



Bear Prints

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The last week of pick up will be the week of October 10 unless you hear differently from us.

It's "Blondie's" birthday tomorrow, Oct. 4th. Michalle is our daughter who has dug almost all your potatoes & carrots this year, the potatoes all by hand! She is key to our operation, so make sure you say Happy Birthday & thanks if you see her!

Farm News

One more week to go after this. We thought we were going to have a frost Friday night. We covered the basil & some of the beans with remay (think of thick fake spider web material), just in case. It protects plants for a few degrees if it's close. Looks like even the basil is o.k., although spots were affected. All the winter squash is home now from Nashoba. The trailer is full of butternut. We'll give a couple out this week while we count the rest so that it's even.

Well, the big party has come & gone. Thanks to everyone who came & allowed us to show our appreciation. We certainly had a good time & hope all of you did, too. There was a ton of great food. More than one member suggested that we ask people to send in their recipes so that we can put them on the website under a new end of the year party section. John Conant took some pictures of the jack-o-lanterns (& a few people). If anyone else has some pictures, send them in! The weather was perfect & so was Mike's cooking, as usual. We went through 12 lbs. of deep fried mushrooms, on top of everything else! The kids seemed to have a great time carving pumpkins & running around in the dark together. All ages seemed to get along great. The last of us left the bonfire around 1 a.m. The party is definitely a rite of passage for us. Now we start to focus on all those projects that have to wait until the CSA is done. Like replacing the greenhouse plastic, getting the fields cover cropped, firewood, a kitchen floor...

What's New In Your Share This Week

You can help with part of the list above. No, not the kitchen floor, the putting the fields to bed part. Every year we have at least one **work day**. Well, we're due, quite frankly. We pull up all the old tomato plants etc. So bring your work gloves & come on down **this Sunday, October 9th, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.** Come anytime within that time frame for as long as you want. Kids are welcome, too. It is usually lots of fun and a great way to meet other members. Maybe you'll see someone from the party. If rain, the 16th. New this week is **butternut squash**. It is far and away my favorite winter squash. Very sweet & not too dry. I like mine baked the best, but it is also fine steamed or boiled. I prefer it with some texture, rather than pureed smooth, but I bet Anna prefers her smooth as silk in a soup with lots of cream! Soup is definitely one way to use it, or as a regular side dish of course. But there are many other ways to use your bounty. Try putting it in ravioli or lasagna, or adding to risotto or squash pie. Pumpkin pie & squash pie are often almost indistinguishable. I think the squash is easier since it isn't so stringy. You can cook and freeze squash, either plain or in recipes. But you don't have to. Squash lasts all winter if you have a cool dry place to store it. With the woodstove, we do not have ideal conditions, but my Mom stores some for us in her basement. An unheated garage is fine most of the time—just make sure it won't freeze if it gets bitter cold. Check them frequently (once a week) to see if any are developing bad spots & eat those up first. Just cut off any blemishes. If you notice that any have cuts or scrapes use those first as well, since that is where they are susceptible. You should be able to think of the farm well past Christmas when you dig in!

Did you have a chance to see all the bluebirds last week? If not, look around because they are probably still here. They come through every fall by the dozens! Bluebirds have brilliant sky blue backs & rusty bellies, at least the males do. They were declining since they don't compete well with other birds for nests and they prefer open fields. But now that people have been putting up nest boxes for them, they are making a comeback.

Bear Hill Farm CSA

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*PICK UP MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, OR
FRIDAY
3 PM UNTIL 7 PM*

*(Please make arrangements at least one week
in advance to switch your pick-up day.)*

CSA Since 1998

COME ANYTIME —
THIS IS YOUR FARM!

A Party Recap and Another Chance

Ahh, the Farm Party. I've said many times how much the kids look forward to it, and how happy I am that the rituals of the party will become part of their own childhood memories: carving the pumpkins and taking the jack-o-lantern tour; permission to eat gobs of potato chips (sorry, my children ignored all of your beautiful carefully prepared dishes—but the rest of us didn't!); carousing in the dark, getting scared but not too scared; and *of course*, roasting too many marshmallows over the bonfire. This year somebody brought the makings for s'mores (yum!) and somebody else sat with the children telling scary stories (fun!).

As the children get older I'm able to lengthen their leashes — so to speak — and I can relax a bit more myself. Also this year we were able to stay a bit later, and it was a great time just hanging around the fire chatting, lingering over just one last glass of wine. The night was clear and the stars were so bright, and I sat next to some folks who really knew their constellations. As we tilted back our heads and admired Europa, I got an unexpected sense of the sublime — that feeling you hope for at Christmas but are usually too exhausted to experience: the world is a vast, awe-inspiring place, and it's truly a miracle that we each have a place in it, and comforting when we find ourselves exactly where we belong.

If this description has those of you who missed the party cursing your poor judgment and vowing to do better next year, then I've done my job. I know that, even if you don't already have other plans, it can be hard to get out the door of an evening and place yourself among a sea of unknown faces. (Being shy myself, I know that feeling all too well.) But I can assure you that it's *just not like that* at Bear Hill Farm — and anyway, you can always hunt me down (being shy, again, I will welcome your approach). Try it next year, you'll like it.

Here's the good news, though: You have another chance, and you don't need to wait until next year! Mike & Anne have scheduled the annual work day for Saturday, October 9. We wear our work shoes and gardening gloves and get right down to business, but it's a party all the same. There is something for every person at every level of ability to do, and while we are working the talk flows pretty freely. I always meet somebody I'm happy to get to know — here among this community that supports agriculture; and it's a chance to visit with old friends in these last weeks before the farm closes down for the winter. I can't promise anything for this year, but I will say that one year we took an excellent hike around the property (where Anne divulged her extensive knowledge of plant life), and last year we were treated to Mike's apple crisp (talk about sublime!). You must know that I'll be looking for you there. — Anna Barker (annabarker@charter.net)

Recipes: Stuffed Butternut Squash

Here is a way to take your squash from side dish to main course, with very little effort involved. Acorn squash is also good for stuffing, but butternut is large enough to serve two generously as a main course. Or slice stuffed butternut squash and feed a crowd — to continue the party theme. — AB

Cooks.com Sausage-Stuffed Butternut Squash

1 butternut squash, cut in half, seeds removed
1/2 lb. Sweet Italian sausage
3 slices bread, cubed
1 egg, well beaten
1 small onion, chopped
1-2 cloves garlic, chopped
2-4 TBS fresh parsley [also try our sage]

Place squash cut side down in greased shallow baking dish. Bake at 350°F for 40-60 min, until squash is easily pierced. Meanwhile, remove sausage from casing and fry until brown and crumbly. Add onion and garlic and continue sautéing until onions are soft. Stir in egg, parsley and bread. Remove from heat. Remove squash meat and add to sausage mixture. Replace in shell. Return to oven and bake another 15 min until top is golden brown.

Butternut Squash Stuffed with Curried Couscous

Adapted from the International Vegetarian Union site, ivu.org

1 butternut squash, cut in half, seeds removed
3 C cooked couscous (follow package directions)
1 T vegetable oil
1/2 C chopped onion
1/3 C cooked peas (frozen or fresh)
1/4 C dark or golden raisins
1/2 C yogurt (or 1/4 C water if you're vegan)
2 tsp good quality curry powder
1/8 tsp *each* cinnamon and cayenne pepper

Bake squash as in previous recipe. While squash is cooking, heat oil and sauté onions until transparent. Stir in curry powder, cinnamon and red pepper. Remove from heat and stir in couscous, peas, raisins, and yogurt (or water). When squash is done, fill each half with the mixture, return to oven, and bake another 30 min, or until stuffing is thoroughly reheated.

Other stuffing go-withs: Rice, wild rice, celery, zucchini, sliced apples, mushrooms, green beans, cheddar cheese, soy feta crumbles, soy sausage crumbles, fresh ginger (Jacque Pepin's idea), grated carrot, chopped cranberries, chopped spinach...