



this week's

HARVEST

This list may change, but it's our best guess at printing time.

Eggplant
Melons
Potatoes
Sweet Peppers
Tomatoes
Zucchini

Add-On Choices

Rushton Farm Honey
Eggs from
Rushton Farm Co-op
Ground Beef from
Crum Creek Farm
Cheese from Shellbark
Hollow



Week of August 17, 2009 ~ Issue no. 13

IN THE BAG *tidbits from Fred*

As the first real heat of summer descends upon us and the crops flourish in the dry hot weather, it seems a fitting time to celebrate the food coming from Rushton Farm. This past Sunday evening we did just that at our second annual "Summer Celebration and Tomato Tasting". The event featured a tasting of six varieties of tomatoes along with a wide range of prepared dishes featuring produce from the farm. While the unadorned tomatoes (well, maybe with olive oil and sea salt) held their own, guests also enjoyed roasted tomatoes, tomato chutney, French tomato tart, and bruschetta. We also served an assortment of potatoes grown on the farm (roasted with garlic and rosemary) as well as the first tasting of the "Bulls Blood" beets, marinated and served with mint and local goat cheese from Shellbark Hollow. Pesto made from our own basil and garlic as well as Rushton Farm Honey were also prominently featured. The food was fantastic and was prepared and served by our very talented staff and volunteers. From parking to weeding and tidying, our dedicated volunteers really helped make this event happen. In addition to sampling the food, we also got to hear about the exciting progress being made to permanently protect Rushton Farm and the surrounding land to create an 80 acre preserve that will bring farming, nature and people together forever. Thanks to everyone who came together for this event.

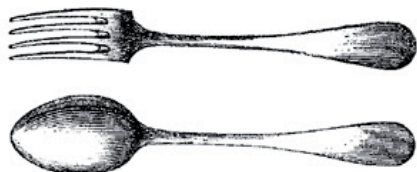
-Fred



THE DIRT *report from the field*

Many people are aware that it has been a difficult year for tomatoes throughout the northeast, particularly for organically minded operations with limited spray options. At the same time, the careful observer may have noticed that it has been more difficult for some tomato varieties this season than others. At Rushton, for instance, we've given over a month of Early Girl, New Girl, and Cosmonaut Volkov (yes, that's really the varietal name) tomatoes in the shares, while we've only been able to offer our heirloom tomatoes for a couple weeks, and in limited quantities at that. Why is that? What is the difference between our early varieties and our heirlooms? The answer is in the genes. All of our early varieties are what is known as hybrids. Hybrid plant varieties are the product of genetically disparate parents, bred together to produce reliable, predictable offspring. Frequently, these offspring display what is known as 'hybrid vigor', an unusually strong plant that may better withstand certain environmental challenges than, say, an heirloom would. Heirloom tomato varieties are older tomato strains that have frequently been in cultivation for many decades. While hybrid seeds typically come out of seed companies and breeding programs, heirlooms are seeds that have more typically been passed down from gardener to gardener over generations. It doesn't make much sense to save seed on a hybrid tomato because the characteristics of the offspring can be quite variable. Saving seed from an heirloom, however, will most likely produce a plant fairly similar, if not genetically identical, to the parent. Millennia ago, agriculture began when people began collecting seeds of particularly delicious plants to replant. We try to honor this tradition by growing heirloom varieties, but hedge our bets with a careful hybrid selection just in case we get a year like this.

-Aaron & Ashley



RECIPES *what to do with those veggies*

Spicy Tomato Chutney

By popular demand, here's one of the great recipes we featured at our 2009 Summer Celebration and Tomato Tasting held on Sunday, August 16. We served it on crackers with goat cheese, and also pureed as a dipping sauce for roasted potatoes with garlic and rosemary.

Chop tomatoes and bell pepper.

In a medium saucepan bring vinegars to a boil with sugar, salt, mustard seeds, black pepper, and red pepper flakes, stirring occasionally, and stir in tomatoes, bell pepper, and scallions. Simmer mixture, uncovered, stirring occasionally (stir more frequently toward end of cooking), until thickened and reduced.

Cooking time will depend on how much liquid your tomatoes give off, usually 90 minutes to three hours. Cool chutney completely. Tastes best after it sits in the refrigerator for a week. Chutney keeps, covered and chilled for a total of 2 weeks.

Ingredients

2 pounds vine-ripened tomatoes
1 red bell pepper
1/2 cup red-wine vinegar
3/4 cup cider vinegar
3/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons mustard seeds
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon dried hot red pepper flakes
3/4 cup chopped scallion greens

-adapted from *Gourmet*

HAPPENINGS

October 4, 2009 - Run-a-Muck. Family-friendly cross country race & ramble through the Willistown Countryside

October 10, 2009 - Horses & the Radnor Hunt Countryside ~ Radnor Hunt Horse Trials.
Pig Roast Party at the Palace after the last horse. . www.radnorhuntht.org

October 24, 2009 - Harvest Celebration, 5:00 to 8:00 pm

See wctrust.org for more info