

Schreiber & Sons CSA

It's a Culinary Adventure

Schreiberandsons.com

August 31, 2009

Week XVIII

In this week's box, from your farmer you can expect:

- Tomatoes
- Bell pepper
- Jalapeno
- Tomatillo
- Cilantro
- Green Onion
- Basil
- Watermelon
- Pak Choy
- Radishes
- Cucumbers
- Squash medley

Look at the first six ingredients and what do they just scream out at you?!?!?!?!?! SALSA

At the end of this email are two salsa recipes from Tanya, one for tomatillos and one without.

Meat. We have a new supply of meat. As usual, we have lots and lots of hamburger, as well as some steaks and roasts. Feel free to order meat. We have lots of flour and the eggs are still being rationed.

Surplus produce. We have extra cantaloupes (\$2), watermelons (\$4), and exotic smaller odd cantaloupe style melons (\$1 or \$2). We have extra squash (\$1/lb), cucumbers (\$1/lb), leaf lettuce (\$4/lb), carrots (\$2/bunch), Italian eggplant(\$2), Japanese eggplant (2 for \$1)and 16 different kind of heirloom or exotic eggplants (between 50 cents and \$2 depending on variety and size) and lots of tomatoes. (\$1 per pound, \$2 and \$3 a pound for the intermediate and smaller sized tomatoes, respectively.)

Hops and Wine Grapes. I think we need to be clear on two things. When I offer up hops and wine grapes, this offer is for CSA members. This offer is not transferable to non CSA members. So do not pass this offer on to non CSA members. If people want the benefit from the fruits of our labor, they should join the CSA and become a member of our inner circle. Also, if you are going to come out to pick hops and wine grapes, call first-do not show up unannounced.

What's going on at the farm. Interestingly, we are planting our fall crops, rather we are planting and transplanting. Fall carrots, cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage, radishes, lettuces, spinach and so on. I walked through the gourds, pumpkins and squash. I hope you are looking forward to all of them-they are swelling up in size. Yes, we could have had some by if we had planted earlier, but we have lots of produce now. I expect you will get your first squashes in early October, followed by pumpkins in mid October and gourds in late October.

Today I walked the farm with my farm manager and we talked about what we are going to plant next year and where. We have to have a crop rotation plan for four years out in order to properly rotate our crops. We know generally what the plans are, but how do you figure four years out for the size of the CSA. Anyone care to venture a guess on the size of the CSA for next year, the year after, the year after that, four years out. If we are at 454 members, I wonder if we would grow 10% next year, 20%, 30%. I figure our growth years are behind us-but may be we are wrong. Will the interest in organic produce increase-for the past two years, it has been at 33%, but will it increase next year? 10% growth would put us at 500, 20% at 550, 30% would be 600. We have to make plans for what the demand will be for next year, right now. If anyone can crystal ball the number of members next year it would be most helpful. If you can do that, tell me the ratio of small, medium and large memberships as well as the ratio of organics to conventional memberships.

We are busy picking cantaloupes and eggplant, which are our two big crops. The melons have been an unmitigated disaster with low sells and lower prices. We had dump three semi loads of picked and packed melons-talk about a financial disaster. And that is after we donated a lot to Second Harvest. They are coming to pick up some additional produce tomorrow, by then we will probably have donated two semi loads of melons and eggplant. Donating to the food bank is some salve on the financial wounds incurred.

I would love to grow the CSA/Farmers Market/Local sales from the farm to take up 100% of what we grow. Selling into the wholesale market is very, very tough for a small and relatively new grower. That is one reason I am trying to grow the CSA, it would be a dream come true to be able to sell everything local.

Winter CSA. Speaking of selling everything local, we are making some solid plans for the Winter CSA. We have reservations for 33 of the 90 memberships, with 1 non CSA member on a waiting list. I am not trying to talk anyone into buying a membership, but I am fairly certain that we will be selling out of the limited number of openings we have. We are reserving this to the equivalent of 20% of current CSA membership. If we gain confidence that we can do this, it is profitable and our members are happy with it, we will increase the size next year.

We are going to buy some produce, hopefully no more than 20%, grow some in the field, grow some in a cold greenhouse (not heated) and a cool greenhouse (minimally heated). The field grown produce would be divided between taken directly from the field in the fall or in the spring at the end of the season and taken from the field and held in storage. We think by being inventive, imaginative and studying how they did things in the old days (storing carrots, etc), we can provide a pretty good set of produce. We believe we can deliver an average of 11 items every two weeks, at least doubling the portion size as in the weekly deliveries.

It is pretty exciting to think about.

Fall Harvest Party. The days are growing shorter, the pumpkins are getting big, the weeds are going to seeds, today was the first day of school; all signs are pointing to Fall. This means it is time for the Fall CSA Harvest Party. Please review the attached invitation. Bear in mind a few things.... we are going to have add some structure to the party due to the increase in its size. We need you to RSVP for the party and for the tours. Also, we will be needing some volunteers. Think of the CSA as yours and we need your help to put it on. Stay tuned for more details, for now, just save the date.

Your Farmer

Alan Schreiber

Tomatillo Salsa

2 lb. tomatillos, husked and rinsed
2 garlic heads, cloves separated but unpeeled
1-2 Serrano chilies
salt to taste
2T canola oil
1 cup fresh cilantro leaves
juice of 2 limes

In grilling wok, toss together tomatillos, garlic, chiles, salt and oil. Set wok on grill; cook, stirring often until tomatillos are soft and starting to burst, and garlic and chilies are charred, 15-20 minutes. Transfer to bowl and let cool slightly. Remove stems from chilies; for a less spicy salsa, remove seeds. Peel garlic cloves.

Transfer tomatillos, garlic and chilies to blender; add cilantro and lime juice. Pulse until salsa is somewhat smooth, leaving some texture. Season with salt. Makes about 2 cups.

Fresh Tomato Salsa

from: Betty Crocker

My note: I would never look to Betty for a salsa recipe, but this one is consistently the favorite (and I've tried lots). You can start with this and add or subtract according to you taste. FRESH lime juice (and YELLOW tomatoes are the key secrets to success, in my opinion!)

3 medium tomatoes

1/2-cup sliced green onions

1/2-cup chopped green bell pepper

3 Tablespoons lime juice (fresh)

2 Tablespoons cilantro (chopped)

1 Tablespoon jalapeno (finely chopped)

1 generous teaspoon minced garlic

1/2-teaspoon salt

First made at the Family Reunion 2007, made a double recipe and was generous with the portions. Used red and yellow tomatoes and added Serrano peppers to one batch and cumin to another.