

FARMLOG

CSA | FARM NEWS | RECIPES

WEEK 27

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MURASAKI SWEET POTATOES
(UNCURED)**

BRAISING MIX GREENS

EASTER EGG RADISHES

POTATOES

RED ONIONS

BELL PEPPERS

SIBERIAN KALE

HALF-RUNNER BEANS

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Last week we began harvesting our sweet potato crop. As I've mentioned in the past, root crops are one of my favorites to grow. Success or failure isn't obvious until the harvest, when you finally pull the crop from the ground. Harvest can be back breaking work. Fortunately we purchased a root crop harvester several years ago, which had formerly served on the farm at LaGrange State Penitentiary. Having a harvester makes the job a bit easier.

Sweet potatoes (Convolvulaceae family, ie morning glory) grow differently than regular potatoes (Solanaceae family, ie tomato). Like morning glory vines, sweet potatoes grow extensive foliage, with the vines sometimes reaching 10 feet from the plant. To begin harvest, we mow off the vines a couple days before harvest so they don't plug the harvester. Once the vines have dried, we pull the harvest through the field, undercutting the roots with a large blade. The soil and potatoes then travel up a slated chain conveyor allowing the soil to separate from the roots, which are then dropped on the ground out the rear of the harvester.

Although we use the harvester to dig the crop from the soil, we still pick up the sweet potatoes by hand. After harvest, sweet potatoes should be heat cured for a week at 90 degrees to enhance their storage life. This process will help convert the starches to sugars, and heal any harvest wounds with the natural latex contained in the sweet potatoes.

****The sweet potatoes in this week's share have not been through the curing process, so you will get to experience the changing flavor profile of aging sweet potatoes over the remaining weeks of this CSA season. In the first week, the flavor is noticeably starchy with a firm texture. As they cure and age the flavor will sweeten dramatically, and the flesh will be softer after cooking. And, if you find yourself with too many sweet potatoes to use during the week, store in a dark place around 60 degrees. DO NOT REFRIGERATE SWEET POTATOES!**

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RED PEPPER SOUP

Many thanks to Annriette for sharing her tried and true recipe for red pepper soup. With the cool forecast ahead, this may just hit the spot at the end of a busy day.

Core peppers, place in paper bag and roast at 425 degrees til peppers are charred , Then skin them. Meanwhile follow rest of recipe.

Ingredients:

2T butter, 1 C milk, 2 onions chopped, 1t salt and pepper, 2 carrots chopped, garlic, 6 C chicken broth, pinch of thyme, 6 roasted peppers chopped

Method

Sauté onions/garlic over medium heat for 15 min, Add carrots, cover until tender (10 – 15 min), Add broth, leave uncovered, bring to a boil over medium high heat for 20 minutes to reduce stock, Add red pepper chunks and cook 20 min more. Remove from heat, add milk, salt, pepper and thyme, When cool puree soup. Serve hot with sour cream or yogurt.