

Earth Dance Farm



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Quote for the Week

And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.

Anais Nin

This week:

Cabbage

Cucumbers

Beets

Broccoli or Cauliflower

Green Peppers

Tomatoes

Dill

Garlic

Eggplant

Summer squash or Okra

Turnips

Notes:

Wash vegetables before eating them.

A time to work

I grew up on a 160 acre farm in west central Iowa. I was the 12th of 13 children in this large German catholic household. We grew corn, oats and hay in order to feed our milk cows, chickens and pigs. We used the manures in our fields, had a pasture along the creek, and rotated crops as required to maintain fertility and manage weeds. The milk check was our stable income with some extra coming from the sale of the pigs. Our huge garden and orchard did its part to fill our seemingly bottomless gutlets. There was always plenty of work to be done besides the regular morning and evening chores (chores is that which revolves around

the feeding and care of the livestock). I remember being quite young and following my dad, walking behind him in his shadow while he went about the farm. We kids chopped thistles in the pastures and herded the cows while they ate down the road banks. We would get a dime an hour which we saved to splurge at the Westphalia 4th of July celebration. We also would walk the corn fields to chop weeds, grind feed for the animals, haul manure, make and mend fence, and do all of the crop work.

Don't get me wrong, we also had time for baseball, catching gophers with a noosed twine, getting the chickens drunk, playing with

cow pies and the like.

I learned from early on that a livelihood on the farm came from much honest, hard work. This has been truly ingrained in the deepest way. I have to work harder to remember the playing around foolish doing nothing taking a nap part of the whole equation. I wonder if it is not much different for many of you. It is a good thing to have a strong work ethic, but this is not only what and who I am.

This past weekend we had my brother and his family down on Sat. and we went to Noah's musical and on Sun. we hosted Laurie's brother and family. I didn't "get much done" on my work list, but, my goodness Norman, what's the more important thing here.

Notes from the Farmer:

Many things need to come together in order to have a successful harvest. We can use our summer squash as an example for this season. The last two years we have had more than plenty of this crop and wondered what to do with it all. Last year it decorated the field as we left much of the crop lay as compost. This year we again started with fresh good seed from Johnnie's nursery and planted them in the greenhouse in early/mid May. They grew well and strong and in early June we transplanted them into soil that seemed ideal. It had been hay ground the prior year, manured and

then plowed in the fall, and tilled two times in the spring. The ground was nice and moist as we transplanted the squash plants into the newly tilled soil. So far, so good. Then we had three weeks with little rain. The field where the squash is planted is too far from our well to irrigate via hose and drip line, so we watered with a 125 gallon tank mounted on a pickup. It was at this time that we noticed a heavy infestation of cucumber beetles. We began to regularly pinch and kill many of them, but their numbers were already too

large. I chose to use an organic spray that I had on hand that affected the adults, but not the larvae. Rains finally came, the plants grew stronger and bigger and the threat was mostly gone. But 25% or so of the plants had succumbed. Another 25% had been so weakened that the weeds started to take over. So now I have more weeding to do and less of a crop to show for it.

Produce news: Cabbage is the last and some are a bit split. Bad year for turnips - they do not look great but should cut nicely into soup or salad. !Halfway done with the season!

Fall Gathering:
Saturday October 4th
2:00pm until.....

Recipes...

Roasted Beet Salad with Lemon and Olives

4 medium beets
1 tbsp lemon juice
Salt
Freshly ground black pepper
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
12 large Kalamata olives, pitted and chopped
2 tbsp minced fresh parsley leaves

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees

Trim all but the last inch or so of the stems from the beets. Wash the beets well and trim any dangling roots. Wrap the beets in aluminum foil. Place the beets in the oven

and roast until a metal skewer glides easily through them, 1 to 1 ¼ hours

Remove the beets from the oven, open up the foil, and cool slightly. Discard the foil. Use paper towels to hold the warm beets and rub them gently to slip off their skins. Slice the beets into ¼ inch thick rounds.

Arrange the warm beet slices on a platter. Whisk the lemon juice and salt and pepper to taste together in a small bowl. Whisk in the oil. Drizzle the dressing over the beets. Sprinkle the olives and parsley

over the beets and serve immediately or at room temperature.

Cucumber Salad with Yogurt and Dill

3 medium cucumbers peeled, halved lengthwise, seeded, and cut on the diagonal ¼ inch thick
1 tbsp kosher salt
2/3 c. plain yogurt
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1 med. Garlic clove, minced
1 tbsp minced fresh dill leaves
Freshly ground black pepper

Toss the cucumbers and salt in a large strainer or colander set over a bowl. Fill a gallon-size zipper-lock plastic bag with ice water and set the bag on top of the cucumber slices. Drain for 1 hour.

Thoroughly rinse the cucumber slices under cold, running water and pat dry with paper towels. Toss the cucumbers with the yogurt, oil, garlic, dill,

and pepper to taste. Drain for 1 hour. Serve immediately or refrigerate for up to several hours.

Sauteed Bell Peppers with Greek Flavors

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
4 med. Bell peppers, cored, seeded, and cut into ½ inch wide strips
2 medium garlic cloves, minced
2 tbsp lemon juice
8 large black olives, such as Kalamatas, pitted and chopped
1 tsp minced fresh oregano leaves
Freshly ground black pepper
2 ounces feta cheese, crumbled

Heat oil in a large skillet. Add the peppers and sauté over medium-high heat until the peppers begin to brown in spots, about 4 minutes. Add

the garlic, reduce the heat to low, and cover the pan. Cook, stirring once, until the peppers are tender but not mushy, about 10 minutes.

Uncover the pan and add the lemon juice, olives, and oregano. Cook just until the lemon juice evaporated, about 1 minute. Season with pepper to taste. Turn the peppers into a serving bowl. Serve hot or at room temperature, sprinkling with the cheese just before serving.