



PRAIRIE SUN FARM

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JULIE AND DAN GEIGER WWW.PRAIRIESUNFARM.COM

10330 Highway 25, Watertown, MN 55388

Ja_geiger@msn.com 952-955-3570

Farm Tours

Minnesota farms fascinate us. This wasn't always the case. When we grew up in South Dakota the farm was not a focal point. We spent plenty of time on farms but it was usually to release energy from being in school or work or to complete some chore we HAD to do. Even our first 20 years in Minnesota held no farm fascination. Sure we marveled at the corn fields so neat and symmetrical we wondered how they could ever have gotten planted that way. But since we entered the world of small scale organic farming we see things differently. Farms big and small hold interest. How did they cultivate that field? How many times have they sprayed? Are they really going to let all those weeds go to seed? Why are they mowing the ditches like a lawn? So much to learn, so little time. We spend a lot of time learning by doing. Sure we go to organic conferences and learn about methods and how other farmers do it but we are mostly developing our own methods for our farm. Ours is unlike anybody else's. To see this go on a farm tour. About 30-40 people got to visit 4 local farms (including ours) last weekend to learn the differences. It was a perfect day for it and it was very interesting hearing the questions and sharing the knowledge. We ourselves are going to go on an Eat Local Farm Tour this Saturday, July 20.

<http://themix.coop/sites/default/files/FarmTourGuide2013.pdf> The 17 places on the tour are all within an hour of the Twin Cities and it looks like a great mix. We hope to learn a few things and support the local community of growers as well. There's no better place to learn where your food comes from than to go to a farm. Thanks to all the people that came to our farm last weekend. It was a lot of fun and we learned a few things too.

WEEK 5 BOX CONTENTS

Kohlrabi: Peel the thick skin and enjoy this crisp, juicy vegetable cooked or raw. It's a member of the cabbage family and can be grated or sliced.

Leaf Lettuce: Red Magenta summer crisp lettuce. Very pretty and tasty.

Sugar Snap Peas: A true garden treat. We had about a pound per box last week and should have even more this week. Remove the string along the seam if you want.

Broccoli: Rinse broccoli just before using it. For most preparations you will cut off the florets from the stem. Most people toss the stem but if you take the time to peel or cut off the tough exterior you'll discover a crunchy, delicious tender snack.

Summer Squash/Zucchini: Slice into long quarters, add olive oil and salt. Then grill for a few minutes just until tender but not mushy.

Cucumbers: There are so many ways to enjoy fresh cool cucumbers - add slices to water, make creamy cuke salad. Add to smoothies or lettuce salads.

Green Pepper: Colored peppers start out green and mature to a sweet red, yellow or orange. We pick a few at the green stage to thin the plants and get them off the ground.

Swiss Chard: One of the most nutritious vegetables and the color mix makes it pretty enough to be an ornamental in your flower garden! Lightly cook the leaves after cooking the stem.

Salad Mix: Mix of cut young lettuce. A riot of color, flavor and texture. Perfect with a classic vinaigrette.

Farm News

The inch of rain came at the perfect time. We were getting pretty dry but we got a nice soaking Friday night. Luckily it wasn't the 4-6" like they got south of us or the 8-12" by Northfield. That would have made a muddy day for the farm tour. Our heart goes out to those farms that have to pick in the fields of water and mud and hope their crop matures. Luckily we still haven't had to set up drip irrigation in the field which is a first. We've got some hot days coming though so we'll see how long the moisture lasts. Right now everything looks fantastic. We've been mowing a lot to control weeds plus hoeing and weeding in the rows. We are on squash and potato bug patrol every day now. The harvests have started ramping up, especially the broccoli and cucumbers. Tomatoes still aren't quite ready yet but there's a lot of fruit that is starting to ripen. We saw a deer checking out the garden just before sunset tonight. We've seen bunnies too. The competition for the wonderful vegetables has begun. We're hoping our members are the winners.

From the Kitchen

Broccoli Salad

Ingredients

1-2 broccoli crowns, just the florets, finely chopped (5-6 cups)
10 bacon slices, crisp-cooked and crumbled (optional)
1/3c red onion, diced
1/3c sunflower seeds (I usually add these right before serving)
1/3c dried cranberries or dried tart cherries
1/2c mayonnaise
2T apple cider vinegar
2t sugar
salt and pepper

Instructions

To a salad bowl, add broccoli, bacon, onion, seeds, and cranberries or cherries. In a small bowl, mix mayo, vinegar, and sugar.

Pour dressing mixture over salad and toss to coat.

Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve (at least one hour).