



The Power of Rain

For the first time in a long time, we received gentle rain over the course of a day from Sunday night through Monday. It was fantastic. It's the first real rain we've had in 4 weeks. Not only is rain a refreshing break from summer heat, but to us as farmers, it represents an amazing amount of power and savings..

Let's start with a little math and vocabulary. When talking about rain in agricultural settings, a common unit of measurement is called an acre inch. As the words suggest, an acre inch is the amount of water necessary to put an inch of water down on one acre of land. There are 27,000

gallons of water in an acre inch.

If we pump water from the well all day long and broadcast it on our land using our overhead irrigation system, we can irrigate 1 acre inch per day. Right now at our farm, we have 6 acres of fields that require overhead irrigation when we are in a drought situation. So that means that it takes us 6 days to get water on all the plants that need it. Add to this equation the 4 hours of labor each day that it requires to set up and move the irrigation pipes.

Now that you've got all the basic parts to this equation, let's put it all together. To get 1 inch of water on 6 acres of land at our farm:

We need 6 days; 24 hours of labor; and 162,000 gallons of water pumped from the ground. That is a lot of energy, both from our bodies and from the electrical power necessary to power the well pump.

So when it rains a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch like it did this week, that represents a savings of: 3 days of irrigation; 12 hours of labor; and 81,000 gallons of water. There is nothing quite so powerful and amazing as 81,000 gallons of water falling from the sky for free. ☺

*This week is: GROUP A
(next group A is week is 8/20/08)*

New this week are peppers, eggplant, and celery! This celery is perhaps the best celery we've ever grown. Midwestern celery is never the best for 'ants on a log' due to its skinnier stalks, but it has great flavor and is excellent for fresh eating or stock making. Just be mindful to check the center of your stalk, as it is common for celery to have some rot at the center when it grows in this climate.

Eggplant is another tasty treat! For those of you not familiar with cooking this, just remember: you can never go wrong grilling eggplant. By leaps and bounds, it's our favorite way to eat it. Salt, olive oil and the grill is all those little funky slices need to be an amazing treat.

In last news, we just heard a Triple M commercial about paying \$8 to go to a family farm day. Who needs to pay \$8? Come out to YOUR farm, visit YOUR farmers, and share one of YOUR favorite dishes this Sunday at 2pm! Hope to see you!

Cassie and Mike

In the Box:

Bannana Peppers *hot*
Beets
Bell Peppers
Cantaloupe (all REGS except Oakcrest)
Celery
Cilantro (REG only)
Cucumbers
Eggplant
Garlic
Green Kale
Lemon Basil (EO only)
Red Cabbage
Slicing Tomatoes
Sungold Tomatoes
Sweet Corn
Sweet Onions
These are cured, so they can be kept on the counter.
Zucchini (Gold or Green)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On Sunday, August 10th, from 2-5 pm, come celebrate the peak of the season with us! It's a potluck, so please bring a dish to pass. We will have a fire going for corn and we'll do a tour of the farm. Bring the whole family our for an afternoon at the farm. We'd love to see you!

The Joy of Cooking Vegetables

Steven's Salad

I tried this salad yesterday compliments of Chef Steven at Café Four in Mineral Point. It uses last week's carrots and fennel but it's so fabulous I wanted you to have the recipe anyways.

1 small melon
1 bunch carrots
1 medium fennel bulb
 $\frac{1}{4}$ c olive oil
dash of salt

Halve the melon and scoop out the seeds. With $\frac{3}{4}$ of the melon, slice it into wedges, remove the rind and slice each wedge into thin triangles. Place the remainder of the melon in a blender with the olive oil and a touch of salt. Blend until smooth. Halve the fennel bulb, remove the core and slice very thin. Peel the carrots and slice them thin by running a vegetable peeler down the carrot. A food processor or mandolin can also be used. Toss together the fennel, melon and carrots. Blend together with the melon dressing. Add a bit of the chopped fennel fronds for color. Toss well before serving.

Although it's not in Steven's recipe, it's good with a squeeze of lime as well

Veggie Joes

$\frac{1}{2}$ large eggplant
1 medium summer squash
1 onion, diced
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cabbage, thinly sliced
1 hungarian pepper, seeds removed and sliced thin
3 garlic cloves, chopped fine
1 handful green beans
1 T canola oil
prepared barbeque sauce or packaged sloppy joe mix
Cut the eggplant and summer squash into small dice- $\frac{1}{4}$ inch if you have the patience. Toss with the cabbage and sprinkle with salt and set aside. Prepare the remaining vegetables and chop the green beans. Heat the oil in a large skillet. Add the beans, onions, peppers and garlic. Dab excess moisture off the salted veggies with a towel before throwing them in the pan. Roast over high heat until the veggies are browned. Add barbeque sauce or prepare the sloppy joe mix. Simmer together until the veggies are completely tender.

Braised Celery

You'll notice locally grown celery is quite different from the stuff from California. Greener and more potent. This is a good way to enjoy the character of local celery. Long cooking tenderizes and mellows the celery, while also coating it with a tasty glaze.

4 stalks celery, cut into 2 inch pieces
 $\frac{1}{2}$ onion, sliced into thin half-moons
1 T canola oil
1 t fresh thyme, or 1 T fresh dill or basil
 $\frac{1}{2}$ c chicken or veggie broth (a teaspoon of bullion powder works just fine, or even a splash of white wine, or water and a bit of tomato paste)
2 hard boiled eggs, chopped roughly
Toast

Heat the canola oil in a small skillet. Add the onion and celery. Toss briefly until lightly browned. Add the herbs and broth. Place a lid over the skillet and braise gently over low heat for 20 minutes or so. Check on it occasionally to see that all the water hasn't cooked away. Add a bit more if it has. If the celery is tender and you still have liquid, turn the burner up to reduce the liquid. Top the toast with the celery and hard

Roasted Eggplant Spread

This is a great summer recipe. Roast it on the grill or at the same time you're cooking something else because eggplant puree freezes well and this dip stores in the fridge easily for sandwiches.

Poke your eggplant with a fork in a few places. Preheat the oven to 400. Place the eggplant on a cookie sheet and roast for 30 minutes or until it's tender through and collapsed. Remove from the oven and peel off the skin after it cools. Mash the flesh, blending in a couple tablespoons of olive oil, chopped garlic, salt, pepper, minced herbs and lemon juice. To taste. Add tahini (sesame seed butter) and you've got the famed baba ghanoush. Eat it like hummus.