

August 18th, 2009.

We sure have been getting the heat that we have been wishing for all summer! It has been a while since the last newsletter, but life here at roots down has been busily carrying on almost as usual. Sue's sister just got married over the weekend, as did the sister of one of our farm helpers Phil, therefore things have been a bit more hectic than usual...but all has gone smoothly. We are very grateful to our farm helpers Wayne and Johnnie who were able to keep things going in the absence of the rest of us! Thanks so much! Phil, we did miss you though and we are glad you are back! Also, those of you who are used to seeing Rebecca at our farm stand at the Kingston market; she is finished for the season. Thank-you Rebecca once again for all of your help! You will be seeing Jeff or I (Sue) from now on at the market.

At my sister's wedding, we provided veggies from our farm for the dinner. It was sure nice to enjoy a gourmet home grown meal! What was interesting is that the veggies were prepared in a way that featured their own qualities. Little was added to them in terms of their flavour, but detail was paid to how their flavours paled with the other items they were being served with, as well as cooking them to perfection, leaving the vitality intact. It sure is nice to eat hot green beans and patty pans that still have crunch left in them. I remember learning many years ago to watch for a colour change in veggies while cooking them. When they are done to a point where you still have a bit of crunch left, their colour will become very vibrant. I especially notice this with broccoli and other green veggies. If they are cooked too long the colour will turn darker, brownish or grayish. Using quality fresh veggies, we believe that the less you do to them the better so as not to interfere with their naturally splendid flavour, texture and nutritional qualities.

Having said that, I will include some zucchini recipes today as they are now abundant and you may be running out of ideas of what to do with them. You can use any type of summer squash for these recipes. If you have a glut of it and more than you can eat, just grate it and freeze. You can use this for zucchini loaves or fritters later.

This week's share of the harvest includes:

Slicing Tomatoes
Zucchini
Turnip Greens
Cucumbers

Cherry Tomatoes
Fingerling Potatoes
Salad Mix

Peppers
Beans
Scallions

The fingerling potatoes are wonderful tossed with olive oil and garlic and then roasted. They also hold their texture and shape well in a potato salad or chopped in to chunks and added to a soup.

A couple of recipes follow for zucchini, but I will give a few suggestions for using them. We use them often in burritos/quesadillas by making a sauté of onions, and then add your chopped zucchini, or any other firmer veggies. I season them with cumin and add black beans and chopped tomatoes and fresh herbs I may have on hand. Zucchini can also be grated and sautéed with onions and put on a quesadilla. Another simple way of using it is to sauté some onions, and then add chopped zucchini and cook for a couple of minutes. Try to not overcook and retain some of the firmness. I use this sauté with fresh cherry tomatoes and cucumbers and feta cheese and Greek dressing in a pasta salad. Also, I will use it in a frittata or omelet (with feta and tomatoes also nice).

Here is the loaf recipe that some of you requested at the open house here at the farm last month:

Cranberry-Zucchini Muffins or Quick Bread Variation

From Martha Stewart's Baking Handbook

Unsalted butter, room temperature, for pan

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups all-purpose flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp baking soda

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp ground cinnamon

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

2 large eggs

1 cup sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp pure vanilla extract

1 cup finely grated zucchini
(1 to 2 medium)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh or frozen whole
cranberries

Preheat oven to 375F. Generously butter 10 cups of a 12-cup muffin pan; set aside. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt; set aside.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, sugar, oil and vanilla. Stir in the zucchini. Add the flour mixture, and stir to combine; do not overmix. Using a rubber spatula, fold in the cranberries. Divide the batter evenly among the 10 prepared muffin cups.

Continued on next page

Bake rotating the pan halfway through, until the muffins are golden and a cake tester inserted in the center of one muffin comes out clean, 25-30 minutes. Transfer the pan to a wire rack to cool for 10 minutes. Turn the muffins on their sides in their cups, and cool. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Quick Bread Variation Follow instructions for muffins, transferring batter to a 9-by-5 inch loaf pan coated with butter. Bake at 375F, rotating pan halfway through, until a cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack to cool before serving.

Zucchini Fritters From COOKS.COM

3 c. coarsely grated zucchini
2 eggs, beaten
1/8 c. milk
2 tsp. flour
Salt and black pepper, freshly ground
Mint, dried or fresh
Olive oil for pan frying

Grate the squash and drain in a colander for 1 hour. Mix the eggs, milk, and flour into a smooth batter. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add mint to taste (about 1 teaspoon dried mint, 1 to 2 tablespoons fresh mint leaf, chopped).

Mix batter with the squash and pan fry in small fritters in a bit of olive oil. Cook just until golden brown and serve as a first course or a vegetable dish. These can be kept warm in the oven for a bit before dinner. Be sure to cover. Serve with sour cream, plain yoghurt or Tzatziki.
Serves 6.

Some recipes for the Turnip Greens:

I found this recipe (see next page) for Winona's Turnip Greens on about.com in a section under southern food. I thought it was a good and simple description of how to cook greens such as turnip, collards, kale etc. We will sometimes start with a few chunks of bacon for flavour and then add garlic and the greens and a dash of apple cider vinegar to add moisture and flavour. Just take the time to wash well to remove any grit.

Preparation:

Re: cooking turnip greens--My mother always cooked turnip greens as well as other types of greens this way: After washing well and removing any tough stems, she would put them in a large kettle/pan with water and bring to a boil. She would then pour off that water to remove the bitter taste. Then she would add more water (just enough to keep them from burning, maybe to where she could see it in the greens) and cook until tender. She would then remove them from the water, place in a skillet with some bacon grease, salt and pepper and cook them down until they were wilted and very tender. She did not usually add any meat because the bacon taste was so good. This is the way I still cook them. Of course, most of us think our mother was the best cook ever.

The following 2 recipes for cooking greens are from the Asparagus to Zucchini cookbook again:

Spicy Potato Sausage and Greens Soup by: JoAnn Hoffman

1 pound bulk hot Italian sausage	4 cups water
½ cup chopped onion, or more to taste	1/3 cup whipping cream
4 cups chicken broth	salt and pepper
4 cups thinly sliced potatoes (slice them with skins on)	
2 cups packed torn fresh greens such as kale, turnip or collards.	

Heat soup pot over medium. Add sausage and onions and cook until meat is no longer pink. Add broth, potatoes, and 4 cups water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer until potatoes are tender, 10-15 minutes. Stir in greens; cook 1-2 minutes. Stir in whipping cream and season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve right away, or, for more developed flavour, let cool, then chill and reheat later or the next day.

Makes 8-12 servings.

(I have made this soup without the addition of whipped cream which still works well).

Spanish Greens

2 tbsp olive oil

3 cloves garlic, flattened or smashed
with the flat of a knife

1 pound greens, stemmed and well washed

salt and pepper to taste

¼ cup golden raisins

3 Tbsp toasted pine nuts

Heat oil over high in a very large skillet. Add garlic cloves and stir-fry until golden, about 30 seconds. Toss in greens. Season with salt and pepper. Cover; wilt greens 2-3 minutes. Add raisins and pine nuts. Check for seasoning and serve.

Makes 2-4 servings