

rain report

None

In the box

Sweet Potatoes: 'Beauregard'

Shallot: 'Conservor'

Kale: 'Red Russian'

Brussels Sprouts: 'Igor' or 'Diablo'

Beets: 'Lutz'

Radish: 'Daikon'

Spinach: 'Palco', 'Winter Bloomsdale', and/or 'Tye'e'

Turnips: 'Hakurei'

Green Pepper

Pole Beans: 'Rattlesnake' or 'Purple Podded' or 'Kentucky Wonder'

ala carte items

None for this week

photo of the week



Starting to plant garlic (10/17/2013) for the 2014 season. We started by first breaking apart the bulbs into individual cloves. Then let them sit a couple of days to dry out a little bit. After that, we start planting the cloves 6 inches apart.

Farm update

Brussels sprouts are by far one of my favorite crops to grow and eat (as long as they are locally grown)! I eagerly anticipate their great fall flavor beginning when the seeds are planted in the greenhouse around the first week of April (along with the tomatoes). I always find this funny since Tomatoes are a summer crop and the Brussels sprouts is a fall crop, but like all fall crops, they do take a lot longer to grow. The little transplants are placed out into the field around the first week of June and my anticipation for this fall treat grows stronger.

There are still a couple more steps before the eagerly awaited harvest sometime in October! Around the first week of September we will "top" the plants to try and get all the sprouts on the stalk to mature at the same rate and have uniform size. To "top" a plant means to cut the growing point off so the plant won't grow taller and produce more sprouts (that won't of any size by October).

The last step is to wait for a light frost or two to really improve the flavor. Well, we finally got a couple light frosts at the farm so this week brings the first installment of sprouts in the share. I had my first taste of "home" grown Brussels sprouts tonight (using the recipe included below) for the monthly farmer potluck of "The Quinn" (Grade A Gardens, Lacewing Acres, Middleway Farm, Mustardseed Community Farm, Tabletop Farm and Wabi Sabi Farm) and the wait was well worth it!

Today (Oct. 20th) was the last "official" meeting of the "farmer support" group (The Quinn) and we all met at Tabletop Farm for a day of light work, great food and comforting conversations. The light work for the day consisted of hanging out in their movable high tunnel (like a greenhouse on skis) potting up rosemary before the tunnel was moved down the field to its winter resting place. We then helped free a couple of beds of rhubarb from the encroaching weeds. After that we got a brief tour of their farm and learn about their methods before we sat down to eat.

We finished the afternoon off by sitting down to a great meal prepared by us, using ingredients that we grew. This was a fun time as well because we all shared stories of what the crop went through this season before it ended up on our dinner plate. There is a lot of humor included when we share our stories, but more importantly we are able to learn from each other's experiences to help us all become better growers!

Recipes

Brussels Sprouts have to be by far my favorite vegetable to both eat and to grow!

Farmer Ben's Basic Brussel Sprouts

Ingredients:

1-2 stalks of Wabi Sabi Farm Brussel Sprouts (sprouts removed from stalk and halved)

6-8 strips thick cut local bacon (optional)

¼ stick of real unsalted butter

1-2 Shallots (or large storage type onion) sliced thinly

Salt (optional)

Directions:

In a cast iron skillet cook bacon until crisp and most of the fat is rendered. Remove bacon to a paper towel. (Skip this step if you don't want to use bacon). Turn heat down and melt butter (making sure it isn't smoking or turning brown in skillet). Add halved sprouts and cook until cut half begins to turn a bright yellow color. Add shallot or onion and continue cooking until they become translucent and sprouts begin to slightly brown on cut side and outer leaves begin to loosen from sprout. Salt to taste.

For other great recipes listed by vegetable, make sure to check out at the Turtle Farm recipe page at:

<http://www.turtle-farm.com/Recipes/index.htm>

storage tips

Brussels Sprouts: Remove from stalk and place them in a plastic bag in your fridge. For long term storage blanch sprouts for around 3-5 minutes and then place in cold water (to stop cooking process). Place in air tight container and freeze them.

Shallot/Garlic: Store on kitchen counter like you would onions.

Kale/Collards/Arugula: Keep in produce bag and place in veggie drawer of the refrigerator.

Turnips/Beets/Radish: Remove greens and store each (roots and greens) separately in plastic bags. Best place would be the crisper drawer of the fridge.

Sweet Potatoes: Store at room temperature in a shady location. Like a kitchen counter top or table. For long term storage keep in a dry, cool location (around 50-55 degrees)

calendar of events

There are also many great pictures on our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/WabiSabiFarmIowa?ref=hl> You don't have to be a member of Facebook to check it out!

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