan coated with nonstick spray. Bake at 450°F for 8 mins. Reduce heat to 350°F. Sprinkle with mozzarella, tomatoes, onion, green pepper, oregano, basil and Parmesan cheese. Bake 15-20 mins, or until onion is tender and cheese is melted.

Veggie Trivia

Zucchini, the most grown squash in this country, was only introduced here in the mid-1900s.

The inside of a cucumber may be 20 degrees cooler than outside air on a warm day.

Potatoes are the most popular vegetable among Americans.

California produces almost all of the broccoli sold in the United States.