



Farm Updates

Things are starting to slow down at the farm this time of year. I woke up to see the first light frost signaling the end for fruiting crops like tomatoes. Weather forecasts predict lows in the upper 30s this week so I have been planning my strategy for maximizing pre frost harvest and how to protect storage crops and the veggies that are still growing. Depending on the weather this might be the last week of tomatoes for the CSA however the shorter day lengths have noticeably slowed down ripening anyway. Fortunately there are many veggies that sweeten in the cold like carrots, broccoli, cabbage, lettuce and bok choy. With a few simple measures they can be protected from a degree of frost and cold, for example the quick hoop and fabric method I also used for pest protection on cabbage and broccoli. I have also been busy preserving split tomatoes and misshapen cucumbers that would otherwise go to waste for the storage shares—special thanks to my mom and dad for making it a party this week with the addition of their help.

Learning Curve and Creativity

Henry Ford said that the only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing. On the farm I find that there is always a better or more efficient way to do something. Anything that goes wrong can be a moral setback but I try to look at the garden as a space for creative problem solving. Even though there is not a long growing season in Minnesota, fall is almost like a second spring to try things that didn't work earlier in the season. This spring I tried to grow Bok choy for the CSA with no success-- the plants went to seed early and were subject to devastating bug damage. I wanted to try again and so I looked at different approaches and grew a successful second crop that you are getting today. Having a sense of enthusiasm for gardening is essential to handle the daily setbacks especially when it is mostly on the job training. Learning from Mother Nature is not too difficult during a year like this but I am looking forward to spending more time to study this winter and plan for next season based on this year's lessons. I hope nobody ever gets a bad veggie but if you do please let me know so I can find out what caused the problem.

Box 17 Items

Carrots: Fresh carrots would be a great addition to a stir fry or salad. These are the carrots that were direct seeded just before the farm party.

Bok Choi: The whole plant is edible but the stalk is the tender delicious part. Spread it with peanut butter for a snack or use bok choy in the recipe below.

Tomatoes: Enjoy the garden tomatoes—you might find a few more spots or splits with the end of the season nearing.

Yellow Onions: Yellow onions are sweet and do not store well so use these first before white or red onions.

Mixed Greens: Arugula with baby greens. This blend is packed with nutrition.

French Breakfast Radish: Great for a snack or in a salad. Don't forget that the greens are also edible!

Small Squash: Oven roasted is the best way to enjoy this winter squash.

Scallions: This fresh onion makes fall feel like spring again.

Recipes

Bok Choi Stir Fry

- 1 Head Bok Choi, chopped with leaves and stalks
- 1 Scallion chopped
- 1 Yellow onion chopped in large pieces
- 4 Tablespoons Soy Sauce
- 1 Tablespoon grated garlic

- 1 Teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 Teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 3 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 Teaspoon sugar
- 2 Tablespoons water

Prepare the sauce by mixing the soy sauce, water, garlic, ginger, sugar, red pepper flakes, scallion and one tablespoon oil. Heat 2 Tablespoons vegetable oil in a large pan or wok. Add the chopped bok choy and yellow onion. Sauté on high heat for 2 minutes. Add Sauce and cook at medium heat for one minute until sauce just begins to thicken. Serve immediately with rice.