
BURR OAK GARDENS, LLC

To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves- Mohondas Gandhi

This Week on the Farm

So much rain! It has been difficult to get much field work done this past week with all of the rain. So far, despite getting over five inches since I last wrote a newsletter, we don't have any standing water in our fields. The grass waterway has been working very well at shunting the excess water out of the fields. Now our crops just need sunshine!

The zucchini seem to have hit critical mass and we should have a nice amount ready for this week. With the heat expected over the next week I think that we may start seeing the first cucumbers next week and definitely in two weeks. The peas and beans are both flowering, so look for those in a couple of weeks. The first planting of radishes is done and we are going to rototill the weeds under sometime this coming week. The second planting is looking good, but not totally ready to harvest. It may end up that the 90+ weather this weekend sends them from tiny to bolting without any time to harvest, but there is nothing we can do about the weather, so we will have to wait and see. Next week we may start seeing a few kohlrabis. The first planting was very uneven, next year I want to bump up the size of the plugs to get a better stand. The second planting which will be ready in a couple of weeks looks much better.

Despite the wet conditions we have managed to get in to the field to cultivate with the tractor in the dried beans, tomatoes, peppers, eggplant. We used a wheel hoe to clean two of our cucumber varieties and the zucchini. And we finished hand pulling weeds in our onion crop.



We started whack a beetle to control the Colorado Potato Beetles in the potatoes and will continue that for the next two to three weeks. We should be getting the tricchograma wasps in the mail either today or tomorrow so I can release those in the cabbage family field. The wasps are a parasitoid and lay their eggs in the eggs of cabbage loopers and imported cabbage moths. Those are our two main pests in the cabbage family. Doing a weekly release of the wasps (which are microscopic) we can get excellent control and we can get some very clean crops as a result. Releasing the wasps is also very easy to do, it involves clothes-pinning

a postage stamp size piece of paper to a bamboo stake. The hardest part is finding the bamboo stake each week. A couple of years ago we fixed the problem by spray painting the top of the stake red to make it easier to spot.

For the rest of the week I have to continue whack a beetle, rototill new ground to prep it for direct seeded crops, transplant our second planting of cucumbers, transplant cabbages, and start weeding crops by hand. It is that time of year where all I seem to do is weed, weed, weed!

Steak Tacos w/ Cilantro-Radish Salsa

2 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided

1 pound skirt or flank steak

Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper

1/2 cup fresh cilantro leaves with tender stems, divided

4 radishes, trimmed, chopped

2 spring onions or 4 scallions, white and pale-green parts only, thinly sliced

1/2 serrano chile or jalapeño, seeds removed if desired, finely chopped

2 tablespoons fresh lime juice

8 corn tortillas, warmed

2 ounces queso fresco or Cotija cheese, crumbled

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large skillet over high heat. Season steak with salt and pepper and cook about 5 minutes per side for medium rare. Let steak rest 5 minutes. Meanwhile, chop half of cilantro and toss with radishes, onions, chile, lime juice, and remaining 1 tablespoon oil in a medium bowl. Season radish salsa with salt and pepper. Slice steak and serve on tortillas topped with radish salsa, queso fresco, and remaining cilantro. (www.epicurious.com)

Green Garlic & Radish Crudit 

2-3 bulbs green garlic, trimmed of roots

1 bunch radish greens (from a bunch of 5 large radishes or 10-ish smaller radishes)

Juice of 1 lemon

3/4 cup pignoli nuts

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 1/2 tablespoons coconut oil

3-4 tablespoons chevre

1 teaspoon salt, to taste

Wash the greens and pick over for yellowed or wilted leaves. Cut the greens and green garlic into 3-inch chunks.

Place greens/garlic in food processor. Add lemon and process until the leaves are well pulverized. Add nuts, oils and cheese and blend until smooth. Add 1/2 a teaspoon salt, blend again and taste, adding another 1/2 teaspoon if necessary. Slice radish bulbs into sticks or spears and serve as a crudit . If that's too French for you, the pesto also works nicely over pasta or on bread.

(www.sevendaysvt.com)

Kale Chips

1 head kale, washed and thoroughly dried

2 tablespoons olive oil

Sea salt, for sprinkling

Preheat the oven to 275 degrees F.

Remove the ribs from the kale and cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces. Lay on a baking sheet and toss with the olive oil and salt. Bake until crisp, turning the leaves halfway through, about 20 minutes. Serve as finger food. (From: www.foodnetwork.com)

Garlic Scape Risotto

2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1/2 cup garlic scapes (cut into 1/4 inch rounds)

1 cup Arborio rice

1/2 cup white wine

4 cups chicken broth or stock

salt and pepper, to taste

1/4 cup chopped fresh sage

1/2 cup freshly grated Romano cheese

In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the garlic scapes and cook, stirring occasionally, for five minutes. Stir in the rice and let toast for one minute. Pour in the wine and stir. Allow the wine to fully absorb into the rice.

Meanwhile, heat the chicken broth in a pan to warm over low heat. Once the wine is absorbed into the rice, begin adding it to the rice mixture one ladle at a time. Allow the broth to be fully absorbed into the rice after each addition (you'll hear a sizzle when its all absorbed). Be patient. Part of making risotto is waiting for it ... and it's totally worth the wait. All in all, this will take about 25 minutes.

Once all of the broth has been added and absorbed, stir in salt and pepper, the sage and the cheese. Cover and cook for 2-3 more minutes. Remove from heat and serve immediately.

(From: www.tablespoon.com)

Your Box This Week

Head lettuce-

Wash the lettuce and spin or pat dry with paper towel. Spread evenly on a paper towel and loosely roll the paper towel. Place rolled towel in a plastic bag and place in the fridge.

Braising Mix-

Same as head lettuce.

Red Curly Kale-

Same as head lettuce.

Garlic Scapes-

Store in a paper bag in the fridge.

Radishes-

Remove the tops and add to the braising mix or keep separate. Store tops and bottoms in separate plastic bags in the fridge.

Basil-

Store on the counter in a jar of water. Do not wash in cold water!

Zucchini-

Store on the counter or wrapped in a paper towel in the crisper drawer.

