

## **Tomatoes are Here!...and other happenings**

Tomatoes have arrived, and are looking wonderful! I'm excited about the crop this year, because the plants are lush and full of fruit. I'm seeing thousands of green fruit to ripen in the next month. Of course, vigilance is always in order. There are always critters out there wanting the same food we want.

Squash bugs are currently our most prominent pest. I'm spending extra time during squash harvest to locate and "squash" the squash bugs and squash bug eggs on the plants. It's a tedious process and not guaranteed to have much effect on overall squash bug populations, but it's more than doing nothing.

When you confront bug pests organically, the line between working with and working against nature is not always clear. The presence of pests is initially a very good indication that your food and land are free of pesticides and other poisons. You know your food is safe.

On the other hand, pest outbreaks can indicate imbalance. Nature abhors vacuums, and farming creates many "vacuums". Unhindered pest outbreaks can annihilate entire crops. We don't want this.

Ideally, your farm should have a diverse and thriving insect population replete with competition, interspecies conflict and cooperation, and lots of pest predators. In order to achieve this, you need lots of food, mostly in the form of flowers.

We're moving in this direction by sowing specific flowers around the fields, like sweet allysum and bachelors button. We're also holding onto basil, dill, and cilantro that have flowered. This, coupled with strategic "companion planting", is a first step towards developing a pest management program that produces lots and lots of safe, fresh food in the years to come.

## **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**

Tomatoes, Eggplant, Potatoes, Carrots, Fresh onion, Summer Squash, Cucumbers, Cabbage, Beets, Radishes, Lettuce

Green Beans and Cherry tomatoes are OPEN... Tomatilloes might be ready this week

## **What's For Dinner:**

### **Eggplant and Tomato Casserole**

1 large eggplant, peeled and cut into 1-inch cubes  
½ cup seasoned bread crumbs  
1/3 cup chopped onion  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 ½ tsp dried oregano leaves  
½ tsp dried basil leaves  
¼ tsp dried thyme leaves  
salt and pepper to taste  
2 eggs  
3 medium tomatoes, sliced  
¼ cup grated fat-free Parmesan cheese

1. Cook eggplant in 2 inches simmering water in covered medium saucepan until tender, 5-8 minutes. Drain well. Mash eggplant with fork; mix in breadcrumbs, onion, garlic, 1 tsp oregano, basil and thyme. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Mix in eggs.
2. Spoon eggplant mixture into baking dish, 11 x 7 inches. Arrange tomatoes in rows over eggplant. Sprinkle with cheese and remaining ½ tsp oregano.
3. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees until casserole is hot and tomatoes tender, about 20 minutes.

## **Looking Ahead**

Onions and potatoes are available on a weekly basis while supplies last...

Red sweet peppers will be joining tomatoes and eggplant soon...

This is the last week for cabbage until the fall, and lettuce for several weeks...