



Bear Prints

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*The big end of the season thank you party is really **not** the end of the season! We can't wait until then because the weather just gets too cold and unpredictable. We are planning on having pick up two more weeks after the party, so the last week will be the week of October 11. We've scheduled the end this year to give us time to plow things under and plant cover crops to improve the soil for next season. (But it **is** really a thank you for joining us party!)*

Mike has scheduled a work day for Sunday, October 10th from 1 in the afternoon until 4. The fall is the best time for these things because you don't have to worry about pulling out the wrong thing, there aren't many bugs and it's not really hot! We plan to clean up the tomatoes across the street by the greenhouse. Last year we had a blast pulling stuff out and then taking a tour of the "back 40" through the woods.

Farm News

This is it! The **big-end-of-the-season-thank-you-party is next Saturday**, from 4 on. Make sure you remind your share partners and friends! Feel free to bring family etc. with you as well. It's potluck, but you can bring anything you want. It would be nice to bring a label & if it's vegetarian, etc. if it's not obvious. We've enjoyed some great food during past parties! Mike will start grilling right around 4 and will continue until almost dark, but there's always new food coming in. Feel free to come anytime. We'll have carved some pumpkins, but there will be more to do. The weather will hopefully cooperate (we'll still have it regardless) and we'll spread jack-o-lanterns all over. We also have a big bonfire after dark.

Just remember to bring warm clothes, because it gets pretty cold at night now. A flashlight might be handy and feel free to bring a folding chair. We'll have a few picnic tables and haybales to sit on.

We harvested two huge pick-up truck loads of winter squash this past week, and we have lots more to go. Even the kids have been pressed into work for a little bit. Wow, there is a lot of winter squash out there! What were we thinking?! We certainly weren't thinking of how heavy this all is when we were transplanting all those veggies with the waterwheel transplanter. We were thinking "This is so easy!" I'm glad there's no frost predicted for this week to give us more time to bring it all in!

Missy got a bath yesterday. Can you tell the difference?

What's New In Your Share This Week

New this week is **buttercup squash**. They have deep orange, fibreless flesh with a rich, sweet flavor. According to the Johnny's catalog, they are dry at harvest, sweeter after a few weeks. Dry storage is important to keep them from spoiling.

You can prepare them the same as the other winter squash. Cut in half and remove the seeds. Place in a baking dish cut side down in about an inch of water. Bake at 350 degrees for about 40 minutes or until tender. Take it out, flip them over and add 1 tbsp. brown sugar, 1 tsp. butter and salt & pepper. Cook another 10 minutes.

You could also fill with sausage or your own creation or just leave them plain. I

like mine with cumin or Cajun seasoning.

Another option for cooking is the microwave. Cut in half as above, then cook cut side down for 6 minutes or so until tender. You may need a few minutes longer, so check.

Also new this week is **baby bear pumpkins!** They are a type of sugar pumpkin, so when you are done with it as a decoration, you can make a fabulous pie with it! Just cook as above, then scoop out the flesh and use in your favorite pie recipe as a substitute for canned pumpkin. Pumpkin is also good as a side dish, just like squash, and it freezes very well. It is good in soups, risotto, ravioli, bread, cookies...

Bear Hill Farm CSA

Anne & Mike Gagnon

14 Davis Road
Tyngsboro, MA 01879
Phone: 978-692-4224
Email: bearhillfarm@aol.com

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Childhood Memories “Down on the Farm”

Among the many reasons I joined Bear Hill Farm is my desire to make sure my children know where their food comes from, and to expose them a little to farm life. My dear parents can't agree with this, or all the other things I think are a “necessity” of child-rearing: why am I hauling them around for all of these “novel experiences,” instead of just sending them out to the backyard to play?

But they did always make sure we went away over summer vacation, usually to Minnesota to visit our cousins. They may never have said it in so many words, but I know they put family as a high priority and wanted us to know our relatives. Sad to say, though, the thing I remember *most* about those trips is the sickly-sweet smell of Moonwind, Mom's “traveling perfume,” as we backed out of the driveway at the start of our trip. Oh well — they tried.

So here I am, year after year at the farm, bringing my ever-changing little brood along with me. Miles came to the farm just a few days after he was born. I've gathered my produce with babies in the sling and into the stages of eating dirt and attacking poor Missy (the only dog Sophie's not afraid of!). At this stage we're busy monitoring street crossings, feeding the goats, and avoiding poison ivy. The teenage years haven't come yet for us...more on that later, I guess.

I have no idea what my children will remember from these experiences. No doubt Miles is too young to specifically remember his delight of a few weeks ago, when he discovered how good it tastes to wrap a basil leaf around a cherry tomato and pop it in your mouth. (*Hopefully*, they all learned that you can't scream at the chickens!) Of course, if you want to know what your children remember about the farm, you can always wait until February and then just *ask* them — something else my parents would find shocking!

Last week I had to tell the kids that we won't be able to make it to the farm party this year. Their reaction was quite telling, “But we *have to* go to the farm party!” Indeed, what kid wouldn't be thrilled with lots of food, roasting marshmallows over a huge bonfire, acres of scary jack-o-lanterns, and playing with flashlights? It's the stuff happy childhood memories are made of, isn't it? — Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

Recipes: Potato Main Dishes

*My favorite way to serve potatoes is roasted with rosemary as a side dish. (Dice potatoes in about 1” pieces, coat with 2 TBS olive oil, sprinkle with fresh rosemary and kosher salt. Then bake at 450° for 45 minutes.) But since you can't cook them the same way **every** time, here are two main dish potato recipes from Brooke Djony's *The New England Cookbook*. — AB*

Portuguese Caldo Verde

2 TBS olive oil
1/2 pound garlicky sausage
1 large onion, chopped
4 C chicken broth
1 1/2 pounds potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
1 small bunch kale, thick stems removed and thinly sliced
Salt and fresh-ground black pepper.

Heat the oil in a large saucepan or soup pot. Add the sausage and onion and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the sausage browns lightly and the onion softens, 10 min. Add the broth, potatoes, kale, and 2 cups of water. Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce the heat to med-low, and simmer, partially covered, for about 30 min, until the potatoes are very soft — almost falling apart — and the kale is tender. Use a large fork or whisk to break up some of the potatoes against the side of the pot to thicken the soup. Adjust the liquid, adding

more broth or water if necessary. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Ladle into bowls to serve.

Hashed Chicken with Dried Cranberries

4 C cooked, unpeeled thin-skinned potatoes, cut in 1/2” cubes
4 C (1 pound) diced cooked chicken or turkey
1 C thinly sliced scallions [or chopped farm onions]
3/4 C sweetened dried cranberries (such as Craisins)
2 TBS chopped fresh sage, or 2 tsp dried
3/4 tsp salt, plus more to taste
1/2 tsp coarsely ground black pepper
1/2 C plus 2 TBS half-and-half or light cream
3-4 TBS vegetable oil

Toss together the potatoes, chicken, onion, cranberries, sage, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Drizzle on 1/2C of half-and-half and toss to combine well. Heat 3 TBS of the oil in a very large heavy skillet. Add the hash mixture, spreading evenly and pressing down with a spatula. Cover the pan and cook over med heat for 15 min, uncovering to stir well every 5 min. Raise the heat to med-high and cook, uncovered, stirring often, until the hash is crusty and rich golden brown, about 10 min more. If the hash seems too dry, add the remaining tablespoon of oil. Just before serving, stir in the remaining 2-3 TBS half-and-half. Taste and add more salt if necessary, then serve.