



HARVEST HILL CSA NEWSLETTER

WEEK 14: SEPTEMBER 15, 2016

SPOTLIGHT: ABBY'S RESEARCH IN CHINA

Abby is leaving the farm this week to go to grad school, and before departing she wanted to share about the research she did in China from March 2015 to January 2016 in Guangzhou, China as a Fulbright Scholar. Her research focused on urban middle class anxiety about food safety and environmental pollution, specifically focusing on new grassroots efforts to build an alternative "safe" food system. Largely led by middle-class professionals, these efforts take many shapes: groups of friends and co-workers will start small organic vegetable farms to provide safe food for themselves and their families, parents at a private kindergarten will contract directly with a farm to source the school's lunches, new social enterprises will form to act as a middleman between consumers and "trustworthy" producers, or groups of concerned consumers will start a weekly "farmers' market" in a mall. China's food safety problems range from polluted air, water, and soil to numerous scandals about purposefully adulterated or even fake food sold to the public; many people do not trust the government to effectively regulate the food system, and in the absence of any certainty that wrong-doers will be discovered and punished, many lose all trust in their fellow citizens. It's an inescapable problem for all people in China, and especially weighs on parents who feel powerless to protect the health of their children. These new efforts to find alternatives stem from anxiety and cynicism about the current system—many new farms and projects, founded with the best of intentions, must contend with profound mistrust from consumers who believe that any "organic" label is a lie, and who for historical reasons look down on farming and farmers as representing the lowest social rung in society. Even with these challenges, these projects and the people involved with them persevere, representing hope that grassroots social change can take root in China.



ABOVE: Weighing out veggie shares at a small organic farm; student volunteers wear "farmer hats" at an organic market in a mall



LEFT: Sometimes large companies in China will sponsor a CSA for their employees. Often they will do so by renting out a certain area of a farm, such as this farm outside Beijing, where each greenhouse had its own corporate label.

QUESTIONS? FEEDBACK?

If you will be on vacation and can't pick up your box, let us know and you will get extra produce in a different week.

Email us at: kelsey.wentling@gmail.com

THIS WEEK'S BOX

- ✧ Lettuce
- ✧ Carrots
- ✧ Cauliflower OR Broccoli OR Green beans
- ✧ Cucumbers
- ✧ Yellow squash OR zucchini
- ✧ Onions
- ✧ Stoke peppers (medium hot)
- ✧ Potatoes
- ✧ Red Peppers **Note: May have some soft spots to cut out, but flavor is very sweet.*

BILL'S Funky MINUTE

Monday afternoon marked a joyous occasion. The crew exchanged high-fives all around when I returned and surprised them with the news that I had mowed down the summer squash, cucumber and zucchini plants. No more itchy arms, carrying 5-gallon buckets and washing for hours in cold water. The oh-so-familiar squash and zucchini will no longer claim their place in half bushel boxes for the CSA, schools, NVRH and the St. Johnsbury correctional facility or food shelf facility. Gavin, head of inventory, won't have to make sure the cooler is rotated and probably won't miss moving the 1,000 boxes, which is around how many we've had since we started harvesting. There is no rest for the weary at this time of the year. To fill the void left by the squash, zucchini and cucumber, our freshly harvested 18-bushel bin crates of Napa cabbage will take over the corner of the cooler. Following Napa cabbage, our next large crop to harvest will be winter squash.

Transporting all that weight can be a challenge, so how do we move these crates around? Using two important tools on the farm: a set of forks on the tractor and a pallet jack for the barn. Both tools save immensely on time as well as wear and tear on everyone's bodies. After harvesting our fall storage crops they all find their way into the 18-bushel bins. Either they are loose in the bins, as with cabbage, or in grain bags. The grain bags are put into the crates and moved either into the seedling greenhouse to cure (onions and winter squash) or to the cooler and barn, (carrots, potatoes, cabbage). Other than eating tomatoes, bringing in the harvest is one of my favorite times of the year. It always amazes me to see the barn and cooler filled with veggies. It's just the beginning of harvest and by the end of October things will certainly look different, but I know some things we'll have by the end of October: exhaustion and much happiness!

Enjoy and be well,

Bill

SMASHED POTATOES:

- ✧ 1lb of potatoes
- ✧ 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ✧ 2 tbsp olive oil
- ✧ 2 tbsp parsley, minced
- ✧ 1½ tsp salt

INSTRUCTIONS:

Boil the potatoes in a pot of water is seasoned with a teaspoon of salt. When the potatoes are completely cooked (you can easily stick a skewer through it), let it cool a little bit on a flat service, preferably a large cutting board. Preheat the oven to 450F.

Combine the garlic, olive oil, parsley, and remaining salt so it kind of resembles a paste. With a clean wash cloth, cover the potatoes with it and smash each of the potatoes with the palm of your hand. Carefully transport the potatoes onto a baking sheet. Spread/drizzle the paste onto the potatoes. Bake the potatoes for 30 minutes or until they are crispy.

(<http://fritesandfries.com/post/49490540363/smashed-potatoes>)

STUFFED BELL PEPPERS

- ✧ Bell peppers
- 2 tbsp of olive oil
- ✧ 1 medium onion, finely diced
- ✧ 4 oz of ground beef
- ✧ 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- ✧ 1 medium zucchini, finely diced
- ✧ 2 Roma tomatoes, diced
- ✧ 1 cup of cooked rice
- ✧ 1 ½ cups of pepper jack cheese

INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Cut the tops off the peppers. Remove and discard the stems, then finely chop the tops; set aside. Scoop out the seeds and as much of the membrane as you can. Place the peppers cut-side up in a baking dish just large enough to hold them upright. Heat 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the beef, season with salt and pepper and cook, breaking up the lumps, until the meat is cooked through and just beginning to brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove to a paper towel-lined plate to get rid of the fat. Wipe out the skillet and add the remaining olive oil. Add the onions and chopped peppers and cook until beginning to soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the garlic and zucchini and cook for another minute. Add the tomatoes and season with salt and a pinch or 2 of red pepper flakes. Cook until everything is heated through, then stir in the beef and rice. Taste and adjust the seasoning. Stir in 1 cup of the cheese. Fill the peppers with the rice mixture and top each with a sprinkle of the remaining 1/2 cup cheese. Pour a small amount of water into the bottom of the baking dish and drizzle the peppers with a little olive oil. Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake until the peppers are soft and the cheese is melted and lightly browned, another 15 to 20 minutes.

(<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/ree-drummond/stuffed-bell-peppers.html>)