

June 26, 2007

Welcome new members! Please go to our web site for past newsletter and recipes. We recycle our boxes and clam shells.

We went to the Stone Fruit Jubilee last Saturday. We had a great time trying the different varieties of peaches, plums, and nectarines. They were all great and we did not realize how many types there were. John kept himself busy, networking with other farmer, I attended a short course on fruit tree pruning and thinning, the interns attended several different short courses and Anna enjoyed her fruit bar. A good day even if it was 105 degrees!

This week's box:

We have carrots, potatoes, blue berries, onions white & yellow, apricots, beets, cucumber, celery, cabbage, squash, basil, lavender, and a herb bunch made up of thyme, sage & mint. We got the blue berries from Larry Hirahara Family Farms of Madera, they are certified organic and a nice family. They are the same farm we got our blue berries starts from. Our blue berries are growing nice, but just enough to feed everyone at the ranch this year. We expect a good crop for you next year.

Storing basil; when you first receive your box take the basil out of the box and let it soak in water for a few minutes, take out of the water and place on a paper towel until the leafs are dry. You can then place in a glass of water and cover with a plastic bag, to keep for a week in the refrigerator. Drying the basil is something that you can do if you need it for up to a year. You can place it in bundles to let dry or try the oven method, although even at 85 to 90 degrees the basil loses essential oils and flavoring. Once the basil is dried thoroughly, you can store it in airtight containers, placed away from the heat and light. After a year the basil will lose almost all its complexity and flavor, so make sure this is something you do yearly.

Emily is the second of the interns to arrive. She has written a short welcome note;

Hi, everyone, I hope you are enjoying your boxes of fresh vegetables each week as much as I am having fun here on the farm getting them ready. I've been here only just over a week, and we have so much going on here, and I am learning so much about the whole farming process. I also am enjoying eating all these delicious fresh vegetables, especially the artichokes. Artichokes are hands down my favorite vegetable, and they don't really grow where I am from on the east coast, so as you can imagine I am very happy. I know you are probably getting sick of artichokes by now judging by the huge bags of them you have been getting in each box, but I found that if you just rip out the hearts and steam them they are good in pretty much anything, for breakfast, lunch and dinner. But don't worry, the artichokes are almost gone and we started planting some new stuff for you, like some eggplant, melons, and winter squash. Those probably won't be ready for awhile, but it's something to look forward to.

I hope you have a great and vegetable-full week!

Until next time,

it's Emily

and

Farmer John & Shelby