

The Farm Weekly

VOLUME 12, ISSUE 4

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25 JUNE, 2010

TOUGH WEEK IN THE ALPACA PASTURE

It was a difficult week in the alpaca pastures. Last week I wrote that we had one girl I was sure would birth on Friday. I was wrong. I was sure she was in labor on Friday for Dreamy even allowed me to examine her and find that her cervix was dilated to about 2 centimeters! But everything appeared to come to a halt in mid afternoon.

On Saturday morning, I arrived to find the dam with a prolapsed uterus and no cria to be found. Putting a uterus back in to an alpaca is a two person process, and our wonderful veterinarian, Scott Hosket, was summoned to do the honors. Her rear end looked like a football with her lacings keeping things back in their place.

Oh, the cria was a beautiful male found all by himself, coyote bait at the bottom of the pasture. His Momma was a Holstein in a previous life with loads of milk and he is doing quite

well, running around with wonderful exuberance that makes your heart smile.

The next challenge came on Tuesday with a dam who is the classic secretive laborer. Checked at 9:00 AM, all was well and no signs of labor whatsoever. At 2:00 PM she was nowhere to be found. Down the hill and around the corner, there she stood alone with twins, a very unusual occurrence. Alas, both were dead and it looked as though she may have had placenta previa, where the placenta separates from the uterus early, interfering with the oxygen supply to the babies, but who knows.

To relieve the sadness, I thought I would climb on the tractor and do some mowing. About 1/3 of the way through the bottom pasture, the tractor stopped abruptly. A cable from the battery had broken, but even when replaced this afternoon, Tim couldn't get it started, so now it sits in the pasture until he can get

to it this weekend.

The broccoli is going so well, we have probably provided more than you can use. A quick blanching in boiling water to make it bright green and then throwing it into a plastic bag and into the freezer will give you something to enjoy later.

The leafy offering with red stems is chard. Chard is an excellent source of vitamin K, vitamin A, vitamin C, magnesium, manganese, potassium, iron, vitamin E and dietary fiber. It is a very good source of copper, calcium, vitamin B2, vitamin B6 and protein. In addition, chard is a good source of phosphorus, vitamin B1, zinc, folate, biotin, niacin and pan-

tothenic acid. In other words, this stuff is really good for you!

Chard is related to spinach and beets and is not usually eaten without cooking first for it is bitter when eaten raw. The stalk and leaf are both edible, but you may want to strip the stringy fibers from the stalk as you do with celery. You can add chard to dishes like you would spinach, or simply braise the chard with a little olive oil and onions and garlic with a tablespoon or two of water to get it cooked. You basically treat chard like collards or kale.

This will be the last week for fennel, and the kohlrabi won't be back until fall, so enjoy them while you can! Enjoy your weekend

Fennel & Kohlrabi Salad offered by CSA member Susan F.

1 medium Kohlrabi
1 medium bulb fennel
1 handful rocket (arugula) optional

Lemon-Caper Dressing

1 large handful small capers
Juice of 1 large lemon plus more for crisping the fennel
Twice the amount of extra virgin olive oil as you have lemon juice
Black Pepper and Sea Salt
1 heaped teaspoon of wholegrain mustard

To prepare the salad, slice the fennel as thinly as you can and add to a bowl of cold water with extra lemon juice. Peel the kohlrabi and then slice strips off with a vegetable peeler and add to the bowl of fennel.

To make the dressing: Crush the garlic with a large pinch of sea salt and grind together with a mortar and pestle. Add some pepper and the mustard and stir together.

Add the lemon juice, the capers, and olive oil and whisk to emulsify. Drain the water from the salad and place in a bowl with the rocket. Add half the dressing and stir to coat. Serve with some of the leftover dressing drizzled on top.

This Week's Box

Lettuce
Red Pearl Onions
Chard
Kohlrabi
Broccoli
Fennel
Garlic
Summer Squash

Next Week

Cabbage
Red Pearl Onions
Broccoli
Lettuce
Summer Squash
Beets