

Featherstone Fruits and vegetables



The week of August 3, 2009

This Week - Likely In the Box

**Sweet Corn
Salad Mix
Yellow Wax Beans
Carrots
Summer Squash
Cucumbers
Bok Choi
Sweet Onions
Kohlrabi (maybe)
Parsley or Cilantro**

Please note: This list is only a guess. Weather and

August Crops

**Sweet Corn
Heirloom Tomatoes (many varieties)
Cherry Tomatoes (several varieties)
Paste Tomatoes
Eggplants
Peppers (several varieties)
Muskmelons (several varieties)
Watermelons (several varieties)
Tomatillos
Basil**

Please note: This list is only a guess. Weather and other conditions are very unpredictable.

Dear Shareholders,

This is the week we said we would no longer post a list of what was likely to be in the box. However, we have not been able to put together all of the content for the pages on the website which will be your monthly guide for what to expect as well as assisting in identifying specific produce. I truly think this change will not only be easier for us to manage but will provide you with much more useful information. At this point, a number of the items are just now ripening and getting photos of them just couldn't be done in time. I think we will be able to get a significant amount of content up by next week. But again, it will be a work in progress.

Here's a peek at some of the information Jack has written up about the produce you can look forward to:

August Crops in CSA Boxes

The crops of August are the fruits of high summer; tomatoes, peppers, melons and the like. Although we continue to pack certain crops through the month that made their appearance in July (ie cucumbers, beans, zucchini and the like), it is these true warm season fruits that we think of in the dog days of August.

As a rule, these are crops that require heat to ripen thoroughly and to develop full flavor, and not just midday heat. Overnight temperatures in the mid 60s are almost necessary to ripen muskmelons, for example. Moreover these crops are (with the exception of sweet corn) all fruits; they bear seeds, develop sugar only in the last stages of development (ripening), and have very short storage life compared to vegetables.

For the fruits of high summer, think fleeting glory. We work so hard to get them into your boxes early, you look forward to them all spring and early summer, and yet they come and go in what seems like the blink of an eye!

Cherry Tomatoes

We grow 3 types of cherry tomatoes at Featherstone Farm, the red grape, the yellow pear and the mighty sungold. All 3 are transplanted out from the greenhouse in May, are supported off the ground by means of an elaborate staking and trellis system, and begin to ripen generally at the very end of August. They can be found in CSA boxes as late as October 1, although 80% of their yield comes in the month of August.

Like all tomatoes, cherries should be stored at room temperature, and kept dry until rinsing just before use.

Red Grape

This is the oblong red cherry tomato that has become so popular in grocery stores in recent years. Red grapes have good flavor in warm conditions, and develop relatively thick skins that allow them to hold quality much longer than other cherry varieties.

Yellow Pear

Yellow pear cherries seem to have a small but very enthusiastic group of devotees, who will settle for no other cherry. The plants are incredibly prolific vines with large pear shaped fruits, whose low acid content provides for a very mild and complex flavor.

Sungold

With fruits that ripen a bright gold-orange and develop the most remarkable tropical sweetness, the sungold cherry is farmer Jack Hedin's favorite taste of summer, period. What could be better on a hot summer's evening than a handful of sungolds? (well, alright, a slice of chilled watermelon works too!).

But watch out! Sungold cherries have remarkably thin skins, which are prone to cracking and make them much more difficult to ship from great distances. Like certain muskmelons and heirloom tomatoes, sungold cherries can only be found at peak quality from local producers.

There is also an administrative change in the works. As many of you know, Becky Christensen joined us in May as our Office Assistant. Her's is the pleasant voice of welcome you get when your phone call is answered at the farm now! She has made a huge difference for all of us at the farm ~ taking on projects large and small. Most importantly, she is becoming the conduit for much of the information requested from the farm as well as liaison for inquiries and requests. As such we are changing the email address for my area of responsibility from info to csa. General inquiries should be directed to Becky at info@featherstonefarm.com (formerly my address). Only CSA inquiries should be directed to csa@featherstonefarm.com (my new address). We are working on making this change on the website, other online resources, as well as printed materials. I know it will take some time to get the word out. Rest assured, Becky and I will be in constant communication and there should be no gaps in our replies to your inquiries. Thanks.



WHO AM I?

AmAndA S. GriGGs

Featherstone Farm

Who am I? The luckiest girl in SE MN.....

It all started at Squashfest 2008. Not only did my friend Sara (former Featherstone CSA Manager) encourage me to attend, but Jim Riddle as well. I was seeking out a guy named Jack Hedin for information. My hope was to get contacts to organic farms in warm climates. So, I ended up in the middle of the acorn squash patch side-by-side with Jack.

After a day of picking squash with Jack, my life changed. I received a call a week later from Jack. He was wondering about my interests in working at his farm. Not sure about giving up on a warm climate farm, I took my time in responding. Finally, I called Jack back and have not missed a beat since.

In my mind there is nothing more positively luminous than working on an organic farm (with JACK!). Part of it is the thought of feeding hundreds of people with organic methods starting from several small seeds. The path from seed to seedling, transplant to mature morsel, and finally into your body is a full circle that energizes me as I plant each seed. There is so much to learn and share as well.

So, I'd like to share with you a bit about me. First of all, it is a pleasure to be working so close to where I grew up. My parents' house is only a short 6 miles away. They decided back in the 70's to move to this area. Wanting to raise my brother and I off the beautiful land here in SE MN. This was the start of my love for nature and farming.

Since my years of growing up here I have been on many adventures. Even though travel always calls my name, I always love coming back to this area. I worked at Prairie Moon Nursery, just down the road from the old farm, for 5 years. Now I have found my life again here at Featherstone. Being a part of this farm, using my knowledge of plants and seeds, and being close to a place I hold close to my heart is why I am the luckiest girl in SE MN.

Until next Newsletter..... enjoy the veges! (I KNOW I AM.)



Peggy Hanson is a food writer, local food advocate and aspiring food coach who lives in Lanesboro, Minnesota. This column originally appeared in the Fillmore County Journal on 10/17/07

Peggy welcomes your questions and comments.

Contact her at mjhanson50@gmail.com.

REAL FOOD

I have a dream. I dream that some day fresh garlic will as ubiquitous in Fillmore County homes as Cool Whip. These two foods can even cohabit in the same kitchen – it is not necessary for one to move out so the other can move in.

What is so dreamy about that? I think high garlic consumption is one predictor of a community that is healthy in both body and spirit. I'll bet a good researcher could prove that there is a positive correlation between the number of fresh garlic heads per capita in a community's cupboards and high longevity or low rates of cancer or depression. I think the 2010 U.S. census should have a garlic question on it so we could find out if my theory holds water.

If you go to www.cancer.gov (the National Cancer Institute) you can find a fact sheet titled "Garlic and Cancer Prevention". You will learn that "a host of studies provide compelling evidence" that garlic is "an effective inhibitor of the cancer process" - especially prostate or stomach cancer.

Another good website is www.ChristopherRanch.com. The ranch is a major producer of California garlic and as you would expect their site has lots of information about garlic as a healthy food.

What about the healthy spirit part? I think that if there is fresh garlic in a home, that means it is likely that someone is cooking from scratch and people in the household often share meals with family or friends. Most of us know that is good for the spirit – even if and maybe especially if you are the one doing most of the cooking.

So now that we know garlic is good for us – how do we find good garlic? Let me suggest that this September you pay at least one visit to the Lanesboro (Sylvan Park Wed 4-6, Saturday 9-noon) or Chatfield (Thurs 3-6 in the park) farmers markets to make a major garlic investment. We are fortunate to have at least two serious garlic growers among our local market vendors – Andrea Mueller and Paul Schmidt. Talk to them. Share your garlic hopes and fears. They will help you make good choices depending on your garlic goals. You could also check out your local grocery store – but avoid bulbs that are light weight and dried out or soft to the touch. Ask the produce manager for help. (*FFV Editor's Note: Of course, if you are a Featherstone CSA shareholder you get locally grown great garlic in your box!*)

Once you find your good garlic, how do you store it? Store unpeeled heads of garlic in an open container in a cool, dry place away from other foods. Do not refrigerate or freeze unpeeled garlic. Properly stored garlic can keep up to three months. You can also put whole peeled cloves in a jar of olive oil. This **MUST** be kept refrigerated.

Some of you still might be resisting the idea of garlic – you think it is too "strong". To you I say – try cooking whole cloves or even heads of garlic. If garlic (cloves or the whole head) are cooked or baked whole with a little olive oil, the flavor is very mellow and almost sweet and nutty. Be very careful not to burn or cook too fast – the garlic will get bitter and you will have to start over. Which is ok. Starting over is a valuable life skill. Not fun or easy perhaps, but valuable nonetheless.

Roasted garlic

You can make a lot of this and freeze it in little containers so you always have it on hand. You can go through a lot of garlic this way. Mix with butter or olive oil to spread on bread. Mix into mashed potatoes or use on top of baked potatoes. Use as a pasta sauce along with olive oil and some steamed or roasted vegetables. Fill an omelet with it.

Separate heads of garlic into cloves. Do not peel. Place cloves on lightly oiled baking pan – shake or stir to just coat cloves with oil. Bake at 350 degrees about 20 minutes. Check every ten minutes – as soon as cloves are soft they are ready. Let cool and then squeeze cooked garlic out of each clove.

Recipes

Tzatziki CUCUMBERS

from MACSAC cookbook: *From Asparagus to Zucchini*

Ingredients

1 medium cucumber, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice
8 ounces yogurt
1 tablespoon chopped fresh mint
or 1/4 teaspoon dried

Instructions

Combine ingredients, chill, serve. Makes 2-3 servings.

CARROTS, Pecans, and Fennel

from the cookbook: *Friendly Foods (Gourmet Vegetarian Cuisine)*

Ingredients

2 cups carrots, peeled & julienned (matchsticks)
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 cup thinly sliced fennel
1/4 cup maple syrup
1/4 cup roasted pecans
2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

Instructions

Steam carrots until tender-crisp. Heat oil in skillet; add fennel and sauté 2 minutes. Add maple syrup, pecans and carrots, and simmer briefly. Mix cornstarch and 1 tablespoon of water and stir into carrot mixture. Stir in parsley and serve. Serves 4.

Grated ZUCCHINI

from MACSAC cookbook: *From Asparagus to Zucchini*

Ingredients

2 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 small clove garlic, minced
3 medium zucchini, unpeeled, grated
freshly grated nutmeg
salt & pepper

Instructions

Melt butter in large skillet, add garlic and cook over medium heat 304 minutes. Do not brown. Toss zucchini in hot garlic butter until tender, 2-3 minutes. Season with nutmeg, salt and pepper to taste, and serve immediately. Four servings.



Bok Choi

BOK CHOI Provençale

from *Tastes from Valley to Bluff: The Featherstone Farm Cookbook*

Ingredients

1 head of bok choy, chopped
1 clove garlic
1 large onion
Olive oil
2 eggs
1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded
2 tablespoons fresh mint, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 375° F

Sauté the bok choy, garlic, and onion in the olive oil just until the garlic and onions are tender and the bok choy is wilted.

Beat together the eggs and cheese in a baking dish, and then blend in the sautéed bok choy mixture. Add the mint, salt, and pepper.

Bake in the oven for 15 minutes, or until the eggs are firm. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

Bok Choi

Nutrition: Like other members of the cabbage family, bok choy packs a nutritional wallop, with significant vitamin C, folic acid, and dietary fiber, with only 24 calories per cup.

Storage: Fresh bok choy will keep tightly wrapped, unwashed, in a plastic bag in the refrigerator vegetable crisper for up to a week...

Trimming & Cleaning: Bok choy tends to collect sand and grit at the base of the stalks, so a thorough cleaning or at least inspection is in order. Separate the stalks from the central stem and rinse under running water, or if they are particularly dirty, scrub gently with a vegetable brush.

adapted from *Tastes from Valley to Bluff: The Featherstone Farm Cookbook*

Recipes

Balsamic YELLOW BEANS

from sheknows.com

Ingredients

1 lb yellow (or green) wax beans, ends trimmed
1 pinch of salt
1 pinch of sugar
1 cup balsamic vinegar

Instructions

Bring a medium sized pot of water to a boil over high heat. Stir in the salt and sugar. Add the beans and boil until crisp tender, about 5 minutes.

Drain beans and dunk them in a bowl of cold water to halt cooking. Drain again and pat dry with paper towels.

Place beans on a large serving plate.

Place balsamic vinegar in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat. Boil until the vinegar has reduced to about a ¼ cup and thickened to a shiny syrup. Quickly remove from heat and drizzle over the beans. The syrup may thicken as it cools. To thin for a pouring consistency, add a tablespoon of hot water and stir.

Simple Sautéed KOHLRABI

from [Farmer John's Cookbook: The Real Dirt on Vegetables](#)

Ingredients

2 medium kohlrabi bulbs (or 1 large bulb), grated
1 teaspoon salt
1 clove garlic, minced or pressed (about 1/2 teaspoon)
1/4 cup butter or light oil
1 medium onion, diced (about 1/2 cup)
2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme, chives, or sage

Instructions

Mix the kohlrabi and salt in a colander and let stand for 30 minutes to drain.

Melt the butter in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and sauté until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute more.

Stir in the kohlrabi. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and cook for 10 minutes.

Increase the heat to medium, uncover the skillet, and cook for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the fresh herbs. Let stand for a couple minutes to let the flavors develop. Serves 2 to 4.



Yellow Wax Beans

Country Vegetable Simmer

from recipezarr.com

Ingredients

1/2 lb fresh green (or yellow) beans, trimmed
4 small red potatoes, quartered
2 small onions, quartered
3 tablespoons butter or margarine
8 fresh mushrooms, halved
1 medium tomato, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
1 teaspoon basil leaves
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon thyme leaves
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1/2 teaspoon fresh garlic, minced
1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped

Instructions

In a 3 qt saucepan combine beans, potatoes and onions. add enough water to cover. bring to a full boil, and cook over medium heat stirring occasionally until vegetables are crispy tender (15 to 20 minutes).

Drain cooked vegetables and return to pan, add remaining ingredients (except parsley).

Cook over medium heat stirring occasionally until heated through (10 to 12 minutes).

Stir in parsley and serve.



Kohlrabi

Ailsa Craig Onions

The sweet onions that seem too big to be real are the Ailsa Craig variety. They are best enjoyed in the summer as their only downside is that they don't keep very well. But they are a great onion to turn into instant onions for winter soups. They dehydrate very nicely when chopped into ¼" pieces.

There are two things I should warn you about if you decide to dry onions:

If you do large quantities, I've found that a pair of ski goggles (or safety goggles with the holes taped shut) makes this a job you won't have to cry over. Be careful when cutting as you may have reduced vision with the goggles (or with tears in your eyes if you go goggle-free) and onions can be slippery to cut. If you have one of those old Vegi-Matic slicers, they work well with onions although the Ailsa Craig onions need to be cut into smaller chunks that will fit into it.

All of your drying screens/trays will need a thorough washing afterwards as everything will be heavily perfumed with onion fragrance, including the surrounding air. Hopefully, you like the smell of onions!

You can also use these big onions in canning recipes where onions are called for, such as salsas or pickles.

Larisa Walk, Featherstone Bookkeeper & Fount of Knowledge of All Things Vegetable



reminders and events:

Book Signing

Mi Ae Lipe, author of Featherstone Farm Cookbook (and former longtime CSA shareholder before her move to Seattle) will be on a book tour through the Twin Cities during the next couple weeks. Please take a look at her website and get more information on the Featherstone Farm Cookbook: <http://www.whatnowdesign.com>

Tuesday, August 4

11–3p
Lakewinds Minnetonka Co-op
Cookbook Signing
17501 Minnetonka Boulevard
Minnetonka, Minnesota
952-473-0292
www.lakewinds.com

Friday, August 7

4–8 PM
Cameron Park Farmers Market (near
High Springs Farm booth)
Cookbook Signing
Cameron Park at King Street
between 4th Street and 5th Avenue
La Crosse, Wisconsin
www.cameronparkmarket.org

Saturday, August 8

8–11 AM
Mill City Farmers Market (in
conjunction with Local D'Lish)
Cookbook Signing
704 2nd Street S.
Minneapolis, MN
952-473-0292
www.millcityfarmersmarket.org

Saturday, August 8

Noon–4 PM
Linden Hills Co-op
Cookbook Signing
2813 West 43rd Street
Minneapolis, MN
612-922-1159
www.lindenhills.coop

Sunday, August 9

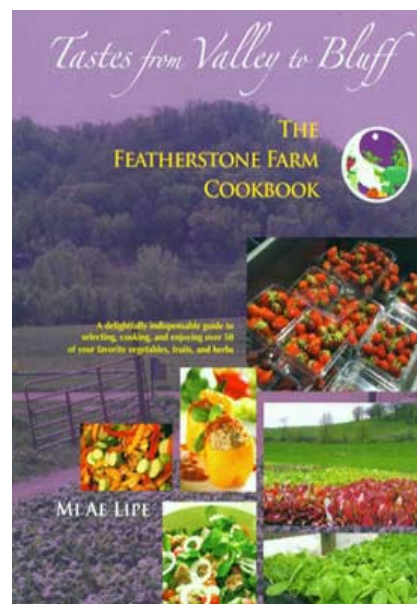
Time to be decided
Mississippi Market
Cookbook Signing
(New store location)
1500 West 7th Street
Saint Paul, Minnesota
www.msmarket.coop

Monday, August 10

11 AM–7 PM
Whole Foods Market — Saint Paul
Cookbook Signing
30 South Fairview Ave
St Paul, Minnesota
651-690-0197
www.wholefoodsmarket.com/stores/st-paul/

Tuesday, August 11

11 AM–8 PM
Whole Foods Market — Minneapolis
Cookbook Signing
3060 Excelsior Blvd
Minneapolis, Minnesota
612-927-8141
www.wholefoodsmarket.com/stores/minneapolis/



Tastes from Valley to Bluff:
The Featherstone Farm Cookbook
Mi Ae Lipe
ISBN: 978-1-4276-2205-1
\$24.95

Published 2008, 416 pages, 8• x 11 inches, paperback with comb binding

Tastes from Valley to Bluff: The Featherstone Farm Cookbook is your delightfully indispensable guide to selecting, cooking, and enjoying over 50 different fruits, vegetables, and herbs that Featherstone Farm of Rushford, Minnesota, organically raises for both its community-supported agriculture (CSA) program and retail outlets in the Upper Midwest.

Whether you buy your vegetables through a CSA subscription, or from a farmers market or your local grocery store, you will truly enjoy—and constantly use—this book. Arranged by season, Tastes is a truly major resource, with 416 pages containing nearly 300 recipes for appetizers, side dishes, soups, salads, sandwiches, main dishes, condiments, dressings, desserts, kid-friendly dishes, and beverages. Over 200 of its recipes are vegetarian, 111 vegan.

Each crop features comprehensive, practical information on its history, nutrition, selection, storage, trimming, cleaning, preservation, and cooking techniques. Also included are hundreds of serving suggestions, cooking tips, handy equivalent measurements, substitutions, and lists of complementary foods, herbs, and seasonings. An extensive appendix of resources invites further exploration.

Far more than just a cookbook, Tastes also features fun trivia, witty quotations, beautiful illustrations, and many informative, thought-provoking articles about farm life, the environmental and nutritional advantages of growing and eating organically, and crop-specific topics. Tastes promises to be a reference you will turn to again and again!

reminders and events:

Harvest Fest & Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, September 19th, we are again inviting CSA members down to the farm. We are having a harvest and anniversary celebration to thank everyone who has played a part in making our farm the success that it is today. There will be music, food and fun starting in the afternoon and going into the evening. We want to celebrate what the farm has to offer with family friendly activities for everyone. One artist we already have lined up is Willy Porter. Check out his website, www.willyporter.com to learn more about him. We will be sending you more detailed information and a formal invitation in the coming weeks. The events on Saturday, September 19th will be a great opportunity for you to make it a weekend long trip. There are many things to do in the scenic bluffs and valleys of Southeastern MN where our farm is lucky enough to be located. As the details come, so will the regional guides on places to see, stay, eat and relax. Can't wait to see you here!



State Fair

On Monday, August 31st, FFV will be represented by volunteer shareholders at the State Fair for Minnesota Grown. We'll be at the Eco-Experience booth in the Progress Building. Minnesota Grown's presence at the Fair is a great way to educate people about the wonderful diversity of Minnesota products by explaining the benefits of buying locally. In addition, we will be answering questions about the CSA program and our Fall Harvest & Anniversary Event. Come see us, we look forward to seeing our shareholders there!



IT'S IN THE BAG
PLASTIC BAG AND FILM RECYCLING PROGRAM



Don't know what to do with your plastic produce bags from the grocery store? The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce has a program 'It's in the Bag' that offers recycling deposit sites at certain Twin Cities locations. Work crews from a local nonprofit location pick up the bags and deliver them to a processing facility where the material is sorted and baled. The material is shipped to a company to be recycled into composite lumber used in building decks and railings. Participating locations can be found [here](#).

Please remember to return your boxes to your dropsite, as we reuse as many of them as possible. It helps us out financially and helps to reduce waste.