



Kevin Milaeger

Milaeger's

My Late Harvest (The tomato picking continues.... No Kidding!)

Kevin Milaeger

It's not quite winter, but we've had some chilly weather and I've seen people wearing heavy coats. Yet-----I'm still harvesting tomatoes and raspberries---I think this is the latest I have ever done that. I live close to Lake Michigan and my tomato plants are in containers, right up next to the house. During that cold snap a couple of weeks ago my thermometer read 32 degrees, but I guess my tomato plants must have been a degree or two warmer. Lucky me. Most of the plants themselves look awful, but the fruit is still worthwhile---about four of the twenty-odd plants that I planted in spring are still producing. Of course the flavor doesn't match the fruit of the warm months, but I think it's still better than those in the grocery store. I am mostly picking cherry tomatoes, but I have about ten large 'Ananas



raspberries



Tomato 'Sun Sugar'

Noire' tomatoes that just need a little more sun to ripen. Raspberries----well, the yield is scant and the fruit size is smaller than in peak season, but the flavor is still enjoyable. Even flowers such as begonias are still doing well at my place, and of course the tough, frost resistant flowers like snapdragons and alyssum are still thriving. The official weather station at Mitchell Field airport in Milwaukee has already recorded a frost, but they are quite a distance from the big lake. I see on

my weather calendar that the latest ever first frost for our area is November 24th---that was back in 1931. Also, the same calendar tells me that 2001 was our warmest November on record. Again, these weather facts are from Mitchell Field.

I made a short trip to Door County on Halloween weekend. At the top of the peninsula, where our cottage is, we still haven't had a killing frost. I stopped by to visit the Beach Road Community Garden in Sister Bay, a garden I wrote about in a [previous blog](#). The plants at that garden have held up well. The tough plants that were planted in spring such as kale and Brussels sprouts were at their peak. All of the tropical vegetables (tomatoes, peppers, squash) that would normally have been killed off by now have been cleaned out. (I'm guessing the plants had stopped producing.) I also saw some of the newer, late



Tomato 'Ananas Noire'

summer plantings that were at their peak now---these plants all perform well in cool weather and can easily take a light frost. The kohlrabi, spinach, lettuce, mizuna, Swiss chard, carrots, and radish all looked great; some had already been partially harvested. Along with the vegetables there was a wonderful display of nasturtium. Although their flowers are edible (they have a pleasant peppery taste), most folks grow them for their fiesta colored flowers.



alyssum

Scroll down to view photos of the Beach Road Community

Garden in Sister Bay.

Please email me (kevin@milaegers.com) if you have any questions or comments.





carrot (top), spinach (bottom)



kale



kohlrabi



lettuce



mizuna



nasturtium





radish