Reel Mower
by Garth Woodruff

For the sake of the rain today and my focused mind fogging over I found myself perusing a list of famous people and places in Gloucestershire, England. Interestingly I found quite an impressive legacy of faces, those at the top being Prince Charles, Prince William, Duchess of Cornwall, Prince Harry and the like. To no surprise the list included many names one would recognize from the silver screen, countless musicians and artists. However, to my great disappointment Edwin Beard Budding (1795-1846) wasn’t anywhere in the top 100. This man single handedly stole millions of precious Sundays and summer evenings from humankind worldwide with his devious invention, the lawn mower. Yes, August 31, 1830 marks the birth of the reel mower. And like many bad habits we seem to collected from other countries we adapted the mower. I, like many this time of year, am facing my last pilgrimages across my lawn tottering behind some old friend who helps maintain and shape the way others look upon me and my home.

With the long weekend break from the University Lani and I slipped back to Virginia for a day of maintenance on our home there and I was one of those men missing a Monday night football game in exchange for quality time spent in the yard. I do love our mountain there and found myself saying on the drive back to Michigan how I could have mowed the lawn 100 more times just for the opportunity to be outside in the woods. In Virginia I have a reel more. I do! It’s the same design that Budding patented over 180 years ago. Little has changed and with nothing to complicate it. My wife raves about this simple thing. She needn’t struggle with it up the steps as it’s light and she needn’t fight with starting it, as it has no motor. If a twig gets caught in the blades she stops, reaches down, pulls it out and keeps mowing. It’s like the perfect mouse-trap. Now, in all fairness our lawn there isn’t much larger then my office here and can take up to eight whole minutes to mow, thus our happy marriage to the ‘reel’ mower.

Michigan, and a larger lawn have brought a new challenge. After seeing the grass grow up at this new home the first few weeks I quickly realized that it was high time to buy a ‘real’ mower. Yes, a man who may not philosophically support lawns has a reel mower and a real mower. Oddly enough I quickly fell into line and felt like I was a true Middle American too, with someone picking up my trash for the first time in 40 years and mowing my lawn on Sundays foolishly waving to the new neighbors. How cool.

Well the gardens are facing their own seasonal maintenance. The mowing there is quickly wrapping up. The string trimmers have been set aside and larger pieces of equipment take the place in the fields. Plastic pullers remove the row covers where older crops are done; manure spreaders are starting to dump fresh fertilizer on the soil to rest the winter away in preparation for next year. And before we seed a hearty winter cover on our resting land we will disk that fertilizer deep into the earth… with none-other than an implement that was first seen on an Egyptian wall painting dating thousands of years back.
Spaghetti Squash with Roasted Brussel Sprouts

by Lani Woodruff

Ingredients:
One medium to large size spaghetti squash
16-24 oz. of brussel sprouts
1 large onion, chopped
3-4 cloves of garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste
crushed red pepper to taste (optional)

Optional: If you want to add some protein....
1 pkg. tofu, diced & sautéed
1 can of garbanzo or cannelloni beans

Cooking:
Cut the spaghetti squash in half lengthwise and place on lightly greased cookie sheet. Roast in oven at 350º for ~30 minutes. While the squash is roasting cut the ends off the brussel sprouts and cut in half or quarter larger sprouts. Place in a roasting dish and add chopped onion and minced garlic. Drizzle a small amount of olive oil and stir to coat. Place in oven and roast with the squash for the last 15 minutes (I stir the sprouts half way through). If you are opting to add tofu or beans, add them after the roasting.

When the squash is soft, ‘spoon’ it out of the skin with a fork into a serving dish. A pasta bowl works great! Add the brussel sprout mixture to the top and serve. Enjoy!

For more recipes please visit our website at http://augardens.com/recipes/

Leeks

Leeks, like garlic and onions, belong to a vegetable family called the Allium vegetables. Since leeks are related to garlic and onions, they contain many of the same beneficial compounds found in these well-researched, health-promoting vegetables.


ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next Weeks Delivery info Please have a cooler or box available for next week’s delivery. For those with additional baskets please have them ready for the driver.

Volunteer Come learn the wonders of the gardens through one-on-one interaction with students. Co-curricular credits are available for undergraduate students. For more information please email info@augardens.com

Apples Last week to order apples in bulk quantity. $8.00 a half bushel. Please email to place an order.

Fall Decoration Ornamental gourds and/or ornamental corn are available upon request. For only $5.00 you will receive a bag of ornamental gourds or five ornamental corn.

Free Range Eggs Free Range Eggs are available for $3.00 from Redbarn Farm in Buchanan, MI. Eggs are limited; first come, first serve. To order eggs for your next delivery please email <info@augardens.com>