



DIGGING INTO TECHNOLOGY

This week, our family attended Farm Technology Days for the first time. While we were anticipating much in the way of marketing to big agriculture, we didn't quite realize how BIG ag has gotten. Literally, all of the machinery on display, acres and acres, was created for ever increasing acreage. Never have we seen machines so large. One particular combine was upwards of \$900K. There was a definitive lack in technology for small farming operations, vegetable, dairy, beef, and the like.

Along with all of the machinery was plenty of financial businesses, insurance agents, suicide prevention/health resources, government agencies, and some very interesting innovations. Much of it is too specialized for a vegetable farm, but remote cellular field sensors might be helpful. So might drone fertility applicators. Or perhaps remote control cultivation robots. It's difficult to imagine ever swallowing the cost of a single one of these new tools.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the event is that it was held at the world's largest horseradish farm near Eau Claire. The growing techniques for such a specialized crop are fascinating. It can be planted in both spring and fall. There were also some intriguing crop plots prepared the year in advance by UW Madison demonstrating several new varieties of small grain, something we have been considering growing. And a living soil pit with tiling demo in the alfalfa field on which the event was held.

Alas, we are sticking with the traditional style of farming for now. And selling direct to consumer so we don't have to grow larger and larger each year to pay for the cost of the middle man. We'll continue to dig through the classifieds for some more old-timers' equipment like our 1940's John Deere potato digger and our 1952 Farmall Super C. But it is fun to think about the possibilities and imagine everything technology has to offer to the world of farming.

Until next time,

eric + rebecca

IN THE BAG

New Purple Potatoes
Green Cabbage
Carrots
Zucchini
Cucumbers
Broccoli
Lettuce
Lacinato Kale
Garlic Bulb
Spring Onions
Mixed Tomatoes

EXTRA PRODUCE



In two weeks, the field cucumbers will start flooding us. This is a great opportunity to ask for extra if you'd like to make a batch of refrigerator dills, fermented pickles, freezer salad, etc. Also, feel free to request extra zucchini for your freezer. It works well to shred the zucchini first. We recommend freezing more than your recipe calls for because of the water that drains when it thaws. And don't forget, we always have extra kale and collards. Just ask!

BAG EXCHANGE

Please bring back our We Grow grocery tote bags each week when you pick up your share. If you get more than one, bring them all back when you remember. Thanks!

VEGGIE HUMOR

Just turned down a job in the store's produce department; the celery was unacceptable.

FOLLOW THE FARM:  

ZUCCHINI

You will be receiving a fair amount of zucchini over the next six weeks so we encourage you to try each different type to experiment with the flavors. The farm favorite is the Italian heirloom called Costato Romanesco. We held an informal taste test where our entire crew tried each of them both raw and fried in olive oil. Not everyone agreed, so it's worth tasting them all yourself. When we get too many, we like to shred and freeze. Freeze extra cause much water seeps out at thawing

Green and yellow zucchini: The standard zucchini. We choose hybrids over heirlooms for their early days-to-maturity and high yields.

Grey mexicana zucchini: This chubby little zucchini features mottled green and white flesh with excellent zucchini flavor. We love the variety this color adds to our recipes.

Patty pan or scallop squash: There are two colors this season, the light green variety is called Jaune et Verte and the yellow is called Sunburst. These are considered a "summer squash" instead of a zucchini. They tend to hold up better in cooked dishes because of the high skin to flesh ratio.

Costato romanesco: Zucchini connoisseurs proclaim "the only summer squash worth bothering with, unless you're just thirsty." Deeply striped and ribbed with a distinctive sweet mildly nutty flavor. Can grow incredibly large and its branches feature scratchy spines.



ZUCCHINI NOODLE SALAD

Vinaigrette ingredients:

- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup freshly squeezed lime juice (2 to 4 limes)
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro leaves + stems, chopped
- 1 small jalapeño, seeded and ribs removed, chopped
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 small clove garlic, peeled
- 1/4 teaspoon salt, plus more as needed

Salad ingredients:

- 2 1/4 pounds zucchini (about 6 medium), ends trimmed and spiralized or julienned
- 1/2 cup cilantro leaves + stems, chopped
- 1/3 cup shelled, salted, and roasted pistachios

1. Place all the dressing ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. Taste and season with more salt as needed.

2. Place the zucchini noodles and cilantro in a large bowl. Pour over the dressing and toss to combine. Top with the pistachios and serve immediately.

GREEN CABBAGE

The early green cabbage is finally coming in. Unfortunately the cabbage moth caterpillars also enjoy eating the plants, so you will see some holes and bite marks. Be diligent in washing the outside layers. The inside, or heart, is usually too difficult for them to reach and can be sliced easily for slaw or our farm favorite, fried cabbage.

We love green cabbage fried and grilled, but this is also a great variety for fresh coleslaw. Cut the amount you need and store leftovers wrapped tightly in your crisper drawer. Next time, simply cut off any discoloration and continue to enjoy. We've eaten our cabbage heads in this fashion for over a month with proper storage.

LACINATO KALE

The flat, dark green leaves with the texture of lizard skin has a several different names. It is an Italian-type of kale known as lacinato, dinosaur, tuscanero or black kale. This kale dates to 18th-century Italy, which is why it's also called Tuscan kale. Thomas Jefferson grew it in his garden at Monticello. The flattened leaves are perfect for making kale chips. This is the type of kale is also commonly chosen for Zuppa Tuscano soup, an Italian sausage, potato and kale soup made mainstream by Olive Garden.

We like to include this nutrient packed green our veggies sautés and in our salads. Makes a suitable substitute for lettuce on sandwiches and wraps too. If you haven't tried it yet, the kale craisin salad recipe available on our website is delicious with fresh lemon zest. Kale craisin salad is even better on day two and has converted many non-kale eaters to the "green side."

STRANGE CARROTS

We apologize for more crooked carrots. We had these started before we realized just how bad they were going to be. Then they were transplanted in the field despite our concerns. We are trying to mix them with straight ones for you to enjoy. Boiled dinner or foil packs on the grill with potatoes, cabbage and carrots is the ultimate combo. Good luck.

HAVE A VEGGIE QUESTION?

Don't hesitate to call for help identifying new veggies or asking for tips on how to use. Our farm collective on Facebook is a great place to get prep ideas. Odds are if you've got a question, someone else probably has the same one.

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