Shareholder Newsletter July 2, 2014 Vol. 15, No. 3

Rachel Bynum & Eric Plaksin,
53 Waterpenny Lane, Sperryville, VA 22740
(540) 987-8567
e-mail: waterpennycsa@gmail.com
Website: Www.waterpennyfarm.com

Farm Notes:

- Cucumbers are in! We have several kinds in the shares. There are two long, thin kinds, Asian and Burpless— these are both thin skinned and sweet flavored. The short, smooth Mid-east is more watery and sweet. The shorter striped picklers are dense and good raw, in salad, or pickled. Finally there are regular dark-green slicers as well, which store the best. Enjoy!
- We'll be offering bulk cucumbers for pickling next week— we'll let you know via e-mail on Monday. If available you can buy 5 lbs for $10 or 10 lbs for $20. We can also include a large sweet onion, a head of garlic and/or a bunch of flowering dill, each for $2. Email with what you want and your pickup location to place your order.
- Tomatoes are around the corner! We have found a few ripening, but not enough for the shares yet. It's a much earlier tomato year than the past 2! Look for some in your share soon.

Here's a shareholder recipe that sounds fun! From on-farm shareholder Kristen Stobo.

We are feasting on a veggie tempura right now!

Zucchini and Yellow Squash, Broccoli ...Greenley has been loving the thin sliced kohlrabi, but tonight we decided to make short French fry cuts of it and tempura fry.

Easy tempura batter - 1 egg mixed, 1 cup ice cold water mixed into the egg. 1 cup flour. [dip to coat vegetable pieces, then fry it up!]

Had to stop and thank you for the yumminess!

~ Kristin, Greenley and Raegan

The Mulch Machine Rolls On

Above, we see Amanda driving the tractor with the offset hay bale unrolling attachment that we use to unroll hay bales in the aisles of most of our fields, while Leigh follows behind making sure the hay comes off the bale nicely. We often try to be essentially done with mulching by the 4th of July, and we've almost made it! This is the last winter squash field we'll mulch this year. At the far left Matt is using a stirrup hoe to dislodge the weeds that have grown in the aisle. If we mulch right after planting we don't have to hoe, but we find the fields we do hoe usually have fewer weeds growing through the mulch.

...But we still have lots of weeds!

Below, a vining morning glory is extracted from our growing pepper plants. Weeding the aisles and the holes in the plastic mulch is vital to our crops' success. Our farm has no shortage of very tenacious weeds, including 4 kinds of morning glory (or "bindweed") and invasive Johnson Grass. The excellent rainfall we had in June has been great for weeds, too!

We didn't find any leprechauns at the end of this rainbow last week, but we did find 200 chickens laying eggs with golden yolks! The chickens are moved regularly and eat grass, bugs, and certified organic, soy-free feed. Our eggs are available at our three farmer's markets in Warrenton, Arlington, and Takoma Park, as well as on the farm every day.

The evening thunder storms like the one that yielded this spectacular rainbow seem to be missing us this week, and we plan to start irrigating today. It'll be the first significant time watering this year, which is unusual— we often start irrigating in May.

Basil & Summer Squash Soup

- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/4 Pounds summer squash, both green and yellow, chopped
- 1 Large white onion, roughly chopped
- 6 Cups vegetable stock
- 1/2 Cup julienned fresh basil, plus whole leaves for garnish
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons butter, softened
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons flour
- Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
- 2-3 Tablespoons heavy cream (optional)
- Parmesan cheese (for garnish, optional)
- Lemon Wedges for serving

1. In a large saucepan over medium-high heat, heat oil. Add squash and onion, and cook, stirring often, for about 5 minutes, or until the onions are softened and the summer squash is just tender. Add vegetable stock. Bring the soup to a boil, turn the heat down to medium-low, and simmer for about 25 minutes, stirring in the basil just about 5 minutes before you're done cooking.
2. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, mix softened butter and flour to make a paste. Carefully remove 1 cup of the soup stock, while it's still simmer, and whisk into the butter-flour mixture. Pour mixture back into soup, and stir until the soup has thickened a little.
3. Remove soup from heat. Let cool for about 10 minutes. Working in batches, transfer the soup to a blender and puree until the mixture is smooth, or to your desired texture. Season with salt and pepper, stir in optional cream. Transfer to serving bowls and garnish with basil leaves and optional parmesan. Serve with lemon wedges.

Recipe Adapted From: food.com

Kids' Favorite Cucumber Salad

From About.com

- 6 large (or 10 small) cucumbers
- 2 tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 3 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 small onion, sliced

1. Wash cucumbers. Do not peel cucumbers. Slice them thinly using a food processor (or by hand).
2. Sprinkle with salt and let sit for 20 minutes.
3. Drain.
4. Add lemon juice, sugar and onion.
5. Refrigerate for a few hours.

Our onions are looking good this year—here we see the mild Sweet Walla Wallas that were fresh in the shares last week and this week. In a few weeks we'll harvest and start curing our storage onions.