



In the Share

Cucumber, 3 pieces
Summer Squash, 5 pieces
Sweet Onion, 1 bunch
Cabbage, 1 head
Carrots, 1 bunch
Eggplant, 2 long OR 1 globe
Lettuce, 1 head
Green Beans, 1 bag
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch
Tomatoes, TBD

As part of our internship program, we tour another farm. It not only exposes the interns to another way of doing things, but also allows Jake and me to ask questions and share knowledge with another farmer. It confirms for me that we do things very differently at Troy. We depend on manual labor instead of machines, which sounds like drudgery, except that there are 14 other people drudging next to you and the conversation is always interesting. Even in silence, there is a sense of camaraderie. We also don't spray anything or use black plastic. Both give certain advantages and we see the effect they have on other farms when compared to Troy. These choices are possible because of the unique situation we have in the City of Madison, as an educational farm, in a surrounding setting of phenomenal support for local food. Thank you for supporting us not only (continued on the back)

From the Farmer

The Plowman's Folly

In 1943, an agronomist named Edward Faulkner wrote a seminal book called the *Plowman's Folly*, about the evils of the moldboard plow. When you picture a classic plow in your head, it is a moldboard plow that you are imagining, and in the mid-1900's, they were pretty much universal in American agriculture. They were designed to dig deeply and turn the top layer of earth under: great for turning sod and prairies into new farmland. Faulkner was making the case, however, that the short term benefits of plowing were offset by the long term problems it caused: soil impoverishment and erosion, and decreased crop yields due to burying natural fertility deep into the soil. We were just coming through the Dust Bowl years, our rich topsoil was rapidly disappearing, and he made a pretty compelling argument. I read Faulkner's treatise at the beginning of my farming career, and it was the start of my education in the need to be thoughtful about how, when, and with what tool I prepare farmland.

We don't use a moldboard plow here at Troy, but we still have to be very conscientious about our tillage, so as to avoid doing long term damage to our soil. Primary tillage happens right around the middle of April for us, when we rent a large tractor and an implement called a chisel plow. We go over the whole farm, and the chisel's big steel shanks rip deep into the soil, loosening and slightly lifting it. The coarse furrows created by the plow help the earth to dry out and warm up more quickly, and the deep ripping action results in channels for air and water to percolate far down into the soil. The big risk with the chisel plow (other than running something valuable over with that giant tractor!) is to plow when the fields are still too wet. If the ground is still muddy in consistency, it will "smear" or "ribbon", making for a hard and chunky consistency that can cause problems all season long. We also have to be careful not to go too deep and pull up the clay subsoil layers to the surface.

Secondary tillage happens throughout the season. We use a 6 foot wide tractor mounted rotovator to till in cover crops, keep weeds under control in fallow sections, and make loose, fluffy seed beds for transplanted and direct seeded crops. I find the rotovator to be a useful tool in our system, but I strive to minimize its use. Plenty of research shows that the mixing and turning over action of the tines destroys microbial activity in the soil (so important in organic production), inverts soil layers, and disrupts the capillary action of air and water into the earth. If over used, it can create a "plow pan" (a mostly impermeable layer about 6" below the field's surface), and too many passes with the tractor can quickly lead to compaction issues. I'm sure that if Edward Faulkner stumbled onto our farm today, he would be glad to not see a moldboard plow, but would have plenty of bones to pick with me about the rotovator.

All of this brings me to the scene on Monday, when I was happily tilling in a spent planting of green beans. The moisture in the ground was perfect for tilling, and my mind was wandering to getting a cover crop established in that section. I glanced over my shoulder to assess my progress, and my heart sank at the sight. 50 feet behind me I saw the tattered crown of my farm hat poking out of the ground. I immediately realized that my hat (the hat that had been through 12 seasons with me...that was broken in and fit my head perfectly ...that I boasted was indestructible and would probably outlive me) had fallen off the tractor, and I had tilled it. Tilled it to smithereens. I will admit to privately shedding a few tears at a true Plowman's Folly. -Jake

Recipe

I know we've already had one kimchi recipe in the newsletter, but I'd like to add another that is quite different than Ellie's recipe. This kimchi is a year-round staple in my fridge and is loosely based off Sandor Katz's kimchi recipe in "Wild Fermentation." -Annali Smucker-Bryan

Kimchi

Ingredients:

At least two of the following- cabbage, carrots, bok choy, turnips, beets (I usually use cabbage and a root veggie)
onions
garlic
ginger
salt
red pepper flakes

Grate veggies by hand or with a food processor (amount determined by how many veggies you have!) Combine in a large bowl with finely minced onions, garlic and ginger and a few tablespoons of red pepper flakes to taste. Slowly add salt until mixture tastes salty but not inedible. Using clean hands, knead or massage the mixture until the cabbage begins to release its juice. Pack kimchi tightly into clean mason jars, making sure not to leave any air pockets and not to fill too high (As the kimchi ferments it expands and can bubble over the jar). Once the jar is packed, pour the extra kimchi juice on top, fully covering the kimchi. Cover with plastic wrap and a rubber band and wait. This is the exciting part! How long you wait depends on the temperature in your house. I've fermented the kimchi for as short as 3 days and as long as 2 weeks. Wait until you start to see bubbles forming throughout the jar and the plastic wrap puffs up, then wait a bit longer. Once fermented, the kimchi can last up to 6 months in your fridge, though it usually gets eaten much quicker in our apartment. You can serve on tacos or wraps, as a side for sushi, on top of a hot or cold salad, with eggs in the morning, or anywhere else that needs a pizzaang flavor. My husband and I added some to tuna fish salad tonight and it was awesome. Enjoy!

Cool Cucumber Soup

From Deborah Madison's Vegetable Soups cookbook

| The Soup | The Cucumber Relish |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 2 pounds cukes | 2 T minced chives or scallions |
| 1 C buttermilk, yogurt or a mix | 1 T minced dill |
| ½ C chopped basil, dill, cilantro | 2 T <i>each</i> basil and cilantro, chop |
| Sea salt and freshly ground pepper | 1 lovage leaf, slivered |
| Zest and juice of 2 lemons | 2 t olive oil |

1. Peel and seed cukes. Use one to make a cup of small dice and set aside. Coarsely chop the rest and puree in blender with buttermilk/yogurt, herbs, ½ t salt and zest and juice of 1 lemon. Chill.
2. Just before serving, toss the reserved diced cuke with herbs, a few pinches of salt, olive oil, and remaining lemon juice and zest.
3. Taste the soup for salt, pepper and acidity, adding more lemon juice if needed. Then serve in chilled bowls (or not) with the cucumber-herb relish.

(continued from "In the Share")
in our endeavor to grow food for you, but also to teach and learn from others, from interns to established farmers.

Deborah Madison never lets me down and she's done it again with the soothing cucumber soup recipe to the left.

Rest assured it's still summer despite the chronic cool temperature; summer squash appears again right on cue. I tested Diana Kennedy's Mexican "farmhouse" squash recipe in which I simply chopped the squash along with onions, garlic and peppers, placed in a dutch oven over a low flame, and let steep in their own juices. It is simple, but can be made unique with the addition of epazote.

Our onions are out of this world! They are perfect to eat raw in whatever creative combination you can dream. Store them in the refrigerator as these are sweet onions, not storage!

Cabbage should also be stored in the refrigerator wrapped in a plastic bag. Both onions and cabbage will keep for a long time in this fashion. Check out Annali's recipe to the left to preserve cabbage out of the icebox.

I'm pretty sure carrots are the original snack food and I'm convinced eggplant is meant to be grilled. Now, how to put these together?

Alas, this is the last of the lettuce for awhile. Despite the current cool weather, the heat got the best of us before.

Green beans are another quintessential vegetable and we plant in rapid succession to insure the tastiest strings.

Herb choices are basil, parsley, chives, sage or mint.

Tomatoes! Don't put them in the fridge- that makes them mealy! They will ripen on your counter into perfectly scrumptious tastes of summer.

Coming next week...tomatoes, beets, summer squash and the first of the garlic.

Troy Community Farm

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