

WSU ORGANIC FARM
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Thanks to everyone who made it out for the field day last week! It was a beautiful day and the farm really looked great. The summer session is now over and we always struggle through August a bit until the students come back to school at the end of the month. Last week's class ended with a day of farm cleanup and a quick lesson in how to present a tour. It's always a great excuse to get caught up on all those unfinished projects that get started at the beginning of the season.

Each student is actually required to complete an individual or group project during the summer months. And they range widely from just taking care of a certain crop in the garden to designing and building a new tool or structure. We highlighted Mike and Kelly's project on raspberries at the field day and it's worth mentioning here, too. When they arrived in the spring they were drawn to our poorly managed raspberry beds that had been planted a couple of years ago. The first task was to transplant new canes from areas that were well established to areas that were empty. This will ultimately lead to a much fuller planting in the long run. They then put in a simple trellis to provide more support to the canes during the summer. This involved putting in a single row of 8' metal T-posts spaced every 10 feet down each bed. Then two sets of steel wire were loosely stretched at about 2 feet above the ground and at 5 feet.

The weeding came next. There was a rough patch of field bind weed and thistle in the beds and after diligent attacks the heavy raspberry growth is now choking out the weeds. Mike and Kelly are also interested in biodynamics and decided to use two pre-made preparations for a fertilizer. These were sprayed on the actual plants early in the summer. Now, one of the two beds is beginning to produce berries and hopefully there will be enough soon to put into the shares!

I'm happy to finally be able to offer fennel to all shares this week. This has been a frustrating crop to germinate but after a couple years of trial and error I think we got it. The trick is to seed an open flat of potting soil thickly with the seed in the greenhouse early in the spring. Fennel is slow to germinate and slow to grow but over seeding is the first step to ensure we can produce enough in the end. Once the seedlings develop true leaves we then transplanted the exact number we needed (roughly 200) to individual cells and allowed to continue growing in the greenhouse. These were eventually transplanted then to the field in June and cared for until harvest. So, you can see this special vegetable takes extra time and care to get to you and is one of the things we only will grow once or twice a year.

Enjoy.

--Brad Jaeckel, manager



If you're suffering from an excess of zucchini, here are two recipes you might try. The first was contributed by CSA member Cheryl Greenstreet (thanks, Cheryl! Any others out there with culinary tips to pass along? Send them in!) I am also going to pass along a beet soup recipe I discovered one weekend when I had company coming and more greens and beets than I could fit into my refrigerator. We often make it in big batches and freeze it in quart-size yogurt containers, then make the spicy topping when it comes out to be served again. So adjust the quantities to whatever you have and consider saving some for a treat later. --Valeri

Summer Squash

(submitted by CSA member Cheryl Greenstreet)

1/4 C grated Parmesan or Romano cheese
3 medium squashes, sliced

3 T butter or olive oil
2 t dried basil

Sauté squash in butter or oil until crisp tender. Season with dried basil (if substituting fresh, be careful not to add it too early). Stir in cheese and serve.

Zucchini and Fresh Herb Fritters

(from *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone* by Deborah Madison)

Salt and freshly milled pepper
2 pounds green or golden zucchini, coarsely
grated
2 eggs, beaten
1 bunch scallions, including an inch of the
greens, thinly sliced

1 cup dried bread crumbs
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
1/2 C chopped parsley
1 T chopped marjoram or basil
1 t chopped mint
Olive oil as needed

Lightly salt the zucchini and set aside in a colander to drain for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, mix the remaining ingredients together except the oil and pepper. Quickly rinse the squash, squeeze out the excess water, then stir it into the batter. Taste for salt and season with pepper.

Film two skillet with olive oil. When hot, drop in the batter-1/4 cup makes a fritter about 3 1/2 inches across-and cook over medium heat until golden on the bottom. Turn and cook the second side. Serve hot.

Beet Soup with Three Legumes

(adapted from *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone* by Deborah Madison)

1/2 C red kidney beans, soaked for 4 hours or
overnight (or use canned; rinse them and
skip the pre-cooking steps below)
4 medium beets, peeled and diced
1/3 C brown or green lentils
1 C cooked (or canned) chickpeas
2 cups chopped beet greens, chard, or kale
Salt and freshly milled pepper
1 bunch scallions, including half the greens, chopped

2 C coarsely chopped spinach
1 small bunch parsley, finely chopped
The Garnish:
3 T clarified butter or olive oil
1 onion, cut into 1/2-inch squares
1/4 t turmeric
1/4 t cayenne
1/4 C chopped mint (fresh or dried)
1/2 C yogurt

Drain the beans, cover with 5 cups water and boil hard for 10 minutes. Lower the heat and simmer, partially covered, until soft, about, about 1 1/4 hours. Set aside. Put the beets, lentils, and 7 cups water (or soup stock) in a soup pot. Bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer, partially covered, for 25 minutes. Add the kidney beans with 2 cups of their liquid, the chickpeas, beet greens, and 2 teaspoons salt; simmer until the greens are tender, about 5 minutes. Add the scallions, spinach, and parsley; cook until the greens are tender, about 5 minutes. Add the scallions, spinach, and parsley; cook until the spinach is wilted and bright green. Taste for salt and turn off the heat. To prepare garnish (don't skip this part!), melt the butter in a small skillet over low heat; add the onion, turmeric, cayenne, and mint; and cook until the onion is soft, about 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Ladle the soup into bowls. Add a spoonful of garnish and yogurt to each serving.