



“Whether we and our politicians know it or not, Nature is party to all our deals and decisions, and she has more votes, a longer memory, and a sterner sense of justice than we do.”

— Wendell Berry

## The Broadcaster

Week 20– October 13th 2016

### *In Your Box*

Sweet Potatoes – Just cured. Use in a week if possible.

Onions

Red Kuri Squash – great in curries, stews and just roasted cubed. Kat’s favorite!

Sage

Daikon Radishes – purple, pink or white.

Cabbage – great cooked or fresh. It is not a tender variety so a good marinade is helpful.

Garlic-

Carrots

Sweet Peppers

Kale – Red Russian, Lacinato aka dinosaur kale or curly kale.

Rutabaga – the best stew veggie!

Brussels sprouts – fresh off the stalk yesterday.

Celariac- celery root is back!

### *Important Reminders*

- ✓ This is the last CSA box of 2016
- ✓ Storage share members you will get an email and a phone call early next week to set up your pick up schedule.
- ✓ Miss us this winter? Come visit us at 212 River Drive in Wausau WI at the winter farmers market Saturdays starting November 5<sup>th</sup>.

### *News from the Farm*

Welcome to week 20 the last CSA week for 2016. We cannot tell you enough how thankful we are to have you as members in our farm. This has been a spectacular growing season and we genuine hope that you have enjoyed the ride with us– through rain and rutabaga, sunshine and sunchoke.

Storage Shares start whenever storage share CSA members would like starting this Saturday through Christmas. You should receive both a phone call (early next week) and an email with more info if you are signed up!

The fall harvest continues now in the last CSA week and for the next 3-4 weeks. We are preparing for winter farmers markets, and believe it or not preparing for next spring’s CSA shares. We are hoping beets will store for 7.5 months until the first box and have not as high hopes (but wishes anyway) that carrots and onions might make it too. We planted garlic this week for next season, are still cleaning up the fields and have about 1.5 acres of beets, carrots, turnips, radishes, Brussels sprouts, cabbage etc to go. We have other fall projects including cleaning up irrigation and plastic, weeding hoopouses, getting the animals well fed and comfortable for winter and starting the planning and ordering season (it starts right away for some supplies). On the backside of the newsletter we feature what we have learned and what we plan. We always reflect upon the season and in some ways this has been our easiest and best season and in others it has been monumentally hard. It is amazing that we have had some of you in the CSA for 10 seasons. It sometimes is hard to imagine that this was not always our beautiful life

Have a delicious week and a great winter – Kat, Tony, Ted, Riley and Maple

Pizzas of the week- **Fall Feast** - Squash Sauce, sausage, apples, blue cheese and onions; **Autumn Ham**- thinly sliced ham, cheddar cheese, horse radish sauce and Kale; Veggie- onions, peppers, pesto

### Recipes from Kat’s Kitchen

**Squash and sage soup (adapted from epicurious.com) Soup:** 1 1/2 tablespoons butter, 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil, 2 cups chopped onions, 2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage, 4 cups 1/2-inch cubes peeled seeded squash, 1 1/2 teaspoons coarse sea salt, 1 garlic clove, minced, 5 to 6 cups **Chicken Stock** or 5 to 6 cups purchased organic chicken broth **Breadcrumbs:** 2 crustless slices fresh whole grain wheat bread, torn, 4 teaspoons butter, 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh sage. **for soup:** Melt butter with oil in large pot over medium-high heat. Add onions, and sage; sauté until onions are softened, about 5 minutes. Add squash and coarse salt; sauté until squash softens and onions are golden, about 6 minutes. Add garlic; stir 1 minute. Add 5 cups stock; bring to boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer until squash is very soft, about 25 minutes. Cool slightly. Working in batches, puree soup in blender, allowing some texture to remain. Return soup to pot. Thin with stock, if desired. Season with pepper and more salt, if desired. **DO AHEAD:** *Can be made 1 day ahead. Chill uncovered until cold, then cover and chill. Rewarm before serving.* **For breadcrumbs:** Place bread in processor; blend until fine crumbs form but some slightly coarser crumbs remain. Cook butter in large nonstick skillet over medium heat until golden, about 2 minutes. Add breadcrumbs and sage. Cook until crumbs are crisp, stirring frequently, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and cool. **DO AHEAD:** *Can be made 4 hours ahead. Let stand uncovered at room temperature.*

**Creamy horseradish dressing for winter slaw** – use on top of shredded cabbage, brussels sprouts, rutabaga, celariac, kale and/or carrots. 2 Tbs prepared horseradish, 2 Tbs white vinegar, 2 Tbs olive oil, 2 tbs sour cream, 1 tbs maple syrup. Combine and incorporate well. This is also great on beets and roasted veggies!

## What we learned and what we plan

Farming has a long view. Each year only yields one season and every season is different meaning it can take years to perfect a system and its timing. This year has been spectacular but is also hard to make sense of on many levels even given fairly ideal growing conditions. Everything seems beautiful beyond belief. We say it is good farming karma and it certainly feels like it.

This year we learn cultivation. This term has many lay meanings but we are really referring to mechanical weeding – this year we committed to both some new amazing weeding technology which allowed us to get weeds in the vegetable rows and reduce hand weeding; and also to the schedule of mechanical weeding, which we are learning a lot about. In farming, especially here with heavy soils and a fast season, timing is literally everything and we were able to learn a whole lot between June and late July which puts us in position to be better and more organized farmers in the future.

Soil health – Holy moly it takes a long time for a farm to come into ecological balance (if it is even ever possible) but we are feeling like we have arrived. We can see the differences between our crops over past years, we can smell it in the soil, and most importantly the pests, diseases, weather, and water are buffered by good soil health so we have been able to fall back on the system we are working to create.

Good pay equals good help. Joel Rodgers at UW Madison pioneered the concept of High road capitalism where paying more and valuing people for their labor creates a better economy for all. We have to say the move to a \$15/hour year round wage was scary on several levels but also fit with our overall goals about fairness and hard work. We have learned that fair pay equals outstanding work. We have been so lucky to have Logan here because he wakes up and goes to bed thinking farming. We have been introduced to the idea that we can probably transform the farm, create more opportunities for new farmers and have a better farm by expanding this wage and increasing wages for future employees. It is our goal and we will realize it in 2017 to have a \$15/hour minimum. We expect a lot from our employees and ourselves and have been impressed by what this shift has meant in one season alone.

Variety is a much a variable as the season. There are many variables to whether a crop will perform: soil, fertility, water, degree days, pests, seasonal timing, ect. But ten years creates a base of knowledge to understand what types of plants flourish here on our farm. Kat continues to be a vegetable variety nerd and next season she plans to start breeding her own carrot variety with the help of Irwin Goldman at UW Madison. She doesn't have it named yet but she has 6-8 years to figure that out!

Fertility increases yields. Historically we have been never brought fertility onto the farm for a number of reasons. We want to create our own fertility. We have animals and part of being a sustainability minded farm is to close the circle. Also we are frugal. This year we bought a semi-load of chicken manure and it was easy to see how it paid off in almost every crop. While we will not do this every year it allows us to take pressure off of making compost in the spring which can ultimately hurt areas of the farm that are too wet, and allows us a bit of control in helping individual crops.

We need some time off. There is a saying I use, that like many sayings originated in agriculture, “make hay when the sun shines.” But on our farm even when it's raining we can work in the hoopouses, or pack shed, or just work in the rain. The point is that work on our farm is very seasonally and physically intense. As pizza night has blown up, demand for our veggies has expanded, and our children are young and need almost constant engagement, making so much rain or shine hay has yielded much including a lot of stress. Last year Kat proposed a schedule of three Sundays off a month. I nodded while smirking knowing we would be drawn into the demands of the farm everyday weather there was a schedule or not. I was right about our impulse to make hay while the sun shines, but I wish we had respected Kat's schedule. A sixteen hour Friday into farmers' market is exhausting enough, but we had a streak from the end of July until this last weekend that we hosted an event Saturday evening and or Sunday. Our average work week was 70 hours with a solid 55 of that being physical field work. While we revel in the productivity and beauty of the bounty we produce it has been taxing. We will be taking three Sundays off a month next year and a couple Mondays. We are learning a lot about what we need as a couple and family outside of farming – it is privilege to be able to not struggle with farming so much that we are able to have these thoughts but none the less we have had some pain and struggle around figuring this out this season.

The big plans for next season not implied in what we have learned include investing in solar power further to meet 100% + of our energy needs; having better and more frequent salad greens mid and late season; hiring more great folks for the farm team at beyond a living wage and trying to achieve more of a balance between small shares and full shares which eases our planning, allows us a stable income and requires a little less stress in our harvest work. THANK YOU ALL!