What’s in the box?

Radicchio, Leonardo  Yellow Onions, Candy & Expression
Kale, Red Ursa        Carrots, Nelson  Winter Squash, Butternut
Fennel, Perfection    Baby Leeks, King  Popcorn, Dakota, Black & Cassiopeia
Richard              Dill, Bouquet    Dry Beans, Vermont
Peppers, sweet mix    Cranberry

Harvest Forecast* October 20 & 23

Beets                  Chard          Onions
Broccoli              Kale           Potatoes
Carrots               Shallots

*Harvest may vary for 1 or 2 crops, determined on day of harvest

Notes from the Field by Peter Crooke, First Year Apprentice

“For last year’s words belong to last year’s language, and next year’s words await another voice … What we call the beginning is often the end and to make an end is to make a beginning.” – T.S. Eliot, from Little Gidding, Sections II & V

During a time of struggle and confusion in my life last year, two dear friends handed me this wisdom, accompanied by their son’s watercolor of a blue jay. I was touched and encouraged and carried this truth with me into new seasons. What to make of the passage of time, of our sorrows and joys?

As the CASFS Class of 2015 graduates this week, we ponder how these six months have informed agricultural callings, questioned stubborn assumptions, steadied divergent personalities. Surely our knowledge and skills on compost, cover crops, irrigation, and pruning has flowered. But as we peer into our futures, despite best-laid plans, we know little of what to expect. No one does. What we likely do know is how we’ve grown, what has fed us. For one, delicious produce! As you enjoy the turning colors in your CSA box this week – speckled Vermont Cranberry beans, vibrant purple radicchio, baby leeks and grown-up fennel – reflect on what ends and beginnings have greeted you through the seasons. How does what and how you eat influence your life? How have you grown?

Many in our cohort have processed this experience through art. Bouquets lit up the Farm Center, drawings and woodwork adorned our tent cabins, creativity flowed through the fields and gardens that we tended. For me, art happened mostly through song, and I was not alone. A sub-set of us formed a band, performing at the Farm to Fork event and Harvest Festival. We had a ton of fun. We played old standards. And we wrote our own material. Just this past weekend, one budding songwriter penned: “Can’t find a way to make it right today/to be of use is all I want … And now I found a way/I made it right today/I’m of use and that’s all I want.” (With incredible accompanying music!) Another poet wrote the chorus of an original when she was just five years old! It has become something of an anthem: “Don’t kill the earth/No, don’t kill the earth/Because the world is very special/Even the bad guys/The world is special to us/And you better keep the world special/Get something soft for the world/Because the world is so special.” In homage to our time in the fruit trees this season, two of us recently wrote and sang and played: “What will you leave? What will you keep? What will take root? What will bear fruit?” Ask yourself the same, and remain thankful.

Friday, October 30 is the last day of the CSA season. Tuesday shareholders last pickup date is October 27.

This Friday, October 16 is the last day of Market Cart at Bay & High and marks the end of the 2015 Apprenticeship in Ecological Horticulture.

Congratulations to the Class of 2015 and thank you for lending your capable hands and so carefully tending our farm and garden!

Upcoming Event

Free Docent-Led Tour
Sunday, November 1 – 2 to 3:30 pm
UCSC Farm & Garden

Take a free, guided tour of one of Santa Cruz’s most beautiful locations – the 30-acre organic farm at UCSC. Guided tours are offered the first Sunday of the month from 2 - 3:30 pm. Free public parking available. For more information or to schedule a guided group tour, email casfs@ucsc.edu or call 831.459-3240.

Directions: http://casfs.ucsc.edu/about/directions.html
Decorative corn this week is also popcorn! Heirloom Dakota Black from Seed Saver’s Exchange, and heirloom-in-the-making Cassiopeia, from Siskiyou Seeds in Williams, OR. Farmer breeder Don Tipping says of Cassiopeia: “A southern Oregon original in the development over the last 15 years. Originating with the old Coche de Pueblo strain, we crossed it with 4 other varieties. Cassiopeia combines the best traits of 5 different heirloom popcorns … Let cure on the cob indoors for a few months before popping.”

If you try popping the corn, rub it off the cob with your thumbs. These ears need re-hydrating – seems we harvested them too dry. The Joy of Cooking and other sources suggest adding water to shelled kernels in a glass, and waiting a few days for water to be absorbed by the corn before popping. Rinsing the corn, then returning it to a Mason jar with lid for re-hydration also worked.

Vermont Cranberry Beans were grown here in the Main field! We planted them in 2014 and 2015, this year improving our yields by uprooting the plants when the bean pods were still leathery, leaving the beans to complete a curing phase in the field before we threshed and cleaned them. Please give them one more go-over by hand before soaking, to catch any last little bits of soil or plant matter that might have made it through the sorting.

Original seed stock from High Mowing Seeds, grown out 3 years on CASFS Farm: “Amazing Vermont heirloom with unsurpassed rich flavor. Can be used as a snap, shell or dry bean. As a dry bean, stores exceptionally well. This variety, dating back to the 1800s, is well suited to short-season, cool summer climates. Versatile • Short-season • Bush habit. (Phaseolus vulgaris)”

Cranberry Bean & Warm Radicchio Salad

1 lb Vermont cranberry beans, cooked
1 lb radicchio
1/4 C scallions minced
1 clove garlic finely minced
sea salt
olive oil
red wine vinegar
black pepper fresh ground

Soak beans overnight and cook following our suggestions in Cooking Dry Beans*. Cook until they are still warm.

Shred radicchio into strips. Drain beans and add oil and vinegar while beans are warm to your taste. Add scallions, garlic, and salt and pepper. Toss together.

*Cooking dry beans: https://cedarcirclefarm.org/tips/entry/our-fresh-dried-beans

Recipe adapted from www.moiga.org

2015 CSA End-of-Season Survey

Help us improve your CSA experience at the CASFS UCSC Farm! Please take a few minutes and go to the online Survey Monkey link below to answer 10 questions regarding your experience as a CSA shareholder. We would like to compile your feedback by Friday, November 20.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PRK57BL