

# Fry Family Farm CSA Newsletter

Vol. 3 Issue 17     September 27, 2007

## This Week's Box:

- Salad mix
- Golden beets
- Tomatoes
- Cherry tomatoes
- Casaba melon
- Bell Peppers
- Leeks
- Russet potatoes
- Green Beans
- FLOWERS: Sunflowers with celosia, dill and feather grass.

## Ancient Chinese secret: The Beet

**NATURE:** Cool and sweet

**ACTIONS:** nourishes blood, tonifies the heart, calms the spirit, lubricates the intestines, cleanses the liver

**CONDITIONS:** anemia, heart weakness, irritability, restlessness, habitual constipation, herpes, liver intoxication from drugs or alcohol.

**One cup of cooked beets contains:** 75 calories, .3g total fat, 3.4g dietary fiber, 3g protein, 17 carbohydrates, 0 cholesterol, 131mg sodium, 136mcg folate, .6mg manganese, and 519mg potassium.

## From the Fall Fields

After a long, productive summer, this fall has been marked by an early first frost. On Monday morning our fields got lightly frosted, enough to do damage to some of our most sensitive crops. The basil, some of the summer and winter squash, our zinnias and marigolds all got hit and are slowly retiring for the season.

In addition to a particular plants sensitivity to temperature, the location of a crop in relevance to how the temperature varied within the field makes it susceptible to freezing. For example, we have 4- 300 foot rows of zinnias at our field in Phoenix; half of the flowers got frosted and half of them are fine. The winter squash in one part of the field got hit, and the other section is just fine. A perfect example of what a difference just a one or two degree temperature difference will make.

Typically we do get a light frost in early October, then most things recover somewhat, and then we get hit with the harder freezes in late October. So, a little early for us this year. Such is the farming life, always unpredictable.

As the nights have been getting colder our crops and flowers are all slowing down, even the ones not killed off by the frost. Tis the season. Is it not harder for us to wake up in colder weather too?

Yet we carry on. The growers markets are bountiful right now, with all of the summer crops still producing, and the fall crops coming on. Despite how the grocery stores make us believe that we can have tomatoes in our salads and pumkin pie for dessert all on the same night; the window of time in which we can do this with our local crops is actually very small. And the time is now. This is what we work so hard for all year. Please enjoy the fruits of our labor in all their present abundance! EAT UP!

## Potato Leek Soup (makes 6 cups)

### *INGREDIENTS:*

1 small bay leaf  
2 sprigs fresh parsley  
10 whole black peppercorns  
2 T. butter  
1 T. Olive oil  
3 leeks, cut into 1/2 inch pieces  
2 shallots, finely chopped  
1 pound potatoes, peeled, dice to 1/2 inch  
1 quart chicken or vegetable stock  
1/2 cup milk  
1/4 cup heavy cream  
coarse salt and fresh ground white pepper  
fresh chervil, for garnish

### *DIRECTIONS:*

1. Make bouquet garni: Wrap bay leaf, parsley, and peppercorns in cheesecloth. Tie with twine and set aside.
2. Heat butter and oil in saucepan. Add leeks and shallots; cook on medium low heat until very soft, about 10 mins. stirring occasionally. Do not brown. Add potatoes, stock and bouquet garni. Bring to boil and reduce to simmer. Cook until potatoes are very tender, about 40 minutes. Discard bouquet garni.
3. Working in batches, pass soup through food mill with a medium disk into saucepan. Warm over medium low heat. Slowly stir in milk and cream; season with salt and pepper. Once milk is added, do not boil. Spoon into small cups; serve hot or cold; garnish with chervil.

### **\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\***

This recipe can be made as complex or as simple as you wish. The basic elements are the cooking times, the blending, and the seasoning. Make it your own by varying the ingredients and the ratios.

## Beets (*Beta vulgaris*)

Renowned for their earthy sweetness, beetroots have the highest sugar content of any vegetable (besides sugar beets). Nevertheless, they are low in calories, high in fiber, and rich in iron. They may even defend against cancer (via antioxidant beta carotene), and birth defects (folic acid).

Non-bleeding **golden beets** tend to be a little less sweet but can be swapped into most recipes.

## Roasted Beets

### *INGREDIENTS:*

1 bunch golden beets  
1 T. Olive oil  
coarse salt and fresh ground black pepper  
1 T. butter  
1 T. white wine vinegar

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Place beets on a baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil and 2 T. water; season with salt and pepper. Cover sheet with aluminum foil and roast beets until tender when pierced with a small knife, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove from oven, let cool.
3. Using a dry kitchen towel, rub beets to remove skin. Cut beets into 1/2 inch thick slices. Heat butter in a large skillet over high heat. When butter begins to bubble, add half of the sliced beets in a single layer. Cook until beets begin to brown, about 2 minutes; add vinegar and season with salt and pepper. Gently stir to combine and turn beets using a spatula. Transfer to a warmed plate and serve.