



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

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Garlic Harvest 2017 - It All Depends on the Weather

By Farmer Richard

I've been growing garlic since 1975. When I first started farming, I didn't have the ability to do a "google search" to find an answer to a farming question or learn about how to grow different vegetables. I had to search for my own answers. So when it came to growing garlic, I tapped another farmer on the shoulder to try to learn more about it. That farmer was Dave Frattalone, an experienced grower who sold vegetables at the St. Paul farmers' market. At the time, Dave was planting a soft neck garlic variety in the spring. His yield was slim and the bulbs were small, but he had the monopoly on that market because no one else knew how to grow garlic any better! When I asked Dave for some garlic education, he made it very clear to me that I was on my own to figure this one out. So, I did my own research and found a grower in Canada who was growing a hard neck type of garlic that he planted in the fall. So I bought some hard neck garlic seed, planted it in the fall, and the following summer I brought some beautiful garlic bulbs to market to show Dave Frattalone. While he didn't say it in words, I could tell that I had earned Dave's respect with this garlic. He asked me how I had grown such big, beautiful garlic and I willingly shared the secret with him....plant it in the fall! This was an important moment in my farming career. I still had a lot to learn about other vegetables and Dave was one of the old-timers that knew a lot of the information I needed to learn, such as when to plant cauliflower for fall harvest. Garlic was the key to opening the door to this wealth of experience and knowledge.

While I did buy seed stock in my early years, I quickly learned that garlic seed sold as "disease free" was rarely ever really disease free...

*(See our **blog** for the rest of Richard's Garlic Tales!)*

What's In The Box?

GREEN TOP PURPLE CIPOLLINI ONIONS: Cipollini onions are known for their natural sugars that develop when cooked. This onion is excellent prepared on the grill or roasted, but you can also eat it raw.

FRESH ITALIAN GARLIC: It's all harvested and will be drying down in the greenhouse over the next few weeks. Pay attention to how the garlic changes from this fresh garlic to fully dried.

GREEN OR YELLOW BEANS: We are in our first planting of beans. These varieties in our early plantings are specifically chosen because of their ability to germinate in cold soil...and it was definitely cold soil this year!

ITALIAN OR GREEN ZUCCHINI: Production has been pretty steady this week, but is tapering off a bit. We'll have a second planting coming in a few more weeks, but we'll continue picking from this planting as long as possible.

GREEN & SILVER SLICER CUCUMBERS: We consider cucumbers to be a staple ingredient for summer eating. The silver slicer cucumbers are our favorite cucumber, both for taste as well as yield!

GREEN TOP CARROTS: These are an older European "nantes" variety called "Mokum" that is known for being an early carrot with a sweet juicy flavor. The greens are edible too! Turn them into a tasty carrot top pesto or soup!

BROCCOLI: This is a big broccoli harvest week! Remember, the broccoli stalk is edible as well and just needs to be peeled to reveal the tender, juicy vegetable inside.

NEW POTATOES: The skin on these potatoes are very delicate and fresh. Handle them with care, and eat them within a week or so for optimal flavor and quality. Read more about them in our Vegetable Feature this week!

AMARANTH GREENS: Refer to last week's vegetable feature for more information about this HVF "superfood." Both the leaves and stems are edible and may be cooked similarly to spinach.

Cooking with This Week's Box!

Well, it's been an exciting week here at the farm. The theme of the first part of the week was "Dig It!" Thankfully we were able to get all of the garlic dug this week and we dug our first round of potatoes on Monday....ahead of the rainstorm thank goodness! So we're going to kick off this week's "Cooking with the Box" with one of the newsletter recipes, **Summer Farmer Skillet Dinner**. This is a dish I make throughout the year, varying the ingredients with the season. This week I made it with the new potatoes, freshly dug carrots, green beans, zucchini and the amaranth greens. I developed this dish out of necessity. It's the end of the day, we're hungry and I don't have a plan for dinner. I start cooking some ground meat, add some onions and garlic....all the while not really knowing where I'm going with this. I started pulling vegetables out of the refrigerator and adding them in layers, basically until the pan was full. I needed some kind of a "sauce," so I added some cream. Of course everything is better with cheese on top, so that was the finishing touch. When we sat down to eat, Richard asked "And what's this dish called?" My response at that time was simply "Dinner." I've since refined the meal a bit, but it's still a simple dish that you can vary with the seasons. You can also get a pretty significant vegetable count with this dish as well and it's a good way to use up remainders of vegetables before your next CSA delivery. Sorry it isn't anything fancy, it's just simple farmer food.

There have been some good suggestions for recipes on our facebook group this week. I'm going to use some of this week's zucchini to make the **Lemon Zucchini Bread** recipe one member suggested.

*(See our **blog** for the rest of this article & our suggestions for utilizing every item in your box!)*

Featured Vegetable: New Potatoes

The potatoes in your box this week are a variety called Red Norland. They are an early variety red-skinned potato with creamy white flesh and this week they are classified as a “new potato.” The difference between a new potato and other potatoes we’ll deliver this season is not the variety or the size, but the way they are harvested. New potatoes are classified as such if they are harvested off of a plant that still has green leaves on it. With latter varieties, we’ll mow down the potato vine about a week in advance of harvest. In the week between mowing down the vines and actually harvesting the potatoes, changes take place in the potatoes that help to set the skins and make them better for storage. They are also easier to handle without damaging the skin.

(Visit our [blog](#) to find out more information about New Potatoes in the remainder of this article)

Crispy Smashed Potatoes with Herbed Yogurt

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

2 ½ pounds small waxy potatoes	2 Tbsp minced parsley	½ tsp honey
Fine sea salt	1 large clove of garlic, minced	2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup plain full-fat yogurt	1 tsp fresh lemon juice and ½ tsp grated	Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
2 Tbsp minced dill	lemon zest	Chopped fresh herbs for serving

1. Preheat the oven to 450°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Place the potatoes in a large pot and cover them with water. Sprinkle a few pinches of salt into the pot and bring it to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer for 10 to 12 minutes or until the potatoes are tender (but not falling apart). Test the potatoes by inserting a knife into the center.
3. While the potatoes cook, prepare the yogurt sauce. In a small bowl, combine the yogurt, dill, parsley, garlic, lemon juice, honey, oil, and a healthy pinch each of salt and pepper; whisk until the mixture is smooth. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed.
4. Drain the potatoes in a colander and let them cool for 8 to 10 minutes. Spread the potatoes out over the baking sheet and use a spatula to lightly press down on each one until it is mostly flattened. (Some may fall apart a bit, but that’s okay!)
5. Drizzle each potato with a teaspoon or so of olive oil and roast for 30 minutes or until they are golden brown and crisp on the bottom. The timing will vary depending on the size and variety of your potatoes.
6. Serve them with the garlic herb yogurt sauce and a sprinkling of chopped herbs.

This is another tasty recipe from *Dishing Up the Dirt*, written by farmer Andrea Bemis.

Summer Farmer Skillet Dinner

By Chef Andrea

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

1 pound ground pork or beef	1 cup cream, divided
1 cup chopped onion	½ cup coarsely chopped fresh herbs (thyme, parsley, savory, oregano, rosemary etc.)
2 to 3 cloves garlic, minced	4 cups greens (amaranth, chard, beet greens, or any other seasonal cooking green), washed and chopped into bite-sized pieces
½ cup white wine	2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
2 cups potatoes, skin on, cut into bite-sized pieces	Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1 cup carrots, medium dice	
1 cup zucchini, medium dice	
2 cups green or yellow beans, cut into bite-sized pieces	

1. If you have a broiler in your oven, position the rack in the middle of the oven and preheat the broiler. If you do not have a broiler, preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Heat an 11-12 inch oven proof skillet on the stove top at medium-high heat. Add the ground pork or beef and cook until browned. Add the onion and garlic and continue to cook for a few more minutes. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Add the white wine to the pan and then layer the potatoes and carrots on top of the meat mixture. Season again with salt and pepper. Cover the pan and simmer for 5-8 minutes or until the potatoes and carrots have started to soften but are not all the way cooked.
4. Add the zucchini, green beans and ½ cup of the cream to the pan. Season this layer with salt and pepper. Cover the pan again and simmer for another 5-6 minutes.
5. Remove the cover and sprinkle the herbs on top. Spread the greens on top, and season with salt and pepper. Pour the remaining ½ cup of cream around the edge of the pan. Cover the pan again and simmer for about 5 minutes or until the greens are wilted. Remove the cover and simmer on the stovetop for an additional 5-6 minutes or until the cream is reduced by about half.
6. Spread the shredded cheese on top of the greens. Remove the pan from the stovetop and put it in the oven under the broiler or in the hot oven. Bake just until the cheese is melted, bubbly and starting to brown.
7. Serve hot. If you have any leftovers, they will reheat well for another meal or they are delicious served with toast and eggs for breakfast.

This is a basic recipe that can be altered to use any seasonal vegetables you have available. Add the vegetables that will take the longest to cook to the pan first and finish with the quick cooking greens on top. And the best part is...you only dirty one pan! This has become one of our favorite, simple ways to make a hearty meal using seasonal vegetables without a lot of fuss and enough leftovers for the next day! Perfect farmer food at the end of a long summer day!