



NEWS FROM PROVIDENT ORGANIC FARM

"Dedicated to a safe, just and sustainable food system."



Season 6, Volume 10

www.providentfarm.com

July 29 - Aug. 4, 2007

DROUGHT, DROUGHT, GO AWAY, COME AGAIN ANOTHER DAY

This is the driest year I have seen since we moved to Bivalve in 1980. I have talked to some of the old timers around here and the word is it's the driest year since 1964. None of that really matters much; we have to play out the hand we are dealt. If we must deal with extremes in our weather patterns in years to come, my preference would be for dry rather than wet. One old timer told me "In a dry year you think you'll go broke, in a wet year you will go broke".

My experience is that insect pressure is less severe in a dry year. The same is true of disease pressure. We have had very little insect damage in the crops this year. Unfortunately, any money I am saving on insecticides is fueling the irrigation pump. At the rate of about ½ gallon per hour and a daily run time of at least 8-10 hours, irrigation is rapidly becoming one of my greatest expenses this year. Aside from the fuel cost, irrigation accounts for much of our workload. We must constantly monitor the delivery of water through the trickle tapes to be sure they are not clogged with iron. If they do get clogged, we either have to flush them or if that doesn't work we have to add a material to sequester the iron in the water to unclog them and then flush them. I have not measured the iron content in the well water this year, but I know it is increasing. What is causing that is unknown to me, but a plumber friend of mine told me that the more wells that are driven in the area, the more iron we will see in the water.

We have been hearing a lot lately about wells going dry in the Eden and Allen area. Some attribute this to a local sod farm. I don't know if that is true, but I have always seen sod farming as one of the greatest follies of all farming ventures. It requires a horribly intense use of chemicals, requires huge amounts of water, and then the dummies strip and ship their topsoil. And for what? So somebody can have a lovely green lawn. Another folly; spend a small fortune on fertilizer and lawn chemicals, use another huge amount of water, spend a larger fortune on a zero turning radius lawn tractor so you can make less work for yourself cutting your grass. Duh! Some farmers say, jokingly, that lawn tractors are the American male's last contact with farming. Get a life guys. If you must,

leave your lights on all night, you'll be doing less harm!

Excuse me, I digress.

We lost a few of the heirloom tomato plants to early blight (I think), but that is to be expected; they are very susceptible to blights. The cooler overnight temperatures and high heat and humidity of August will bring on the risk of late blight in the tomatoes and mildew in the winter squash and pumpkins. A kaolin clay based fungicide called Surround can control both of these diseases. I have used it with success for 4 years. The heirloom tomatoes are looking great and are just starting to pick. We have 12 varieties this year, some of which were chosen by our Mater Mania Queens, Patti Erickson and Loren Moriarty. The winter squash and pumpkins are doing well in spite of the dry conditions. We have lost a few of the pumpkins to squash vine borers, but I over-planted to compensate for the dryness.

Onward,

Jay

IN YOUR SHARE

Cucumbers
Zucchini
Bell Peppers
Red Slicing Tomatoes

HEIRLOOMS:

Hillbilly
Green Zebra
Striped German
Marmande
Cours Di Bue
Cherokee Purple
Black Krim
Ruby Gold
Pruden's Purple
Brandywine
Green Grape
Evergreen

if you do not pick up your share for 3 consecutive weeks without explanation, we will discontinue packing a share for you until we hear from you.

RECIPE

TOMATO HERB SALAD

Makes 4 servings
10 minutes

For the Roasted Vinaigrette:

Process:

Roasted Garlic Cloves from 3 Bulbs
3/4 cup white Wine Vinegar
1/3 cup fresh lemon juice
2 T. Honey
1 T. Worcestershire Sauce
1 t. kosher salt
1/4 t. ground pepper

Gradually drizzle in :
3/4 cup vegetable oil

Stir in:

1 t. chopped fresh thyme

For the Tomato-Herb Salad

Divide:

4 large tomatoes, thickly sliced
1/4 cup blue cheese, crumbled
1 T. minced fresh basil
1 T. minced fresh chives

Drizzle with:

Roasted Garlic Vinaigrette

Submitted by Ed Noch and found at Cuisine at Home online at www.cuisinerecipes.com

SAVE AN ENTIRE CASE OF PAPER AND 1 FULL BLACK TONER!!!

*Which is the equivalent of 6 weeks of share veggies, or 40 pounds of heirloom tomatoes, billions of cucumbers . . . you get the point. Seriously folks, you can read the newsletter online at www.providentfarm.com or request an email copy by emailing Kelly at kelly@kcpandg.com.
NEED MORE INCENTIVE?
All monies saved by printing less newsletters will be donated back to MHF by our printer.*

MATER MANIA

August 19, 3-6 pm
Cedar Hill Park Marina

We will have:
TOMATOES!!!

Lots of different Heirloom Tomatoes in the form of Salsa, sandwiches, and plain old tasting. Also:
Kids Games
Live Bands
Crafts and
MORE!!!!

It's the 'mater time of year and we are once again recruiting salsa makers and support workers to raise funds for the Medora Harvest and Mater Mania. If your talent is in concocting succulent salsas or you are a willing volunteer for the salsa booth please contact Jane Hager at rjane999@yahoo.com, 410-629-0440 H or 410-543-6790 W. Donations of 1 gallon batches of salsa are most appreciated!

Furnace Town tomato tasting this weekend!

Can't wait for Mater Mania? Here it is:

What: Heirloom Tomato Tasting
Where: Furnace Town, Snow Hill, under the Pavilion (rain or shine)
When: August 5, 1-4 p.m.

Wondering what to do with all this wonderful food? How to store it? How to cook it? Try our website at www.providentfarm.com. There is a great section on produce and recipes. www.providentfarm.com