

North Creek Community Farm

Newsletter

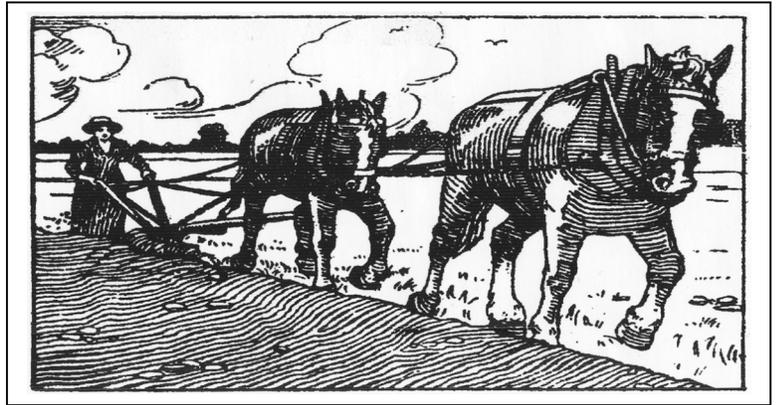
Thursday, September 23, 2010

Week Sixteen

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Musings

Sometimes when I have to write the newsletter, I feel daunted by the amount of information on the web. Often though, there is just too much information. One site that has a good introduction to cooking leeks can be found here: <http://startcooking.com/blog/183/Leeks>.

When I am first using a new vegetable, it takes a while to not be intimidated about it. Leeks were that way for me. To get the grit out of the leeks, I usually chop them up and then soak them in several changes of water. I like them in leek and potato soup or in stews. I have included some fun recipes on the back. Fennel is the same way, but really it can be used like celery, raw or cooked. Its flavor is not that strong so just throw it into things. If you want the flavor to be stronger, throw in some fennel seeds. It goes well with pork.

Brrrr...

There is an odd phenomenon as we switch over to fall harvesting. Summer well water is so cold when we wash vegetables that it hurts your arms. As the weather cools though, the water feels warm as you touch it. I know it is the same temperature; it is just our perception that is different. I wonder what else I see one way but really it could be seen from the other side. My wardrobe this time of year changes a lot too. I start out in a turtleneck shirt and sweater and then have to peel off layers as the sun and work warms us up. After harvesting the leeks in a steady drizzle though, we had to peel off wet clothes and we almost started speaking Welsh.

Good-bye Mingo

The farm seems empty without Mingo the milk cow. I decided that I needed to "ship her", have her butchered, because she was getting very old and had some severe health issues. It is a relief not to be milking every day but already I miss the fresh milk. Mingo could not be bred again and without having a calf, cows will not give milk each year. Thank you Mingo for all the milk. I will miss you.

In the bag:

Tomatoes
Carrots
Onions
Leeks
Fresh Fennel
Peppers
Sage
Winter Squash

Vegetables in the bag

Suddenly it is fall and the vegetables are begging for soups and to be roasted. A salad seems too cold and watermelons are already a memory. Leeks should be sent with potatoes but recent rains have again made the field impassable with the potato harvester. We will try and ship some next week but it all depends on the weather. You might have some potatoes left in the crisper drawer of your fridge. The carrots are doing well and enjoying the fall weather. There will be more of these beauties next week.

Harvest Festival

Sunday, October 3

10:30 – 7:00

Join friends and members for a fun day of harvesting and celebration. There will be limited extras to take home but there are pumpkins to choose, at least enough for the kids, some potatoes to dig, if the ground is dry. We will have a soup and lunch around 1:30. Bring something to share for the meal that could go with soup and salad desserts, beverages, cheese, etc.

There is also end of the season work that I would love some help with. We'll see how the day goes.

If it is raining, call and check the answering machine. I'll leave information there. There is no rain date. No need to RSVP just come on down.

Couscous with Fennel and Pine nuts

Note from Kate: Pine nuts are very expensive. I think almonds would be just as nice.

Bon Appétit | March 2009

By Joanne Weir

Fresh fennel and fennel seeds infuse the couscous with a subtle anise flavor.

Yield: Makes 6 servings

1 1/2 tablespoons butter
1 large fresh fennel bulb, cut into 1/4-inch cubes (about 2 cups)
1/2 teaspoon fennel seeds, coarsely ground in mortar with pestle or in spice mill
2 cups low-salt chicken broth
1 cup water
2 cups couscous (about 12 ounces)
1/4 cup pine nuts, [toasted](#)
3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

Melt butter in large saucepan over medium heat. Add fennel cubes and fennel seeds; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sauté until fennel cubes are almost tender, about 5 minutes. Add broth and 1 cup water; bring to boil. Stir in couscous. Remove from heat; cover and let stand until liquid is absorbed, about 10 minutes. Fluff with fork; stir in nuts and chives. Season with salt and pepper.

Risotto with Butternut Squash and Leeks

Bon Appétit | December 1999

Bread and Ink Cafe, Portland, OR

Some shaved Parmesan and fresh sage leaves would make an attractive garnish.

Yield: Makes 6 first-course or 4 main-course servings

1 large butternut squash (about 2 pounds), peeled, seeded, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
4 tablespoons olive oil
6 cups (about) chicken stock or canned low-salt chicken broth

3 large leeks (white and pale green parts only), thinly sliced (about 3 cups)
2 cups Arborio rice or medium-grain rice
1/2 cup dry white wine
1/2 cup whipping cream
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage

Preheat oven to 400°F. Place squash on large rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle with 2 tablespoons oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper; toss to coat. Roast until tender and beginning to brown, stirring occasionally, about 40 minutes.

Bring stock to simmer in heavy large saucepan. Reduce heat to very low; cover and keep stock warm.

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in another heavy large saucepan over medium-low heat. Add leeks and sauté until soft but not brown, about 10 minutes. Add rice; stir 1 minute. Add wine and simmer until absorbed, stirring constantly, about 2 minutes. Add 1/2 cup hot stock; simmer until absorbed, stirring frequently. Add remaining stock 1/2 cup at a time, allowing stock to be absorbed before adding more and stirring frequently, until rice is tender and mixture is creamy, about 25 minutes longer. Add roasted squash, cream, Parmesan cheese and sage; stir until heated through. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve warm.