



# PRAIRIE SUN FARM

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## Silent Spring Again?

We often write about uplifting events at the farm and this week the newsletter is full of them, in the Farm News on page 2. But first, there was a great opinion written in the Star Tribune a couple months ago by William Souder, a Minnesota writer that was writing for the Minnesota Daily at the U in the 1990's and has since focused on environmental reporting including a couple books. His most recent book is about Rachel Carson, the author of "Silent Spring". This ground breaking book about DDT and pesticides written 50 years ago warned against the heedless use of synthetic pesticides such as DDT and other toxic cousins due to the damage it was causing to the environment. In 1945 Carson discovered that government experiments showed that DDT was toxic to every species tested, it persisted in the environment and that it was devastating to wildlife. Yet through the '50's and into the '60's it was dropped from airplanes, sprayed into trees, on crops and as a fog into neighborhoods to kill insects. We remember those days watching the trucks go by in the alleys late at night when people were supposed to be inside. Our parents would close the windows when they heard the trucks coming, sometimes, as the kids stood outside inhaling the fumes. Is our society making the same mistake again as we incorporate toxic genes into crops in order to kill the insects that feed on them? Is this affecting our bees and causing colony collapse disorder reducing our bee population at alarming rates? Unfortunately there hasn't been long term tests done on many of the synthetic chemicals used in our fields today. As Souder puts it "The only thing we know for sure is that if using these chemicals is a mistake, it's one we've made before." Yikes!

### WEEK 7 BOX CONTENTS

**Tomatoes!** Hopefully there will be enough cherry and slicer tomatoes for all the boxes. Cherry tomatoes are a mix of gold, yellow, red and purple varieties. Slicers are a mix of heirloom and hybrid varieties.

**Fennel:** Has a hint of licorice. Use the bulb and the fronds. Chopped fennel sautéed with onions is a start to many great meals. Try with shrimp or pork.

**Cabbage:** Excellent source of vitamin C, vitamin A, and high in antioxidants. Great sautéed, cooked in soups, braised or used in raw salads.

**Summer Squash/Zucchini:** Thinly slice and add to salads or pizza. Also they can be peeled and tossed with olive oil and salt for a side dish.

**Cucumbers:** Producing like crazy...hope you are still enjoying!

**Summer Savory:** This herb has a minty thyme flavor. Add to meat and vegetable dishes.

**Green Beans:** These are from our first planting that was partially washed away in the flood so the bags aren't as full as normal. We have another planting of green and yellow wax beans so more to come.

**Onions:** Italian Red tropea variety. These are not storage onions so keep in your frig. It's a sweet onion that can be cooked or eaten raw.

**Cauliflower:** There are many ways to enjoy cauliflower raw or cooked. In a salad or with a dip or mac n' cheese or in soup. Store in a plastic bag in the frig.

**Eggplant:** Eggplants creamy flesh soaks up any flavor. It's best to grill, roast or broil.

## Farm News

Now for the good news, the farm looks fantastic! The prairie is gorgeous with cone flowers, Monarda, milkweed, big bluestem grasses and a host of other perennials lighting up the field. The gardens are looking incredible too. We've stayed on top of the weeds and bugs more than we ever have been able to. The potatoes are bushes crowding the pathways in between rows. The corn tassels are reaching, readying to pollenate the ears. The tomato plants are heavy with fruit. The peppers and eggplant add color to the rows. Squash blossoms still flower as the next plantings grow. Cucumbers, pumpkins and melons are sprawling across the rows we left between them. It's always a treat to see watermelon and cantaloupe grow and turn colors as they begin to ripen. And it amazes us to see green pumpkins turn orange as the season progresses. New plantings of lettuce are sprouting. The fields around the garden are getting tilled up for the next planting of cover crops. A little rain wouldn't hurt but we can water. So far Mother Nature has been very, very good to us this year. Except for the flood this spring. We won't talk about that.

## From the Kitchen

### Bean Salad with Olives, Tomatoes and Summer Savory

#### Ingredients

3 cups string beans, trimmed  
2 cups cherry tomatoes, halved or diced tomatoes  
1/3 cup pitted kalamata olives or feta cheese or both  
1 clove garlic, finely chopped  
1 sprig summer savory, chopped  
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
1/2 teaspoon red wine vinegar

#### Instructions

Bring medium pot of salted water to a boil. Cook beans until cooked through but firm, about 7 minutes; rinse with cold water. Mix remaining ingredients in a bowl; add beans and toss.

### Eggplant Dip

#### Ingredients

1 Eggplant  
1 Small red onion, sliced thin  
1 Large clove garlic, crushed  
1/4 olive oil  
Juice of 1/2 lemon  
Salt and Pepper to taste

#### Instructions

Prick eggplant with a fork and bake at 350 for 40-45 minutes, turning once or twice. Let cool, then peel and chop the flesh allowing the juices to run off. Blend together the eggplant, onion, garlic, oil, salt and pepper. Chill and then serve with pita chips.