

Cobble Hill CSA

community supported agriculture 

Newsletter

www.cobblehillcsa.org

August 19, 2008

It seems odd to be talking about winter in the dog days of August, but it's time to start thinking about winter shares. Cobble Hill CSA will once again be partnering with Winter Sun Farms as our winter share provider. Last year, WSF quickly sold out of the 35 shares on offer to Cobble Hill CSA members; this coming winter, they'll have 50 shares available.

WSF partners with sustainable farms in the Hudson Valley to supply New Yorkers with monthly shares of frozen vegetables. More information about WSF and the farmers they partner with is available at their website, www.wintersunfarms.com.

Check out the website, then save up your questions. WSF president Jim Hyland will stop by Cobble Hill CSA on September 16 to talk to members interested in participating.

—Amy Blankstein

Notes From Green Thumb Farm

The middle of August is here and our summer crops are in full swing. The challenges of farming continue. The last three weeks we have had too much rain. Pop-up thundershowers have been everywhere.

Our tomatoes, summer and winter squashes, pepper have begun to meltdown as molds and fungus take over the fields--there will be no sweet red or gold peppers this year and very few melons. Summer squashes are done until the next planting arrives and winter squash plants are dying rapidly.

It seems like just a few weeks ago we were bringing out our irrigation pipe to water our crops. What a difference a few weeks can make. It's certainly a challenge when you try to make your livelihood and rely upon the weather. That's farming!

Organically Yours,

Farmer Bill



Volunteer Opportunity

Cobble Hill CSA is very thankful to Christ Church Cobble Hill for providing us with a distribution site. In order to show our appreciation to the church for our fledgling relationship, now in its second year, the Cobble Hill CSA core group is organizing an effort to paint the church's ballet room. If you haven't filled your volunteer shift yet, or even if you have and would like help out and get a chance to meet other CSA members, please join us on August 29 and 30.

Shifts are as follows: Friday, August 29 at 6pm; Saturday, August 30 at 9am and 1pm. Snacks and beverages will be provided. You'll be receiving additional information on the Cobble Hill CSA member Yahoo list. We hope you'll join us!

Meet the Core Group

In the interest of keeping our members connected to the CSA community, the newsletter will occasionally introduce you to our core group members.

Wondering what to do with a new vegetable or looking for new ways to tackle a few too many pounds of string beans? Ask Simone Mogul, site coordinator through September 2, a professionally trained chef who studied at the Cordon Bleu in Paris. In addition to being a CSA member, Simone is an avid gardener and raises her own small flock of chickens in her Prospect Park South backyard.

Simone and her family have been members of the Cobble Hill CSA since 2002, not long after they moved back to New York from Philadelphia, where they'd been CSA members for several years. As a trained chef, the draw of locally grown foods was a main draw, as was the desire to support local family farmers.

Simone's favorite vegetable is the string bean, which she typically cooks simply--a quick sauté in garlic and olive oil.

During the summer she chooses to avoid heating up the kitchen by grilling as often as possible. Her recent dish of choice? With the seasonal abundance of stone fruits, it's grilled peaches filled with Queso Fresco. Literally translated, "fresh cheese" a soft, moist, mild and crumbly cheese for sprinkling over enchiladas or black bean soup or crumbling onto a salad is available at Mexican grocers and some specialty gourmet stores.

Basil

Basil, native to India and Asia, is one of the most commonly used herbs around the world. A member of the mint family, it comes in many varieties including lemon basil and cinnamon basil. Basil is a hot weather crop that matures in the summer along with tomatoes, eggplant, and peppers.

The best storage strategy for basil is to cut the bottoms off the stems and place the bunch of basil in a glass of water on the counter top. Basil can keep for up to a week this way.

One method is to wash, rinse, and pat dry, then put it in a plastic zip-lock bag. Remember to remove the air from the bag before sealing. The other method is to break the leaves off the stem and pack them into an ice cube tray. Fill the tray with water or olive oil and freeze it. You can add a frozen basil cube to a soup, stir fry, chile or other cooked dish. Freezing will cause the leaves to blacken in color, but they will still be flavorful and edible.

To use, remove leaves from the stem and wash and dry well. Tear or cut leaves to add to dishes right before using to avoid discoloration. Basil tastes great raw or cooked, you can use it to flavor green salads, pasta salads, and other cold dishes. It goes well with other summer vegetables like tomatoes, eggplant, peppers and summer squash like zucchini.

Basil Butter

This butter is delicious on sandwiches, warm, crusty bread, pasta, or steamed vegetables.

3 cups fresh basil leaves, washed and finely chopped

1/2 cup butter, softened

2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

In a bowl, mix all of the ingredients together. Once combined, pack the mixture into small containers and freeze. It will keep for up to 6 months in the freezer.

Ramatuelle Pasta Sauce

This recipe serves 4.

1 pound pasta

2 cloves garlic

1/3 cup onion, chopped

1 cup fresh basil, packed

5-6 large, ripe tomatoes, cut into quarters

1/2 cup olive oil

Salt to taste

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Parmesan cheese

Boil salted water in a large pot and add pasta (cook according to instructions on the box). Meanwhile, put the garlic, onions, basil, and tomatoes in a blender or fast food processor and mix them. Add the oil, salt, and pepper and blend until smooth. Set the sauce aside until pasta is cooked (sauce is served at room temperature). Drain the pasta and toss it with some of the sauce in large bowl. Top the pasta with the rest of the sauce and some Parmesan cheese and serve.

Wood Creek Herb Farm Pesto

1/3 cup pine nuts or walnuts

2 cups loosely packed fresh basil leaves, washed and patted dry

1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

3 or 4 large garlic cloves

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon freshly milled black pepper

3/4 cup olive oil

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Place the pine nuts on cook sheet and toast for 8 to 10 minutes, until lightly browned. In a food processor or blender, combine the toasted nuts with the basil, cheese, garlic, salt, and pepper. Process until the ingredients are well chopped.

Gradually drizzle the oil into the mixture with the motor running until mixture reaches the desired consistency. Refrigerate unused portion and use within 3 days. If you want to freeze the pesto, omit the cheese from the mixture.

Cobble Hill CSA Core Group

General Coordinator

Chris Caveglia

cjcaveglia@yahoo.com

Treasurer & Membership

Coordinator

Jeffrey Axelrod

jeff.cobblehillcsa@gmail.com

Volunteer Coordinator

Carey Johnson

carey@donatoart.com

Publicity Coordinator

Angela Long

Along09@yahoo.com

Website Administrator

Martha Rowen

Mr29@nyu.edu

Newsletter Editor

Amy Blankstein

ablankstein@verizon.net

General Administrator

Justin Knapp

Unloader

Meera Bhat-Novak

Site Coordinator: 6/3-7/15

Jackie Glasthal

Site Coordinator: 7/22-9/2

Simone Mogul

Site Coordinator: 9/9-10/21

Linda Blyer

Site Coordinator: 10/28-12/9

Tom Kingsley