

August 2, 2007

Lone Willow Ranch

Hello, where does the time go? We are already into August!!! The days are already getting shorter the children are getting ready to go back to school (yes). Although, we are enjoying our long hot summer. Thank you for your input on the delivery day for Los Banos. We have had a few drop and a few add so we are at our comfort level, but thank you. We appreciate all of your communications.

This Week's Box

We have squash, tomatoes, melons, carrots, beets, peppers, onions, garlic, sweet corn, cucumbers, eggplants, peaches, nectarines and herbs. We have included parts of an article that was in the Fresno Bee by our friend Joan Obra on Eggplant. For us, we love high heat grilled. We grill the eggplant and all other vegetables very fast and make layers with cheese, herbs. Just stack as you are grilling. When you are done you will have towers. Top with a little pesto or olive oil. Then let the towers rest until you are ready to serve dinner. This gives the grilled vegetables time to blend. The towers look very special and are very tasty compared to single vegetable grilling. Serve with a salad & meat. So easy ...

No summer would be complete without eggplant, the vegetable considered poisonous by Italians for at least a century before the Renaissance. Eggplant's Italian name, melanzana, derives from the Latin mala insana, 'apple of madness,' " Aliza Green writes in "Field Guide to Produce." With all fear of this vegetable obliterated, we are free to indulge in numerous varieties. The common Black Beauty resembles an elongated globe. The lighter-colored Graffiti eggplant is known for its purple and white striations. "They are smooth and creamy when cooked, without the bitterness sometimes found in dark varieties," Green writes. And thanks to Asian farmers in the central San Joaquin Valley, it's easy to find the long, dark-colored Japanese eggplants. When shopping, weigh the eggplant in your hand. It should be "heavy for its size, firm and almost hard without wrinkles," Green writes. "When selecting eggplants, look for solid color all the way to the stem, without any green." Keep it in the refrigerator for about four days, she adds. Taste the eggplant before cooking; if it's too bitter, salt the slices for about 30 minutes before using. Baba ghanoush, the classic roasted eggplant dip, is revised by Tom Kime, chef and author of "Street Food: Exploring the World's Most Authentic Tastes." "I have made this recipe slightly smoother and richer by adding crème fraîche," he writes. "Yogurt could be added instead." "This classic Lebanese eggplant dip is the perfect accompaniment to cheese, salad or grilled meat," "It works particularly well with the smoky rich flavors of rare grilled beef or lamb."

Farm Report

We are planting and harvesting. We have for the fall crop, carrots, kale, broccoli, winter squash, plus many more. We are stilling in full production of heirloom tomatoes, melons, sweet corn and on and on. We have had a rough summer on the sweet peppers. The sun wants to burn right through them.

We have also included a recipe from Renee Martin, for Green Tomato Jam and we understand she makes a mean green tomato and chocolate cake. We can't wait to taste.

Check out www.slowfoodmadera.org and www.organicheirlooms.com for upcoming events.

Ciao,

Farmer John & Shelby