



CSA Newsletter

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Week 6

I am so excited about our cucumbers! If you've been a member in the past, you know that we haven't done well with cucumbers. This year we finally have the right conditions in the right garden. We planted the cucumber plants in the garden behind the house where we have quick and easy access to running water. We also mulched the entire garden. When we planted the cucumbers we watered them in with our organic fertilizer and soil inoculants. The soil inoculants get the soil life going to help the plants access soil nutrients more effectively. I think it's doing the cucumbers some good! This is just the beginning. The plants are loaded with tiny forming cukes.

The Gardens

We've been weeding the big garden most recently. I prefer to use the stirrup hoe while the interns prefer weeding by hand. Gaby and I worked out a good system where I used the hoe between the plants and she followed along behind doing the finer weeding immediately around the plants by hand. We're also weeding the potatoes as we go along. What we really need is a big group to come out for a day to clear the whole garden! That would be amazing.

We've continued to give nutrients to our tomatoes. We've had our first taste of cherry tomatoes. They'll be coming in strong soon. The peas seem to have stopped producing in the heat. They really like cool weather and will stop producing flowers when it gets hot. Often they'll start up again in late summer or fall when the temperatures get cooler again.

I pulled my first onions this weekend! Not quite big enough for shares yet, but they're getting there! This is another crop we've run into some growing problems with. For two years, they didn't form much of a bulb. We seemed to have figured out the problem and they're doing well this year!

On the Farm

Today, Eric and I are being interviewed and photographed for an article in Vermont Magazine. The magazine features farms around the state and we've been selected for next year's June/July issue. We're thrilled to be able to tell more of our story to more people. The children are home today and will be able to experience that too. They'll also participate in the photo shoot.

We bought a new bull. His name is Titan. We have another young Titan, so we call the big guy Big T. We separated our herd from our custom animals last week, and breeding season has begun. Titan, a British White bull, and two young red Galloway bulls will be with the herd for about two months. This is timed so all of our calves are born on pasture in the spring. This gives them the best start....drinking the best milk of the season produced on the beautiful spring lush of grass. They also have all summer and fall to learn to graze and to learn to follow Eric's whistle calls. We're really looking forward to having spring calves again next year.

100% Grass-fed, Certified Organic Beef

We have beef on hand right now and can deliver it to you at your weekly pick-ups. We also have larger freezer beef packages available for the month of August. Please place your orders by August 1st. Our beef has been selling out fast, so act soon! Visit our website for details about our delicious beef:

<http://maplewoodorganics.biz>.

Please find us on Facebook (Maplewood Organics and The Organic Mother) and Twitter (maplewoodvt and organicmother74). We have a new email list sign up on Facebook!

Recipes of the Week

Potato, Squash, and Goat Cheese Gratin

serves six

2 medium yellow squash
4 small to medium red potatoes
3 tablespoons olive oil (or local sunflower oil)
4 ounces goat cheese (you may substitute cheese of your choice)
salt and pepper
1/4 cup whole milk, preferably raw
1/3 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
1 tablespoon thinly sliced basil, optional
Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Use a mandoline or chef's knife to slice the squash and potatoes into very, very thin slices, 1/8-inch or less. Toss the sliced vegetables with the olive oil in a large bowl.

Pour a small drizzle of olive oil in a casserole dish (around 8 or 9 inches square) and spread it around the bottom and sides. Place 1/3 of the squash and potato slices in the bottom of the dish—no need to layer them squash-potato-squash-etc.—then season with salt and pepper. Top with half of the goat cheese, scattered evenly in large chunks. Repeat with another 1/3 of the vegetables, seasoning again with salt and pepper and topping with the other 1/2 of the goat cheese. Finish by layering on the final 1/3 of the vegetables and seasoning with salt and pepper.

Pour the milk over the entire dish. Top with the parmesan cheese. Bake, covered, for 30 minutes, then uncover and bake 15 more minutes, until the top browns. Scatter on the fresh basil, if using.

Cucumber & Black-Eyed Pea Salad

From EatingWell: May/June 2007

An easy salad to serve with grilled chicken or steak for supper or on a bed of greens for a satisfying lunch. Substitute white beans or chickpeas for the black-eyed peas if you prefer.

6 servings, about 1 cup each | Active Time: 20 minutes | **Total Time:** 20 minutes

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh oregano, or 1 teaspoon dried
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 4 cups peeled and diced cucumbers
- 1 14-ounce can black-eyed peas, rinsed
- 2/3 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1/4 cup slivered red onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped black olives

1. Whisk oil, lemon juice, oregano and pepper in a large bowl until combined. Add cucumber, black-eyed peas, bell pepper, feta, onion and olives; toss to coat. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Please visit our website to read our past newsletters and recipes if you're looking for more ideas. Only this year's newsletters are there so far, but I'll be working on getting all of our newsletters from 2005 on archived on our website. <http://maplewoodorganics.biz>

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