



Notes From The Field - by Patrick Buckingham, Calliope Farm A Coast to Coast perspective on farming.

We moved here from the pristine farming area of the Central Coast of California just over one year ago. Where the biggest garden pest is gophers, and the only worry of frost is maybe four days out of every ten years. The earth is still black from Indian camps and if you can keep your soil healthy you can grow any fruit or vegetable imaginable: Avocados, cherimoya, kiwis, artichokes, macadamia nuts, loquats.

We came east, against the prevailing winds, to find our own little piece of land here on the Eastern Shore and found people so warm, helpful and willing to teach, share, and continue to learn that it makes all the pests seem minute.

Thank you to Kelly, who showed up out of the blue one day to show me how to pick Colorado Potato Beetles and their larvae off the potato plants. We did that twice a day for about three weeks and enjoyed our crop of purple, red and fingerling potatoes that otherwise might have been lost.

Thanks to Ted for calling and warning us about the last frost in May that could have wiped out a third of our early planted crops. We spent hours covering and uncovering thousands of them with everything we could find, from bread bags to glass chandelier lampshades.

Thanks to Craig who, when I went to help plant garlic on his farm, reminded me that every farmer should carry a pocketknife at all times.

Thanks to Laura Hunsberger for finding us someone to chisel plow our field and for advice and books on composting, pests, and how to tell if our melons are ready.

And most of all, thanks to Jay, for letting us grow our transplants in his greenhouse so we could have early crops; Inviting us to grow for his CSA; Allowing us to sell at the farmer's market he started so more people could enjoy fresh, healthy fruits and veggies, and for saving us years of trial and error by giving us advice about which varieties to plant and when to plant them in this region.

That, folks, is what Community Supported Agriculture is all about. So, thanks you from the top of our Bright Lights Rainbow Chard to the blossom end of our cucumbers.

- Patrick Buckingham

Special Offer to CSA Members

This has been a wonderful year for Natural Pastured Pork here at W.FARMS.

This IS from the support I have received from the Provident Farms CSA! I hope everyone that has a freezer full of my pork from this year's order is enjoying it to the fullest, and I thank you!!!

Unfortunately, the last of this year's pork is scheduled for September butchering. I will not have my little ones ready until March of next year. The demand this year was great and I raise only a limited amount yearly because it's all about QUALITY not quantity. The last pigs for September butchering will be held exclusively for Provident CSA members! I will be taking your orders now for the September harvest. We will have halves and quarters available. The **half pork** is estimated weight of 100 lbs and the **quarter pork** is estimated weight of 50 lbs. All butchering is custom cut to your specifications, vacuum sealed, and labeled by cut, and is U.S.D.A. inspected. This includes any curing and smoking. All orders require a deposit, with the balance due when you receive delivery of your pork. If you would like to place an order or would like to ask questions, feel free to contact me any time by e-mail or just give me a call. I would also like to hear from the CSA Members that have already received orders this year. The concerns, compliments, complaints, or suggestions are needed and HIGHLY encouraged to better service my customers and improve my operation in the future at W.FARMS.

Thank You Again,
Mike Wilczynski

W.FARMS

E-MAIL: SIMPLEMANSKI@AOL.COM

CELL : 443-235-0277

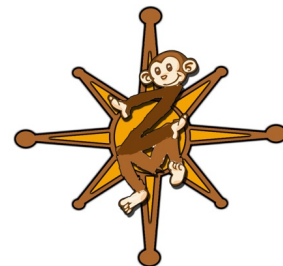
In Your Share* This Week

Cantalopes
Eggplant
Tomatoes
Cherry Tomatoes
Squash
Cucumbers
Frying Peppers

*Share makeup is best estimate at publication time.
Note: For more preservation tips and additional recipes,
visit our CSA website at
<http://www.providentorganicfarm.com/>

Zen Monkeys At Asbury

Don't forget, Tuesday 7/21, a musical treat for the Asbury Church distribution. Suzanne Mallow and the Zen Monkeys will be playing music for the kids. 4 to 6-ish. Come out, pick up your share, and enjoy!



It's the season again for the improbably large, and misunderstood, purple vegetable- Eggplant.

How to Store: Although they look hardy, eggplants are actually very perishable and care should be taken in their storage. Eggplants are sensitive to both heat and cold and should ideally be stored at around 50 degrees Fahrenheit (10 degrees Celsius). Do not cut eggplant before you store it as it perishes quickly once its skin has been punctured or its inner flesh exposed.

Place uncut and unwashed eggplant in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator crisper where it will keep for a few days. If it is too large for the crisper, do not try to force it in; this will damage the skin and cause the eggplant to spoil and decay. Instead, place it on a shelf within the refrigerator.

If you need to store Eggplant that has been cut, place it in a plastic bag or a container with a well-sealed lid and refrigerate. Eggplants start to quickly degrade once they have been cut, so it is best to use the remainder quickly.

Peeling Eggplant: Most eggplants can be eaten either with or without their skin. However, the larger ones and those that are white in color generally have tough skins that may not be palatable. If you want to peel Eggplant, use a vegetable peeler after cutting off the ends. Avoid peeling if possible since Eggplant's nasunin phytonutrient is found in its skin.

Cutting Eggplant: When cutting an eggplant, use a stainless steel knife as carbon steel will react with its phytonutrients and cause it to turn black. Wash the eggplant first and then cut off the ends. Slice the remainder of the Eggplant into 1/2 inch slices. Cutting Eggplant into slices of equal thickness will help it to cook more evenly. Slicing it thin will help it to cook more quickly. It is good to brush the slices with a little lemon juice to keep them from turning brown when they are exposed to air.

How to Reduce Bitterness from Eggplant: After slicing the Eggplant and tossing with lemon juice, sprinkle with coarse salt (fine salt will make Eggplant too salty), and allow it to sit for about an hour to draw out excess moisture. This will also reduce bitterness. Rinse the slices to remove the excess salt. If you need to restrict sodium intake, alternative methods would be to soak the Eggplant in cool water for 10-15 minutes. Eggplant can be baked, roasted in the oven, or steamed. If baking it whole, pierce the eggplant several times with a fork to make small holes for the steam to escape. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit (about 177 degrees Celsius) for 15 to 25 minutes, depending upon size. You can test for its readiness by gently inserting a knife or fork to see if it passes through easily.

Cooking Methods: Eggplant can be baked, roasted in the oven, or steamed. If baking it whole, pierce the eggplant several times with a fork to make small holes for the steam to escape. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit (about 177 degrees Celsius) for 15 to 25 minutes, depending upon size. You can test for its readiness by gently inserting a knife or fork to see if it passes through easily.

A Few Quick Serving Ideas

For homemade babaganoush, purée roasted eggplant, garlic, tahini, lemon juice and olive oil. Use it as a dip for vegetables or as a sandwich filling.

Mix cubed baked eggplant with grilled peppers, lentils, onions and garlic and top with balsamic vinaigrette.

Stuff miniature Japanese eggplants with a mixture of feta cheese, pine nuts and roasted peppers.

Add eggplant to your next Indian curry stir-fry.

Complementary spices include allspice, basil, bay leaves, garlic, chile powder, oregano, sage, thyme, marjoram, and parsley. It's a natural combined with tomatoes and onions, as in the popular dish Ratatouille.