



The Pod

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

World PEAS is a program of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project

Thursday September 3, 2015

Meet Your Farmers: Rob Fortune and Steve Fowler

In May of 2012, Steve Fowler and Rob Fortune came to Lowell for New Entry's Explore Farming workshop. They were strangers at the time, both interested in starting their own vegetable farm business. A year later, after graduating from the Farm Business Planning Course, they



launched Beyond Seasons Farm as a joint venture and went on to have one of the most successful first seasons of any New Entry graduate.

Rob and Steve both live on the North Shore (Gloucester and Marblehead, respectively), so although they needed land to start their farming venture, New Entry's incubator training farm sites in Dracut, Mass., were a bit too far away. Instead, Steve and Rob were the first farmers to put down roots at Arrowhead Farm, New Entry's newest incubator farm site in Newburyport, Mass.

Collaborating with New Entry's Technical Assistance Coordinator, Eero Ruuttila, they got right to work, building a new produce wash station (including a washing machine converted into a giant salad spinner), setting up an innovative sprinkler irrigation system, and constructing a walk-in cooler for post-harvest storage. In addition to their half-acre of vegetable crops, Rob and Steve partnered with Arrowhead Farm's owner, Dick Chase, to plant another half acre into a low-maintenance cover crop of oats and peas, improving the soil and producing a high-value specialty product – pea tendrils – in the process.

On the other half acre, Beyond Seasons Farm did something seemingly small but a bit unusual for a small diversified vegetable farm in these parts: They didn't grow tomatoes. In fact, they spurned the nightshade family altogether – no peppers or eggplants either. Instead, they asked former World PEAS CSA Coordinator Kate Petcosky what she was having trouble sourcing, and built that demand into their crop plans. They focused largely on greens, selling lots of baby greens and braising greens to the CSA. In addition to greens and pea tendrils, they did branch out into other crops like beets and zucchini, and still managed to deliver several hundred pounds of sweet potatoes for World PEAS.

Steve and Rob are back at Arrowhead Farm this year, now with a full acre at their disposal. With more land and two strong seasons under their belt, we are very excited about the wonderful quality and quantity of produce they have delivered this year!

Produce this week:

Collard Greens • Kobacha Squash
Slicing Cucumbers • Eggplant
Green Peppers • Hot Peppers
Cherry Tomatoes • Heirloom
Tomatoes • Pears

Crop Information:

Kobacha Squash



Kabocha squash is very sweet and has a fluffy, chestnut-texture that's similar to a sweet potato crossed with a pumpkin. It is used widely in Asia, especially Japan and Korea, where it is fried into tempura, stewed, or even used in desserts. Food anthropologists have determined that the squashes originated in Mesoamerica and were then brought to Asia by the Portuguese. Full of beta carotene, iron, vitamins, and other good stuff, kabocha is also extremely good for you. It's smaller than most winter squashes, so it's perfect for single servings or small households.

All species of squashes and pumpkins are native to the Western Hemisphere. This particular squash requires a fair amount of hot weather for best growth and thus has never become very well known in northern Europe, the British Isles, or in similar areas with short or cool summers.

Handling: If cooking with the skin on, wash well in warm water. If using only the inner flesh, slice in half with a sharp knife and use a spoon to scoop out and separate the orange flesh and seeds.

Storing: Winter squash will last 3-6 months stored at room temperature in a dry and cool (50-55 degrees) but not cold location.

Baked Kobacha Squash & Apples

Adapted from bettycrocker.com

Ingredients:

*1 small buttercup squash (about 1 pound)
½ cup chopped tart cooking apple
2 teaspoons packed brown sugar
2 teaspoons butter or margarine, softened
½ teaspoon lemon juice
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg*

Preparation:

Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Cut squash in half, remove the seeds and fibers with a spoon. Place squash halves, cut side up, in an ungreased baking dish [about 11x7x 1 ½ inches]. Mix chopped apples, brown sugar, butter or margarine, lemon juice and nutmeg in a separate bowl. Spoon into squash halved.

Cover tray and bake 30-40 minutes or until squash is tender when pierced with a fork.



Stuffed Collard Greens

Adapted from marthastewart.com

Ingredients:

*2-3 cups whole peeled tomatoes with their juices
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 small onion, finely chopped
Pinch of red-pepper flakes
Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
1 cup spelt or another whole grain like whole oats
1 medium bunch collard greens
1 1/2 cups cooked white beans,
2 tablespoons finely grated Parmesan
2 teaspoons chopped fresh sage leaves*

Directions:

1. Pulse tomatoes with juices in a food processor until chopped. Heat 2 tablespoons oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and pepper flakes; cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is tender, about 6 minutes. Add tomatoes; bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer; cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened, about 20 minutes. Season with 3/4 teaspoon salt. Let cool.
2. Stir spelt into a saucepan of salted boiling water. Reduce to a steady simmer; cook, uncovered, until tender, about 40 minutes. Drain and let cool.

3. Meanwhile, add collard greens in batches to a pot of salted boiling water and cook until bright green and tender, about 3 minutes. Remove with tongs and let cool. Trim off stems. Reserve 12 large leaves; chop any remaining leaves.
4. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Coarsely mash beans in a bowl. Add cooked spelt, remaining 2 tablespoons oil, cheese, sage, and any chopped collards. Stir to combine. Season with 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper to taste.
5. Working with one collard leaf at a time, arrange 1/4 cup filling in center. Fold stem end over filling. Fold in sides. Roll collard over to form a bundle, overlapping ends to seal. Transfer, seam-side down, to a 9-by-13-inch baking dish.
6. Spread sauce evenly over stuffed collards. Cover with parchment, then foil; bake until sauce is bubbling and collards are tender, about 30 minutes. Serve immediately.

Baked Pears with Brown Sugar & Vanilla Ice Cream

Adapted from Giada De Laurentis for foodnetwork.com

Ingredients:

*1/3 cup apple juice
1/3 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
3 tablespoons butter
3 pears, peeled, halved and cored
Vanilla ice cream, for serving*

Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Arrange the pears cut side up in an 8-inch square glass baking dish. Whisk the apple juice and sugar in a small heavy saucepan over medium-high heat until the sugar dissolves. Whisk in the butter. Pour the sauce over the pears. Bake until the pears are crisp-tender and beginning to brown, basting occasionally with the juices, about 35 minutes.

Spoon the pears onto plates. Top with ice cream. Drizzle with any juices and serve. The pears can also be served frozen. To do so, cool the pears, then place them in the freezer until frozen solid, about 8 hours