

The Farm Weekly

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UNUSUAL HEAT AFFECTS GARDEN

At this time of year high heat over the last two the high temperatures are or three weeks supposed to be in the low supposed to be in the low 80s. These lower temperatures allow us to grow crops that are usually associated with spring weather such as spinach. Tim will wait for a window of opportunity where the temperatures moderate in August to sow the spinach seed. A stretch of 3 or 4 days of low 80s weather earlier in the month is cool enough to allow germination to occur. He also irrigates daily to keep the soil loose and cool so that roots can emerge and grow deep and the leaves can easily poke through the soil instead of being stopped by a hard crust.

The lettuce is taking exception as well and is sowing the spinach seed. A stretch of 3 or 4 days of low 80s weather earlier in the month forcing Tim to pick the heads earlier and smaller than usual.

Everyone thinks I am crazy, but I have been painting in the barn during this heat. It has been tedious to say the least for I am painting T111 and paneling that resembles wood paneling for interior walls, but is much rougher. What I thought would take 3 or 4 days has blossomed into 2 weeks, but most of it is done for now and I was working in the shade with a fan blowing. Well, actually, I had the fan until yesterday

when Tim took mine down to the other barn to blow on tomato seed he had harvested to save for next year's planting. So now I know where I fit in the scheme of things here at the farm, lower than tomato seed.

PESTO!

1/3 cup basil leaves, chopped

6 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons Parmesan Cheese (preferably fresh)

3 tablespoons toasted pine nuts or walnuts, chopped

1 clove of garlic (or more if you love it!)

salt to taste

Put all of the above ingredients in a blender or food processor, and blend until smooth. This can then be used to toss with spaghetti or to garnish vegetable dishes. It can be kept in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks in an air tight container. Just place it in the container and cover with a thin layer of olive oil.

There was a wonderful aroma wafting from the packing building this morning as this week's harvest concluded. Last to arrive in the back of the pickup truck was the basil. In my opinion this is one of the most versatile herbs one can grow around here. It pairs perfectly with tomatoes in either cooked dishes or minced onto a salad.

We enjoy tomatoes cut into bite sized chunks with a bit of thinly sliced or diced onion and basil marinated in some Balsamic vinegar with a teaspoon of sugar to take the edge off the tartness.

If you don't want to use the basil immediately, it can be kept like cut flowers

in a vase on the countertop. Doing this brings a wonderful scent to the kitchen.

I have included a recipe this week for pesto, a paste to be spread on toast made from crusty bread or tossed with some pasta. Pesto is easy to make and we have provided the garlic this week to help round out the ingredients.

I have not done this, but you can save the basil by hanging the entire plant in a cool dry place. If you have dust issues like we do, you might want to place it in a brown paper bag, and then hang it. When it is dry, you can slip the leaves off the stems and store in an airtight container to use in all of your soups, sauces, and scrambled eggs.

Have a great Labor Day weekend!

This Week's Box

Onions

Lettuce

Summer Squash

Tomatoes

Peppers

Melon

Cucumbers

Potatoes

Basil

Garlic

Next Week

Lettuce

Onions

Summer Squash

Cucumbers

Tomatoes

Green Peppers

Beets ?

Potatoes

Dill ?