

It's Hot In July at the Farm

The sun never ceases to amaze. The sun drives every living thing around us, turning dirt, water, and air into food; turning oceans into whirlwinds, storms, and droughts; and making some mighty warm days here in the middle of the country.

In July, some days I figure my job is to put several thousand plants in the ground and give them as much access to the sun as possible, and then get out of the way. In some cases, it's just like that. Most of the time, though, the work keeps piling up, as the sun grows weeds, dries soil, and keeps on growing crops that need to be harvested (yay!). As far as "getting out of the way," it's always important to know when to get out of the sun. In these dog days of heat and humidity, I orient work days to start with the most strenuous work, with the strain lightening as the day heats up. I save "inside" work, like seed sowing and clean-up tasks, for afternoons.

The heat is the most dominant part of the job these days. This is good for our heat-loving crops, like tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, basil, et al...

Remarkably, this is the week that we'll start sowing fall crops, like broccoli, cabbage, kale, cauliflower, etc. We have to sow these crops now because day length is already decreasing, and these crops need to be at maturity stage at or before the first frost. It feels strange to be jumping into fall already.

Within the next four weeks, fall will be set. We'll sow spinach, peas, lots of mixed greens, carrots, rutabaga, bok choy, you name it.

For now, I and our farm assistants drink lots of water, work hard in the mornings, and keep working until we know it's time to get in the shade. As long as the fruits of our labors are bright and tasty and you all are enjoying this bounty, I'm happy...

Upcoming Events

Cooking Class, Tuesday, July 24
Work Day, Saturday, July 21 @ 8 a.m.
Tomato Festival! Sunday, Aug. 5

What's in Your Share

Potatoes, carrots, Fresh onion, Fennel, Summer Squash, Cucumbers, Cabbage, Beets, French Breakfast Radishes, Lettuce, Scallions

Green Beans OPEN! Cherry tomatoes, too, as an early walk-thru, with more to come!

What's For Dinner:

Vegetable and Wild Rice Salad

Olive oil cooking spray
2 medium yellow summer squash
1 medium zucchini
1 medium eggplant, peeled (coming soon)
1 medium red bell pepper (coming soon)
3 cloves garlic, peeled
1 Tbsp herbs de Provence (thyme, oregano, etc.)
½ cup fat-free honey Dijon salad dressing
¼ cup fat-free plain yogurt
3 Tbsp. orange juice
2 tsp grated orange rind
3 cups cooked wild rice (or other rice)
salt and pepper to taste

Pre-heat oven to 425 F.

Spray aluminum-foil-lined pan with cooking spray. Cut vegetables (except garlic) into ¾ to 1-inch pieces. Arrange vegetables in single layer on pan; spray generously with cooking spray and sprinkle with herbs.

Roast vegetables at 425 F until browned and tender, about 40 minutes, removing garlic when soft, after about 20 minutes. Cool to room temperature.

Mash garlic in small bowl; mix in salad dressing, yogurt, orange juice, and rind. Combine vegetables and rice in serving bowl; drizzle dressing over and toss. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Looking Ahead

In the next few weeks, we'll settle into our summer harvests of tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, squash, and cucumbers, with several other crops supplementing.