

Fair Fields News

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On the Farm

The garden is slowly preparing for hibernation. We have a few loose ends to put away and will do a little mulching and harvesting for our root cellar. Beyond that, we are happy to put it to bed for another winter.

As the garden empties out, so has our basement. For the last couple of months the harvest room has held pumpkin, squash, onions, garlic and the overflow of nightshades at first and later root vegetables. Now it feels both spacious and barren...

We broke ground (literally) in our future orchard this week, dig-

ging holes to prepare for apple and pear trees we will pick up in November. We will follow these trees with some stone fruit and berry bushes, next spring. The trees will hopefully provide enough over time to supplement the CSA or potentially form the start of a more fruit oriented operation. Time will tell, and it certainly will take time. Most fruit trees begin bearing fruit between 2-5 years of age and don't peak till several years later, so this is very much an investment for the future.

Gill has been doing the bulk of the digging, not lite work as the holes

are 3' wide by 16" deep! We want to thank Gill, not just for digging holes, but for all the hard work this season. Gill has been an important part of the farm this summer and we wish all the best for a wonderful winter in Guelph and whatever else the future holds.

We hope those jack-o'-lanterns still get to shine on Halloween as we understand it could be a cold and blustery one. Wherever Hallowe eve finds you I hope you get both tricks and treats. I think we might hole up with Lilly and eat some chocolate!

This Week's Harvest

- ◆ **Beets**
- ◆ **Brussel Sprouts**
- ◆ **Carrots**
- ◆ **Cabbage**
- ◆ **Chard**
- ◆ **Garlic**
- ◆ **Herbs**
- ◆ **Kale**
- ◆ **Onions**
- ◆ **Potatoes**
- ◆ **Rutabaga**
- ◆ **Squash**

Root Vegetable and Apple Slaw

This time of year can be a little challenging if you are new to eating a lot of root vegetables. It can be easy to get in a routine of boiling, baking or mashing your favourite way and slowly tire of vegetables that in this climate are seasonal for more than half the year.

One of our favourite ways to use root vegetables is raw with apple as a salad. It is filling, nutrient dense and sweet, crunchy and fresh, almost any-

time of year.

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup Celeriac
- 1/2 cup Carrot
- 1/2 cup Winter radish, Fennel, Squash, Sweet potato, Parsnip or other root vegetable
- 1/2 Small Onion
- 1 Apple (a firm pear works too)
- 1 tbsp. Lemon juice
- Fresh Mint
- Light Vinagrette or Creamy dressing

Peel, wash and Julien all the vegetables and the apple and toss with lemon juice and some minced fresh mint. Then toss with a light vinegratte or creamy dressing.

Whichever dressing you go with I like to make a dressing that includes some honey, lemon juice and mustard as they go well with root vegetables and apple. Also nice can be a more Asian style dressing with some rice vinegar, sugar, chili and fish sauce. Explore and enjoy...!

Braised Brussel Sprouts with Bacon and Raisins

For those with memories of boiled and bitter sprouts, try this. The smoky saltiness of the bacon with the sweet from the raisins helps balance out the bitter vegetable...

Ingredients:

1 teaspoon olive oil
2 thick slices bacon
4 cups Brussels sprouts (about 1 pound), trimmed, halved
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/4 cup golden raisins
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1/2 cup chicken or beef broth
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

Preparation:

Heat oil in a large heavy skillet over medium heat. Add bacon and cook, turning occasionally, until crisp, about 5 minutes. Using tongs, transfer bacon to paper towels to drain. Let cool. Coarsely crumble.

While bacon cools, add brussels sprouts to drippings in skillet; season with salt and pepper.

Cook, stirring often, until well browned in spots and beginning to soften, 5-7 minutes.

Reduce heat to low and add raisins, onion, and butter; cook, stirring often, until onion is soft, about 3 minutes. Add broth to skillet;

increase heat and bring to a boil, scraping up browned bits from bottom of pan. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until broth has evaporated, 1-2 minutes. Stir in vinegar and crumbled bacon. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



End of Season Survey

We hope you will take time to fill out our end of season survey. In particular, we are looking for input about preferred days and times for pickups as we may try to change these next year.

You can find the survey at:

<http://fluidsurveys.com/surveys/devo-kFt/end-of-season-survey-2014/>

We really value your feedback for planning and helping us meet your needs.

Next Year

We will be growing again in the 2015 season. This year we reached 45 members, more than double last year's membership and close to our goal of 50. Next year we are going to be a little less ambitious, aiming to have 60 members, ideally split between Guelph and the farm.

The decision to grow more slowly this year is very intentional. Nicole is thinking of going back to school this winter for a 16 month intensive training in Registered Massage Therapy.

We hope this will be a fruitful and enjoyable career for her. It will marry well with her yoga teaching and allow her flexibility to work around a farming schedule. Also important will be the stable income it will provide. As a result we are focusing our finances towards schooling and some of my time towards childcare, this coming year.

Growing to 60 members will allow us to continue to grow and accept new members and finally provide me (Devan) with a living

wage. We will still be on a small enough acreage to avoid scaling up our mechanical cultivation, i.e. buying draft horses, which will save me a lot of time and money this year.

Our hope is that in 2016, Nicole will be finished and I can again focus on growing the CSA and exploring fruit production, with her help and hopefully some great massages...!