

McDougal's Farm LLC

What's Growing On!

December 4th, 2018

Farm News

2019 CSA registration is now open

We are enjoying the slower pace Winter brings. Time to go through the little "squirrel piles" around the house that grew in numbers as the 2018 growing season progressed. Unfiled paperwork, stacks of unread magazine, we even have a "fix me in the Winter" pile. Things that use to be a priority, no longer holds its position until the growing season ends....then, look out! Cleaning is no longer humdrum. It is an *event* we look forward to.

The **seed catalogues are flooding in** already. Soon we will have another "squirrel pile" to go through. *That* pile is reserved for last...our reward. We love diving into that one and seeing what's new. Hard to believe it's time to order seeds already.

Outside of an occasional bag of oranges, we haven't had to go through the produce section at the grocery store yet. Our own stores are still fat. Even **dug out greens the other day from under 4 inches of snow and a thin row cover**. It was beautiful dark green, resilient and an *inspiration...* humans could never survive these Wisconsin winter temperatures laying under 4 inches of snow with nothing on but a piece of gauze. What's their magic? Some plants, particularly greens, can do something we can't. When necessary they can push the water out of their cells. Then when the plant freezes their cells don't burst destroying the cell walls. When temperatures warm up, they are able to pull water back into their unharmed cells, giving them structure again. Wouldn't it be cool to be able to do that? Humans are actually quite frail and delicate when it comes to temperature change. Ironically we are the ones being sloppy and careless with our environment and actually causing temperatures to fluctuate. **Being good stewards to our planet seems like nothing more than good common sense...**even the selfish should understand this.

Your everyday little choices *do* make a difference. Right now there are 7.7 billion of us. **Seven billion little changes in the right direction would equal one hell of a big change!** It doesn't have to be complicated. It can be as easy as choosing to eat local, recycle, plant a tree, join a CSA. When you join our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, your food is less traveled, less packaged, less processed, less handled with no chemicals and *fresh!* *Fresh* means higher nutrition. It's a win, win for everybody *and* the planet.

Growing pure veggies in an Earth friendly manner, for as many families as we can handle, is our *choice*. It's hard, enjoyable work with a positive vision. This is what *we* do. What can you do? Join us. Make an intentional choice. We would love to have you. **Registration for 2019 CSA is now open. Early sign up before February 28th is encouraged.**

Looking forward to being your trusted farmers,
Jerry and Maydene

2019 Registration is now open

For your convenience, we have attached the **2019 Sign up form** to this newsletter. Our website mcdougalsfarm.com is chucked full of information regarding the CSA and how it works. It also has an endless number of recipes. **Our website has not been updated with the 2019 CSA prices and dates for the upcoming farm workshops and events yet** but check back soon. We ask that you use the 2019 attached sign up form instead. **Check is our preferred payment.** A partial payment will temporarily hold you a spot as long as the full balance is paid by June 1st. We will keep you updated.

The produce aisle...the struggle is real!

By mid winter even we are looking over the produce in stores. Overpriced, wilted romaine is really hard to put in your cart, isn't it? Being seasonal veggie growers ourselves, it even stings a little more. Other store shoppers who know us, humorously watch our food snob dilemma as we flip flop the wilted romaine back and forth, sniff the muskmelon, poke the heads of broccoli and scrunch our trained noses when we smell a rotten potato buried 2 feet down in the pile...like those mushroom seeking pigs:)) We have had people that know us approach us...some confront, some comfort. Either way, the struggle is real.

Here's a few tips, they not going to help with spotting freshness in the store, but they can help you spot real food:

All produce has a PLU number. It's usually only 4 digits long. (ex 4141)

- If the 4 digits are preceded with a 9, (ex 94141) that means it's organic
- If the 4 digits are preceded with an 8, (ex 84141) it is GMO or Genetically Altered food

Here's the catch though, all organic producers are proud to let you know their product is organic and will happily mark it as organic (with a 9). The GMO producers at this time are not required to mark their produce. So sadly, just because your produce's PLU isn't precede by the number 8, that doesn't mean it is **not** GMO. The only true way to avoid GMO produce all together, is to buy organic when you can because GMO's are not allowed in the "organic" world.

- Raise an eyebrow to produce that looks too perfect and identical. We are not all perfect and identical and neither is anything else in nature.

You can use any variety of leftover baked squash to make these pumpkin bars. Doesn't have to be Pie pumpkin. My family loves these...they are heavy, moist and the batter taste like a pumpkin latte. -Maydene

Pumpkin Bars out of winter squash

3 eggs

1/2 cup Hellman's mayonnaise (can substitute 1 more additional egg- 4 in total)

1 -1/2 cups granulated sugar (can substitute 1 cup honey)

1 cup vegetable or olive oil

16-20 ounce of baked pumpkin or squash

2 cups sifted all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon of ground ginger
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 nutmeg
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking soda (make it a fat one)

frosting:

8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup butter or margarine, softened
1 cups sifted confectioners' sugar
1 cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Cut pie pumpkin in half and remove the seeds. Bake face down on a cookie sheet until you can poke through easily with a fork. Scoop out baked pumpkin flesh. Add the eggs, sugar and oil with an emulsion blender, this breaks up the pumpkin fiber, blend well until light and fluffy (a blender or mixer on high can be substituted.) Add the dry ingredients to the pumpkin mixture and mix at low speed until thoroughly combined and the batter is smooth. Spread the batter into a greased 13 x 9-inch baking pan. Bake for 30 minutes or until the middle of the cake springs back. Let cool completely before frosting.
3. **Frosting:** Combine the cream cheese and butter in a medium bowl with an electric mixer until smooth. Add the powdered and the brown sugar, mix at low speed until very smooth. Stir in the vanilla and mix again. Spread on cooled pumpkin bars.