



Bear Prints

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September 15, 2014

DON'T FORGET— the big fall party will be the last Sat in Sept. this year— Sept. 27,

4 p.m. to whenever.

There's a pile of pumpkins we got from our pal Midge for carving at the party. They aren't perfect (some have been nibbled by deer) but they don't last once you carve them anyway. And the sheep love to eat them.

Farm News

Well it's that time of season again when the list of things being planted has ended. Now it's just a matter of harvesting and getting ground ready for next season. Some of the stuff Mike planted a few weeks ago is starting to come to fruition, like the arugula you'll be getting this week. Other crops will need some encouragement if they are going to mature before the first frost. The next crop of beans near the cherry tomatoes are a good example. They are about half grown, but with these chilly nights they aren't going to start flowering anytime soon. So, we'll try helping them along by covering them with remay, a polyester fabric. Even so, some crops just won't mature before a killing frost. It's always gamble this time of season.

Mike spent a lot of time working on vehicles this week. He fixed the big truck that Michalle uses to pick up the pig food (I guess now it's technically the pig/cow/sheep feed). Sat. he had to fix a shackle on the horse trailer so we could bring another few pigs to market this morning.

The pigs have been getting out a bit, but that's just as well since it's time to put the sows in with the boar. We'll have some piglets in November (yes, that was not a well-timed escape), but most will be born in January, so the piglets will be nice & big in the spring to sell to others to raise.

Michalle saw a big black bear down the street last Wed, just over the Westford line. It was eating acorns by the road. She called Mike & he came down & got some photos with his cell phone. I guess the bears are back at Bear Hill.

What's New In Your Share This Week

New this week are **delicata** winter squash. They are very cute little individual serving size squash. I think they rather look like gourds. Store all the winter squash in a cool dark place, like the garage or cellar, as long as they won't freeze. Be careful cutting them—they can be pretty tough.

When you are ready to eat them, cut in half & scoop out the seeds & stringy stuff. Scrub them well and you can even eat the skin if it isn't too tough. You can cut them in half then microwave, but I like them best roasted. Start them out cut side down, then halfway through flip them over & leave plain or add some cumin/curry powder or maple syrup or brown sugar & pumpkin pie spices.

We also have **red round storage onions**.

A lot of people figure red onions are mild & sweet, but these are strong raw. Again, cooked they turn very sweet, as

the compounds that make them strong raw turn to sugar with cooking.

Also new this week is **arugula**. Great in salad when it is young like this. It is a little peppery, so mix with other greens if you like. Dress with a simple lemon juice/olive oil vinaigrette. If you like it try adding to sandwiches instead of lettuce. I think it would go particularly well with tuna. If you find it a little too peppery try cooking it, which really mellows the flavor. It is growing well right now. In the spring the leaves are usually ravaged by flea beetles. They eat tiny holes when the leaves are small, then the holes get bigger as the leaves grow. Luckily, flea beetles are a spring phenomena & go away when the summer heat arrives.

Speaking of which, where did that summer heat run off to?

Bear Hill Farm CSA

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

*Feel free to come late - bring a flashlight!
(Please make arrangements at least one
week in advance to switch your pick-up
day.)*

CSA Since 1998

COME ANYTIME —
THIS IS **YOUR** FARM!

Timing

Mike & I are well aware that pig farms aren't particularly popular. In fact, I think Tyngsboro no longer allows them (what a shame), although we're grandfathered.

We have always tried to be friendly and encouraged anyone that stops or walks by to visit the critters. Because we have quite a bit of land and the neighbors aren't real close, we haven't had any problems. The Ericksons have been especially understanding when the occasional cow ended up on their lawn.

Mike tries to be mindful of when he starts equipment up, particularly on the weekends when most folks aren't working & might want to sleep in. The other day, though, someone complained about the smell. Well, yeah, it does smell, especially after a rain or when it's really hot & muggy. This wasn't someone that just moved in, but it was bothering him now.

After thinking about it, Mike realized that it wasn't that he was doing anything different, it was the timing. In the fall Mike turns the compost a lot to make room for all the new leaves. Well that really makes it smell. Except he was doing most of that work late into the evening, quitting after dark. Then the odor would hang in the night air & settle into the valley where it would drift into open windows. Simple solution, now he turns it in the morning, so it can dissipate more rapidly.

So, sorry if it's a little more smelly around the farm for a bit. Just think of all that black gold being spread on the fields next season. It really makes a huge difference. And keep in mind all those folks like Mike working dawn to dusk.

I also wanted to mention that we've been bringing more produce from Brookdale Farm in Hollis NH to the Tyngsboro Farmers Market on Sunday, since our veggies are slowing down. We didn't want CSA members to think we were selling stuff instead of giving it to you—the CSA always comes first! Come visit (Sundays, 9:30-1:30) it's a good opportunity to ask Mike about our meat.

Recipes: Arugula (+ Onions)

Do you have a bunch of onions piling up or have you been using them each week? If you haven't been keeping up, no worries, onions can last a long time. Just use those big sweet ones & the red long, torpedo-shaped ones first, since they aren't storage onions. Here's a recipe I've modified for a rustic onion tart that calls for a handful of arugula leaves from Local Flavors by Deborah Madison.

Rustic Onion Tart with Cheese & Walnuts

Pizza Dough

1 1/4 cups warm water
1 scant Tbsp. active dry yeast
pinch sugar
3 cups all purpose flour, more as needed
1 tsp. salt
1 Tbsp. olive oil

Put the water in a bowl & add the yeast, sugar & 1 cup flour & let sit for 30 minutes.

Stir in the salt & oil, then add the flour. When too stiff to stir, turn onto a lightly floured counter & knead for 10 minutes until smooth & shiny, adding more flour if needed.

Place in an oiled bowl, turn to coat, cover with plastic wrap & set aside until doubled, roughly an hour.

Tart

2 Tbsp. olive oil

6 onions, thinly sliced
2 tsp. fresh or 1 tsp. dried thyme
2 oz. blue cheese, crumbled
3 walnuts, chopped
1 large handful of arugula, chopped

Make the pizza dough. Heat oil in a large pot with a cover then add the sliced onions & the thyme. Stir to coat, then cover & cook on a medium low heat for 30 to 40 minutes, stirring occasionally until soft & lightly colored.

Preheat the oven to 450 for 20 minutes. Roll out the dough to cover a cooking sheet. Cover it with the onions & bake for 12 minutes. Add the blue cheese & walnuts & bake another 10 minutes or so, until the cheese is melted & crust is crisp. Add the chopped arugula to the hot pizza & serve.

You can also make a quick pasta dish by cooking spaghetti. While that is boiling saute some chopped garlic & red pepper flakes in olive oil. Then add washed, chopped arugula (or chard from the extra table). Add salt & when wilted add the cooked spaghetti to the same pan. Add some chopped nuts, 1/2 cup ricotta cheese, some romano or parmesan cheese & more oil if needed.