

WSU Organic Farm  
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## Harvest Party at the Farm!

Saturday, October 14, 2006

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Haywagon rides

U-pick pumpkins, fresh-pressed cider, and U-pick orchard fruit for sale

*Meet the crew, see your friends, enjoy the harvest and the crisp fall air*

We got our first frost last Friday morning and the farm is looking very different this week. I arrived for that Friday harvest at about 6:30 and found a carpet of frost over the entire farm! The farm thermometer read 26 degrees and it didn't get above freezing until almost 9am.

We usually start cutting the salad mix right away but Jewlee brought me back a frozen piece of romaine and wondered if this was really going to work. All of the hearty greens such as lettuce, spinach, mustards, and Asian greens can freeze and thaw and keep their integrity. BUT, we have to wait until they thaw before we can harvest! So that meant pulling anything that was under the fabric row-cover or in the hoopouses.

We lost the summer squash, cucumbers, green beans, basil, and some of the cut-flowers. The potato plants and winter squash plants, including pumpkins, also have all died back. Now the good news is the potatoes that are still in the ground will be fine until we harvest. The pumpkins will be fine outside in the field until October. And the winter squash is being moved into the hoopouses to cure.

It's ok for the winter squash to get a little frost but it does not promote good long-term storage to leave it in the field. Now that the plants have died back it's much easier to walk in and find the squash. We cut the stems from the vine or bush, being careful to keep the stem intact and not scrape or bruise the skin. The skin is still relatively soft and needs to harden in order for it to store well.

By moving the squash into the hoopouse they are given a warm dry environment to harden their skin and dry the stem. If the squash loses its stem, that scar is very likely to end up rotting. So if you receive any squash without a stem or yours breaks off try to eat it fairly quickly. Remember, those handy stems are not meant to be handles!

If you're interested in keeping your squash in storage for use at a latter date find a cool dark closet inside your house

where it stays between 50-60 degrees. Give each squash a little elbow room for good air circulation and check them regularly for rot. If you feel one starting to soften go ahead and cook it up. All of the seeds are edible and you can roast them just like you might with pumpkin seeds. And if you're ambitious the seeds from the Butternuts can be saved and replanted next season. This is the only winter squash variety we can do that with because it does not cross-pollinate with any of the others.

To do this, first, soak the seeds in water to loosen any of the material that may be attached. Then clean the seeds and lay them out to dry on a cutting board or other hard surface that they won't stick to. Once dry they can be stored in any bag for next planting season.

Last week, Tuesday members had Red Kuri and Friday members had Butternut.

You can expect a different squash or pumpkin each week but we may have to mix and match to get everyone's box filled. If you're not sure of the variety please ask. Some varieties we have enough for everyone but some we don't. And also remember the CSA runs through the last week in October!

Thanks to everyone who has been bringing their own bags or box... keep it up. - Brad Jaeckel



*Pumpkins and squashes* are members of a large, complex botanical family that includes winter and summer squashes, cucumbers, melons, gourds, and even “luffa” sponges. They probably originated in Central America and their consumption dates back millennia (which makes them much more popular over the longterm than say, tomatoes or potatoes); some of us probably owe our existence to them, since the Pilgrims and subsequent New Englanders relied heavily upon them for winter sustenance. (*Blue Corn and Square Tomatoes* by Rebecca Rupp)

Winter squash can keep for months as long as the stem is intact, the flesh unbruised, and it is kept in a well-ventilated, temperate space. Cooked pumpkin freezes well in freezer bags and can be used throughout the year for quick breads, smoothies, puddings, and pies. Don’t forget to save the seeds and roast them for snacks. You can use pumpkin or squash interchangeably in recipes, generally.

### **Baked Squash with Butter and Maple Syrup**

Serves 3 to 4 (from *Lost Recipes* by Marion Cunningham)

3 pounds acorn or butternut or other squash, halved and seeded

Salt and black pepper to taste

2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) unsalted butter

1/8 cup maple syrup

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Place the squash, cut side down, on a baking sheet and bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until the squash is easily pierced with a fork. Scoop the flesh into a bowl and mash with a potato masher or a fork until fairly smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper and keep warm.

Combine the butter and maple syrup in a small saucepan and cook, stirring, over low heat until the butter is melted and blended with the syrup, about 2 minutes. Stir half of the syrup mixture into the squash. Transfer the squash to a shallow serving dish. Pour the rest of the syrup mixture over the top.

Note: This may be prepared up to 2 days ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Reheat in a 350-degree oven for about 20 minutes.

### **Pumpkin-Chocolate Chip Protein Bread**

Makes 1 loaf of dense, moist bread (from *Sunlight Café* by Mollie Katzen)

1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour

1 cup soy protein powder

1 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons baking powder

½ cup sugar

1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

2 cups cooked pureed pumpkin

2 large eggs

2 teaspoons vanilla

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

Preheat the oven to 350 F. Lightly spray a standard loaf pan with nonstick spray.

Place the flour, protein powder, salt, baking powder, and sugar in a medium sized bowl, and stir until thoroughly combined. Stir in the chocolate chips.

In a second bowl, combine the pumpkin, eggs, vanilla, and melted butter, and stir with a whisk or a fork until uniform. Add the pumpkin mixture to the dry ingredients, and stir from the bottom of the bowl until everything is thoroughly blended. The batter will be stiff.

Transfer the batter to the prepared pan, patting it into place with a dinner knife and shaping it so that it is gently mounded in the center. Bake in the center of the oven for 45 minutes to 1 hour. Cool in the pan for about 10 minutes, then rap the pan sharply to remove the bread, and cool it on a rack before slicing.