

Updates from

# PLEASANT VALLEY FARM



AUGUST, 2012

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 6

## *Hello Friends!*

Happy August to all our farm friends. Did you know that it is PA Produce month? With so much fresh produce in season, it's no wonder why! We've had greenhouse tomatoes available for some time, but our outdoor heirlooms are now ripening, and we've also got sweet corn ready for this coming weekend. Check out page 2 for details on all the delicious varieties we are growing! We're currently picking beets, peppers (green bell, banana & jalapeño), eggplant, cucumbers, pattypan squash, green onions, new potatoes and a variety of fresh herbs, too! And as the month moves along, we're excited about our first melons of the season, along with a fun selection of specialty peppers...everything from sweet Italian frying peppers to hot, hot habaneros! We've also begun digging our garlic. We'll dry it for a few weeks, but look for it at the stand by the end of the month as well.

We've got a great selection of meats right now. Frozen chicken is available now, with fresh birds returning mid-month. We've also got a fresh stock of ground beef, and since we had our cow cut up a little differently than usual, we now have NY Strip steaks as well as boneless filets. We start off the month with fresh bacon, ham, and our thick-cut ham steaks (they are great on the grill!), plus we have plenty of naturally raised pork in the freezer— a full selection of ribs, chops, roasts, as well as ground pork and all 4 varieties of our homemade sausage. We don't have an official date for the return of grass-fed lamb yet, but expect that to be available late this month or in early September.

See you at the stand!

*-Emily*

## *New & Returning Favorites*

With the bounty of produce coming out of the garden right now, Emily is spending lots of time in the canning kitchen. That means lots of your favorite products are appearing again at the stand, and since she loves trying out new recipes, there are always a few new surprises there as well.

It's been a great year for cucumbers, so we've got plenty of pickles! **Emily's Own Dill Pickles** have been a best seller since they were first introduced. New this year, we are also offering **Bread & Butter Pickles**. Either of these slices are a great addition to burgers & other summer sandwiches. Both are \$4/pint or \$7/quart.

**Dilly Beans** are also back. What is a dilly bean? It's a green bean preserved in a dill pickle brine! They are great for snacking and make wonderful additions to summer relish trays! \$4/pint.

A new sweet treat is our **Simply Strawberry** spread. Just 2 ingredients are used: strawberries & sugar, which are slow cooked to spreadable consistency. Use this chunky fruit spread on your morning toast or over desserts like cheesecake or ice cream! \$3.50/8 oz jar. Get yours soon, as supplies are limited, and we don't think they will last long!

Tomatoes are in, and so is **Bruschetta in a Jar!** This tangy mix of chopped tomatoes, wine, vinegar and spices is meant to top garlic or other crusty bread. It's a great appetizer and a tasty way to impress your next dinner guests! For an extra dimension of flavor, try melting our Havarti or Italian Cheddar cheese on top. \$3.50/ 8 oz, \$5/pint.

We'll also be offering **Fiesta Salsa** again this year. This is a medium— hot salsa, as the addition of cool cucumbers tones down the hot peppers. Of course, there are home-grown chunks of tomato, as well as onion to make a great addition to your next Mexican— themed meal! \$5/pint.

## AUGUST HAPPENINGS:

- ◆ Open for the season!  
Visit us every Saturday  
from 10 AM-2 PM
- ◆ SWEET CORN is now  
in season! YAY!
- ◆ Beef, pork and chicken  
now available
- ◆ New veggies coming into  
season weekly



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## Corn...So Sweet!

It's that time of year again...sweet corn season! For many folks, it is the one vegetable to buy direct from the farm, because the flavor of fresh corn just doesn't compare to the shrink wrapped stuff at the grocery store.

Many people want to know what variety of corn we plant, or are specifically looking for "Silver Queen" or "Butter & Sugar" corn. But, unlike 20 years ago, there are many,



many different varieties of sweet corn. The company we purchase seeds from offers 70+ different varieties each year. Corn also has different genetic types for

sweeter taste & more tender kernels. Silver Queen, popular years ago, is what is called a standard sugary type. It's actually not all that sweet compared to today's varieties, where your farmer must choose from sugary enhanced, synergistic, supersweet and augmented supersweet types. When it comes to picking which corn to plant each year, the choices seem nearly endless!

### *Here are the varieties we'll be offering this season:*

**Sweet Chorus:** This is a bicolor corn, a type popularly called "butter & sugar". We like it because it is a very early corn that handles cold soil, making it the first variety to ripen in our fields each year.

**Spring Snow:** This is the first year we've tried this variety and are anxious to sample it for ourselves! As the name implies, it is an all-white corn, and also one suited to cold-soil planting for an earlier crop.

**Applause:** This is the only all-yellow corn we plant. It's ready in the middle of corn season, has nice 8" long ears. It's an improved, synergistic version of another popular variety, Bodacious. The synergistic types improve on the sweetness while maintaining the tenderness for which the older varieties were known.

**Cameo:** Another bicolor variety, this will be our last corn to ripen. It's an improved, synergistic version of the popular "Delectable" variety. We love this variety for its large (8-9") ears and great flavor

WE'RE EXCITED  
 ABOUT THE  
 VARIETIES OF  
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 YEAR.

If you visited us in July, you know we have had tomatoes in for weeks now. Thanks to the greenhouse, we have lots of Early Girl tomatoes, and are currently offering them singly (\$0.50), by the quart (\$3), 1/2 peck (\$7.50) and 1/2 bushel (\$15). We've also been offering cherry tomatoes by the pint. (\$3)

Now, the tomatoes out in the field are beginning to ripen as well, and we're excited about the varieties we are growing. With hundreds of varieties available in the seed catalogs, it's so hard to limit the selec-

## Tomato Time!

tion to what actually fits in the garden! Here are this year's varieties:

**Red Zebra**— As the name says, it's stripey! These are nice slicing tomatoes, and are red with distinctive yellow stripes!

**Green Envy**— a cherry tomato that's green when ripe! We love to think of all the colorful contrasts we can make using this one in recipes...

**Pink Brandywine**—this one is pretty much the gold standard of heirloom tomato taste. Just don't be fooled by its appearance, as this variety is known for being lumpy or lopsided.

**Riesentraube**— the name is German for "tiny bunches of grapes" because that is how loaded with fruit these plants can be! It's an heirloom created by the Pennsylvania Dutch communities.

**Martino's Roma**— What is canning season without Romas? These heirlooms are great tasting and make nice, thick sauces.

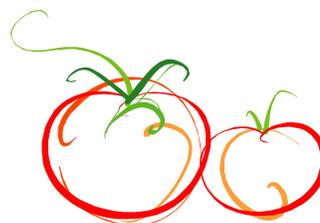


## MORE SUMMER COOKING!

So many tasty things are now in season! Here are a few ideas to take advantage of the garden goodness August brings.  
Items in *italics* are available here at the farm!

### Sausage & Basil Stuffed Tomatoes

6 medium tomatoes (*preferably with stem intact*)  
4 Tbsp olive oil  
Pinch cayenne pepper  
3/4 lb mild Italian Sausage (*buy bulk or remove casing from rope style*)  
1 small green bell pepper, *diced*  
1 bunch green onions, *diced*  
1 small clove garlic, *minced*  
1/3 cup Parmesan cheese  
1/2 cup walnut pieces  
2 cups bread cubes  
1 bunch fresh basil



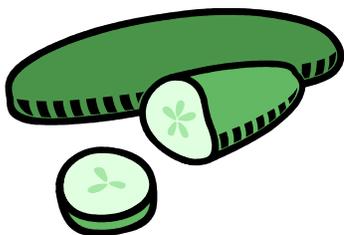
Preheat oven to 400. Using a serrated knife, slice off the top 1/4 of each tomato. Scoop out the pulp and place in food processor or blender. Add 2 Tbsp olive oil & cayenne and process until smooth; pour into a 9 x 13 baking dish.

Heat remaining olive oil in a large skillet on medium-high heat. Add sausage, pepper, onion & garlic. Cook until sausage browns. Transfer mixture to food processor and add bread crumbs and chop. Pack this mixture in tomatoes so stuffing is domed on top. Place tomatoes in baking dish with sauce.

Place basil, walnuts and cheese in food processor and chop. Sprinkle onto tomatoes. Put tops (cut side down) between the stuffed tomatoes. Bake until stuffing is golden, ~20 minutes. Cover each tomato with a top and serve with sauce.

### Shepherd's Salad

Combine 2 chopped *tomatoes*, 1 chopped *cucumber*, 1 chopped *Italian frying pepper*, 1/4 cup finely chopped red *onion* and 1 bunch chopped fresh *parsley* in a bowl. Toss with 3 Tbsp olive oil, 1 1/2 Tbsp lemon juice, 3/4 tsp kosher salt and pepper to taste. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.



### Thyme Lemonade

Bring 1 bunch *thyme* and 1 1/2 cups each sugar & water to a simmer in a saucepan over medium heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves. Let cool, then strain syrup into an ice-filled pitcher. Stir in 2 cups each fresh lemon juice and cold water. Serve over ice with thyme sprigs & lemon slices.