



PRAIRIE SUN FARM

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Pathways

The road less traveled is the one we prefer. Where's the excitement in life if you always follow everyone else on the well-worn path? As we create new gardens each year we create new farm roads leading to areas of the field we haven't gardened yet. It feels like we're developing new untraveled paths into unknown areas. It's an adventure. We create new paths each spring surrounding our plots so we can access the rows of vegetables. We prefer 100 foot rows so the paths surround these sections. The paths are beaten down by this time of the year and look like they've been there forever. But the paths that we've used in the past for other garden sections are almost invisible now where we've tilled and planted cover crops. They disappear and we get to make new paths again when we replant those areas. We were working on our rotation plan the other night thinking about where new paths would be created. These paths get walked on and driven on hundreds of times in a season. For us it's like going down the Yellow Brick Road to see the Wizard of Oz in the garden. OK, that's a stretch but it popped into our heads because we just watched Oz the Great and Powerful. We create paths through the prairie too so we can get lost in the 8 foot tall big bluestem and so we have places on the property to hike. We also snowshoe on these paths in the winter. Some of these paths too change every year so we can explore new areas of the prairie when it's at its peak. Izzy likes the pathways also with her nose to the ground following wherever they lead. She hasn't ventured into the tall prairie too much, yet. We encourage venturing into new areas though and trying new things. You never know sometimes where that pathway might lead you. Just follow the Yellow Brick Rd.

WEEK 14 BOX CONTENTS

Winter Squash: Delicata has a nice mild sweet flavor. Cut in half lengthwise, remove the seeds and bake face down for about 30 minutes. Serve with butter and buckwheat honey.

Potatoes: Some of the russets potatoes have green spots on the skin. This is caused from exposure to the sun. The green needs to be peeled off before eating. The green part is bitter and can be toxic if eaten in quantity.

Tomatoes: Cherry tomatoes are a mix of gold, yellow, red and purple varieties. Slicers are a mix of heirloom and hybrid varieties.

Garlic: We'll have 2 weeks of garlic this season. More next year! Store on your counter for 6-7 months.

Sweet Peppers: Ivory, Green, red, yellow or orange. The red peppers look like hot peppers but are really sweet Carmen's. Slice and freeze any that you don't use.

Hot Peppers: Yellow wax, Anaheim or jalapeno peppers. These can be frozen whole and used later in chili.

Leeks: Like garlic and onions, leeks belong to the vegetable family called Allium. Leeks need to be cooked before eating.

Salad Mix: Mix of baby lettuce varieties.

Beets: Mix of red and chiogga varieties to make a colorful salad or side dish.

Kohlrabi: Large Kossak variety that tastes like the small kohlrabi but will store much longer.

Thyme: Use now or let dry for later.

Cabbage: This is a new red variety we trialed this season. Tastes good but most of the plants didn't form nice heads.

Farm News

The big news at the farm this week is we got rain! Over an inch fell soft and slowly nourishing the dry, cracked soil. It will be much easier to pick the leeks this week now. We mowed over the sweet corn because the heat over-ripened the rest of it. The garden is shrinking with more bare rows as the weeks progress. The green rows we do have left are flourishing though. People keep asking, “Are you winding down for the season?” Hardly, we’ve still got 5 weeks to go (including this one)! The plants are still growing even though the days are getting much shorter. Well, the tomatoes are slowing down. They don’t like these cold nights. Not too many new peppers are appearing either. But there’s still good salsa mix in the field. Enjoy it now before it’s gone. Enjoy the garlic too. Unfortunately there won’t be much of it this year. We’ve got the spot picked out for planting our new bulbs in a few weeks though. Hopefully next year is a better year for garlic. We’ve got great onion and potato harvests to make up for it. And the squash is fantastic if you’re a squash lover. Enjoy!

Potato Leek Soup

From Twin Cities Natural Food Co-ops MIX publication

Ingredients

1 pound Russet or Yukon gold potatoes
4 Leeks
¼ cup of olive oil
¼ teaspoon fresh ground white pepper
2 large cloves of garlic
6 cups vegetable broth
2 tablespoons Herbs de Provence
1 cup low-fat sour cream
Salt and pepper
Chives (optional)

Directions

Scrub potatoes thoroughly and cut into one-inch chunks. Soak potatoes in cold water for about 15 minutes, then rinse. Wash leeks, cut lengthwise down the middle, then wash again to remove all grit. Slice leeks in quarter inch slices, discarding the tough dark green portions of the leeks.

In the bottom of a large stock pot or Dutch oven, heat a quarter cup of olive oil over medium heat. Grind a quarter teaspoon of white pepper into the warming oil. Press or mince garlic and sauté for one minute. Add leeks and cook for an additional minute, stirring constantly. Add potatoes, cook for about two to three minutes stirring continuously.

Add a half cup of broth, cover pot and let it “sweat” over low heat for five minutes. Add Herbs de Provence and the remainder of the vegetable broth to cover the potatoes. (This amount may be more or less than six cups; you need enough to cover the potatoes). Bring soup to a boil, and then turn down to a simmer. Simmer until the potatoes are tender, about 15-20 minutes. Remove the pot from heat, and blend soup with an immersion blender until smooth. Stir in one cup of sour cream into the soup. Salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with chives if desired.