



# BLACKBROOK FARM

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## Reflection and Letting Go

So the weather's a little chillier, but at least we got a few drops of rain for the first time in about a month. This helps us focus on other farm tasks since we aren't always moving drip-tape irrigation. This week we had time to try to clean the quack out of our fall brassicas. Quack, as many of you know, is a tenacious weed because it grows from a long taproot that can send up shoots from any part of the root. Typically it just multiplies when you cut it, so we're just trying to keep it down until the end of the season. Ah well...

We also had time to meet with our MOSES (Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Service) Mentors, Ken and Judith Keppers, and reflect on the successes and failures of the year (basically, there were plenty of both). Ken and Judith run a 1 or so acre year-round CSA out of Range, WI, a nearby town. They focus on building soils and season extension through animals and high tunnels. It is helpful to have the perspective of established farmers. Sometimes it's nice just to know that someone with a lot of experience had the same problems we did. Irregular rain, for instance can mess with crops like our rutabaga. When it's dry, root crops like these tend to start curing and their skins harden, but then a boost of water hits and they crack open at the seams like kids going through a growth spurt! And it's nice to know that were not the only ones with small sweet corn this year. Then again, we have a lot to learn from farmers like Ken and Judith in terms of soil issues, crop management, and pest management, so it is nice that the season is slowing down for us and we have a bit of time to devote some attention to reflecting and learning. But then we head back out into the field remembering the

## What's In the Box:

**Tomatoes-** Our tomato harvest went from 900 lbs to 250 in a little over a week. So, the pickins are a little slim. However, we do expect to get them for a couple more weeks. Meanwhile, the Green Zebras are going gangbusters, so enjoy these tasty little treats.

**Peppers-**Red, Green and Orange Bells as well as the sweet italian Carmens.

**Hot Peppers-** A mixed bag of: habaneros, jalapenos, anchos and cayenne.

**Watermelon OR Cantaloupe-** Not sure if this is the last week or not. They just keep coming. The half shares did not fit so we put them outside of the box.

**Broccoli-**First of the fall stuff. Sweet tasting and much more of this to come!

**Cucumbers-** This is the last of the cukes for this year. They were good while they lasted.

**Beets-** Most of the bunches are larger than usual, but still bunching beet size. Recipe included.



James in Front of the Newly Rebuilt Hay Wagon



Ayla and the last Box

## Roasted Roots

Adapted from a Yummly.com recipe

2 1/2 lbs squash--or a small one (peeled seeded cut into 1/2 inch cubes, about 5 cups)  
 1/2 lbs potatoes (unpeeled cut into 1/2 inch pieces)  
 1 bunch beets (1/2 lb trimmed but not peeled: scrubbed and cut into 1/2 inch pieces)  
 1 red onion (cut into 1/2 inch pieces about 2 cups)--substitute thinly sliced scallions added as a garnish or caramelized yellow onions.  
 1 head garlic cloves (separated peeled)  
 2 tbsps olive oil  
 Fresh sprigs of rosemary, thyme, or oragano  
 Salt and Pepper

Preheat oven to 425°F. Oil 2 large rimmed baking sheets. Combine all ingredients in very large bowl; toss to coat. Divide vegetables between prepared baking sheets; spread evenly. Sprinkle generously with salt and pepper. Roast vegetables until tender and golden brown, stirring occasionally, about 1 hour 15 minutes. (Can be prepared 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature. Rewarm in 350°F oven 15 minutes.)

## What's in the Box

thousands of feet of potatoes awaiting our pitchforks and potato sacks.

On a side note, something really terrible happened last week after market: our lab top was stolen out of our delivery truck! Unfortunately, we hadn't backed up many of our business files, though we always talk about it. All of our excel spreadsheets that included planting charts, seed orders, succession plantings and CSA box plans were lost. If we didn't have veggies to prove we were a farm, we wouldn't exist...boohoo. Included in what we lost were all of our newsletters. However, with the help of Ayla's mother, Nancy, who likes to collect the newsletters, we hope to scan them back into the computer to put onto our website this winter. For how much time we spend outside in nature, we also spend a lot of time chronicling our harvest and plantings, sending invoices, communicating with customers and writing newsletters on the computer. Maybe this was a wake-up call to what is really important, but still it really stinks.

But then we have all had important things taken from us, and we just cope with it and move on. Just like with the change of seasons brings closure on certain crops it opens the door to cool weather crops, too. So this week we are including in your box a really nice, big pound of braising mix, bigger beets (for most boxes) and winter squash and broccoli or green cabbage. In the following weeks, we hope to have many more crops such as spinach, rutabagas, brussel sprouts, radishes and arugula. Enjoy!

Bon Appetit

Ayla and James

**Garlic-** Either Chesnok or a variety we got from Foxtail Farm last year, which has been selected for large cloves.

**Scallions-** Tokyo Long White. Great for egg or quiche, as well as in a stirfry

**Potatoes-** Kennebecs or Norlands.

**Winter Squash-** A Delicata and a very nice heirloom acorn called Thelma Sanders. Recipe included. Or just bake in a pan with a little water til soft and add butter.

**Braising Mix-** Really tasty and flavorful mix that includes: kales, baby collards, mustards, arugula, mizuna, tatsoi, baby beet greens and others. Braise with onions and garlic to put over pasta or in a stirfry. Recipe included.

**Rosemary OR Oregano-** First of both of these this year. Use the rosemary in a roasted root dish. The oregano is great for a marinara sauce.

### Coconut Milk-Braised Greens

Adapted from The Whole Foods Market

Ingredients:

- Salt to taste
- 2 bunches collard greens, kale or mustard greens (about 1 pound total), stemmed and roughly chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 3/4 cup coconut milk
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Black pepper to taste

Method:

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add greens and cook for 2 minutes; drain well and set aside.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onions and cook, stirring often, until soft and translucent, 5 to 7 minutes. Add reserved greens, coconut milk and lemon juice, stir well and simmer until tender, 5 to 7 minutes more. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

### Creamed Braising Greens

Adapted from the NY Times.

- 6 tablespoons butter
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Pinch freshly grated nutmeg
- Salt
- 3 to 4 pounds young greens, like collards, kale, chard or mustard, stemmed and finely shredded.

1. In a saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons of the butter over high heat until it foams. Add the garlic and shallot and cook over medium-low heat, stirring, until softened and golden, 5 minutes. Add the cream, bring to a simmer and cook until slightly thickened, 10 minutes. Add the nutmeg and salt to taste. Using a hand blender, purée until smooth.

2. In a large pot, heat the remaining 4 tablespoons butter over high heat until it foams. Add the greens and cook, stirring constantly, until tender but still bright green, about 5 minutes. Sprinkle with salt and add the cream mixture. Lower the heat, cover and let simmer until cooked through, 5 minutes more. Taste for nutmeg and salt, season to taste and serve hot.