



# My Minnesota Farmer CSA

## My basket this week may include

- ❖ **Rose Potatoes** – This is another fun potato. Instead of having a bright purple inside this potato has a pink hue striped through the middle. Again, this is a very similar taste to the typical potato but has a fun color.
- ❖ **Swiss Chard** – I have a great recipe that my mom had tried with swiss chard. If you like Mexican food try this Taco casserole below. It was a hit with my kiddos!
- ❖ **Celery** – Celery is my boys favorite crop to harvest. You get to put the knife way down in the dirt to saw away at the thick root of the celery plant. It is wonderful that they feel all grown up and are excited about harvesting this. I wonder how many years we will see this enthusiasm, right now it is over using a knife but I have a feeling it won't be too long and it will be over which boy gets to drive what tractor or who is first on the bobcat moving around the compost. Yep it will be a fun busy time growing up for these guys! Oh, and as a reminder the leaves of the celery are great too, not just the stalks. For that reason we leave all the leaves on.
- ❖ **Peppers** – We may have a couple people that get peppers this week but those plants aren't producing nearly as well as they have in last years. If you get one it will be a bonus.
- ❖ **Green Leaf Lettuce** – We have gotten so much rain! I feel bad about how much soil is still in this lettuce. Even if I try and wash it up there is still not very clean. I'm sorry, we have had inches of rain in the last couple days and it was enough for me even to get outthere and get it through the mud. The best way to wash lettuce, if you didn't figure this out in the spring is cut the bottom off, flat the leaves around in some cold water then spin or drip dry. I know I am super excited about having lettuce again! Hopefully you are too!
- ❖ **Basil** –From looking at our patch in the field I think we will have enough basil to get some to everyone this week. Great with tomatoes! Enjoy!!
- ❖ **Yellow Onions**– These are going great at the farmer's market along with our candy onions. Good thing we have 20,000 more! We will send a couple different kinds in the next weeks.
- ❖ **Butternut Squash** – This is definitely my favorite squash so we planted a lot of it. I love seeing the huge ones with cracks. I know I can't send them out so I need to eat them. Num. Cut them in half, de-seed them and bake them at 350 for about ½ hour. Take them out and eat the inside with butter and salt and pepper or brown sugar and marshmallows.
- ❖ **Swing or Sweet Success Cucumbers** - We should have a good amount of cucumbers for another week or two. If you are looking to get some for canning let us know. If we pick and deliver them we are asking .50 a lb. Just let us know!
- ❖ **Tomatoes** – This amazing growing year has been so wonderful. The only drawback we see at this point is the excess moisture. The tomatoes are really dying off because of the extreme moisture in the soil and in the air. The moisture has caused the tomatoes to have some black spots along the top and a good amount of cracking from the intermittent rain. We are only trying to send out the best of the best. Red ripe perfect tomatoes are what we aim for. I have a lot of tomatoes that are just not good enough to go into the boxes. I guess I have a lot of spaghetti sauce now because of this. I need to get moving on my tomato soup now. I still have some left from last year but it won't take me through all winter. Dean's grandma's tomato soup recipe is below.
- ❖ **Siberian Garlic** – This is a new variety of garlic. This has a classic garlic flavor. We will send out the red Russian later this season so you get to try that one as well. The Russian is supposed to have much more of a kick to it. See if you have a preference.

## Candied Butternut Squash

- 1 large butternut squash, quartered lengthwise
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon

Scoop seeds out of butternut squash. Arrange butternut squash pieces, cut-side down, in a large baking dish. Pour hot water in the baking dish to a depth of about 1/4-inch. Bake butternut squash at 350° for 50 to 60 minutes, or until tender. Cool squash; peel.

Cut squash into 1/2-inch slices and place in a 9x13x2-inch baking dish. Pour butter and honey over squash, then sprinkle with pecans and cinnamon. Return to oven and bake for 15 to 25 minutes, until butternut squash is glazed and hot.

## Taco Casserole

**2 lbs ground beef** (grass fed My MN Farmer **Burger sounds good to me**)

**1 can tomato sauce** (or chopped tomatoes from your friendly local farmers)

**2 cups kale or chard** well chopped

**Two cloves garlic**, diced or pressed

**One large onion**, diced

**Green peppers** (one or two large) diced

**Cheddar cheese** to layer

**12 corn tortillas**

**Salt, pepper or other Mexican spices** as you prefer

**Sour cream and salsa**, if desired

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Put a light coating of oil in 9X13 pan. Brown and drain ground beef. In a separate pan, sauté veggies until soft. Add ground beef and tomatoes to veggies. Slick corn tortillas in 3/4 inch slices. Layer meat mixture, tortillas and shredded cheese in 9x13 topping with a cheese layer. Bake until cheddar is melted but not browned – 20-30 minutes, tops. Serve with sour cream or salsa, if desired.

Thanks mom for the delicious, easy recipe. ☺

## Homemade Tomato Soup

1 5 gallon bucket about 30 lbs of tomatoes

6 large onions

1 stalk celery

Boil and Puree above ingredients (you can strain them if you prefer very smooth soup)

Then add

1/2 cup sugar

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon pepper

Melt 1 1/2 cup butter then whisk in 2 cups of flour for the roux

Whisk the roux into the hot tomato mixture to thicken soup. You also may heat to reduce this if you would like a thicker soup.

Pressure can at 10 lbs of pressure for 30 minutes. This is a wonderfully easy meal in the winter. Pop open the can and make some grilled cheese. It is one of my kids' favorites!

## Confessions of a CSA Farmer

There are so many wonderful things about farming. I love working outdoors most of the time. ☺ There is something amazing about being outdoors in God's creation. While out feeding the pigs the other day in the rain we watched a flock of birds fly synchronized onto a patch of tall weeds and then as if magically hunker down just a bit so we couldn't see any of them. What an awesome sight. Then as if on cue in an orchestra they all simultaneously took flight made a couple synchronized circles and landed and disappeared into the thicket again. It was majestic. Also watching new life as animals are born, seeds are sprouted and watching the interwoven ecosystems all around is a miracle. The beauty of creation, be it in the smallest microbes underground or the deafening thunder is amazing.

All this being said somehow or another the enormity of managing 40 acres, more animals than we can count, seven wonderful children and getting beautiful produce out of the door without the help we need has been overwhelming and even depressing. We just can't manage it all as well as we would like to. I feel like a juggler with 15 balls in the air hoping not to drop any of them. Even though the value is in the boxes the fact that they are not overfull gets us down. We hope that what we are providing is a blessing to you and your family. Our goal is to get healthy food to you. I pray we are doing what we can to make that happen. We do feel so blessed by what we have been given and we feel like we can do nothing but in turn pass on this blessing. We hope we are a blessing to you. Be blessed!

