
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 we still have a lot of zucchini. I am definitely reducing the number of plants we plant for next year. It has been an upper body work out harvesting all of the zucchini. I keep reminding myself to “lift with my knees, not my back.” The cucumbers also had a big week this week. The two and a half inches of rain we got this past weekend pushed things along.

We have both yellow and green beans on the stand this week. I did run out of beans this past weekend due to the fact it was raining so much and I couldn't get out to harvest. Also, I try very hard not to harvest on Sundays. I like to have one day of rest, otherwise I am so fatigued from all of the physical work that I am not at my best. Sometimes I may run out of an item for a day or two, but check back and if it is still in season it will reappear on the stand.

New this week are cabbages. We have a lovely standard green cabbage ready this week. It makes excellent coleslaw. My mother-in-law made a great stir fry with kale, cabbage, zucchini, beans, and kohlrabi last night. We do have a few of the Kossak kohlrabi's available (this large ones), but we don't have a lot of them so I cannot guarantee they will be on the stand. I really want to try to make kohlrabi fries. We had a recipe for them a couple of years ago that I have saved.

In the next week or so we should have the sweetheart cabbage ready (the conical one). Napa cabbages are also looking close to being ready. The hot peppers are just starting to size up and the bells look about two weeks from being ready. The cherry tomatoes are also getting close, I found about a half pint's worth in the field yesterday, so it shouldn't be long.

Onto farm news. The greenhouse is green again. I have lettuce, kale, collards, chard, kohlrabi, and broccoli that have all germinated. I seeded more lettuce and pac choy yesterday. I have to water the new flats every couple of hours during the day for the first two to three days in order to get good germination. So far everything looks good. It helps that our workshares over the last two weeks have gotten the floor of the greenhouse weeded. It looks like a whole new building!

Last week we got more of the deer fencing up. I am hoping to get another section done this week and we will have the west side up. It is a lot of fence! I really hope we can get it up before mid-August when the fall broccoli and lettuce transplants get planted. We may have to spend a couple of weekends pounding posts in the ground. We haven't had time during the week because I have been busy weeding or harvesting and Tyler has been very busy with his handyman job.

We got the last of the beans weeded this week. I also weed whacked in the tomatoes, peppers, and next to the rutabagas. Later today the workshares are going to weed the second planting of cucumber plants that are just starting to flower. Usually the cucumber plants start to slow down in mid-August, so we planted a later planting to extend the season. It may turn out that I planted way too many cucumbers, but that just means more muscles for me!

Kickin' Collard Greens

1 tablespoon olive oil
3 slices bacon
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon pepper
3 cups chicken broth
1 pinch red pepper flakes
1 pound fresh collard greens, cut into 2-inch pieces

Heat oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add bacon, and cook until crisp. Remove bacon from pan, crumble and return to the pan. Add onion, and cook until tender, about 5 minutes. Add garlic, and cook until just fragrant. Add collard greens, and fry until they start to wilt.

Pour in chicken broth, and season with salt, pepper, and red pepper flakes. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 45 minutes, or until greens are tender. (From www.allrecipes.com)

Hot & Sour Greens

1 pound greens (bok choy, kale, Swiss chard, collards)
2 teaspoons expeller-pressed canola oil
2 large cloves garlic, minced
1/4 teaspoon hot red-pepper flakes
1/4 teaspoon dry mustard powder
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
1 teaspoon soy sauce
1 teaspoon light brown sugar

Wash and drain greens, remove any tough stems, and slice leaves into 1/2-inch shreds. Heat the canola oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and red-pepper flakes and stir-fry for one minute.

Add the greens along with the mustard and stir to coat with the spices.

Combine the rice vinegar, soy sauce and sugar and add to the greens in the skillet.

Cook covered over medium heat until vegetables are tender, about five minutes. (From www.drweil.com)

Smashed Cucumber Salad

2 English cucumbers
1 teaspoon white sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt, plus more as needed
2 cloves garlic, finely crushed
2 tablespoons seasoned rice vinegar
1 teaspoon soy sauce
1 teaspoon sesame oil
Red pepper flakes to taste
2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

Wrap each cucumber in plastic wrap to minimize splattering. Place on a work surface and pound with a flat object (like a meat pounder) until cucumbers crack and are slightly flattened. Remove from plastic. Cut cucumbers in half; halve each side lengthwise. Slice into 1- to 1 1/2-inch wide slices. Transfer to a strainer set over a bowl.

Sprinkle cucumber with sugar and salt; mix until well combined. Refrigerate bowl and strainer for 30 to 60 minutes so cucumber pieces can drain into the bowl.

Place garlic, seasoned rice vinegar, soy sauce, sesame oil, and red pepper flakes in a large bowl. Whisk together thoroughly.

Transfer drained cucumbers into bowl with dressing. Toss to coat. Cover with plastic wrap; refrigerate for about 30 minutes to allow flavors to mingle.

Place cucumbers in serving bowl and sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Chef's Note:

In place of seasoned rice vinegar you can use plain rice vinegar and add an extra pinch of salt and sugar to the dressing. (From allrecipes.com)

On the Stand This Week

Green or Red Curly Kale-

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.

Collard Greens-

Same as Kale.

Cabbage-

Store 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.

Cucumbers-

Same as zucchini.

Pickling

Cucumbers-

Same as zucchini.

Scallions-

Store in the fridge in a jar of water.

Green or Yellow Beans-

Store in the bag in the fridge.

