



LOON ORGANICS

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What's in the box 8/18:

Hungarian Hot Pepper: (Long, yellow pepper) It's Hot! But not as hot as a jalapeno. Wear gloves when cutting and handling.

Eggplant: Japanese eggplants are long and skinny. Regular shaped ones are either purple or striped. All prepared the same.

Sweet Peppers: Jimmy Nardello Sweet Pepper is the long, skinny RED one. There is also a sweet Mini or Lg Bell Pepper.

Red Watermelon: These should be ripe and ready to eat

Onions: Sweet onion can be eaten raw or cooked.

Garlic: Store on counter

Cucumbers: try a cuke sandwich with cream cheese.

Assorted Summer Squash: Yellow/Green/Zucchini. This should be it for awhile.

Tomatoes: Sungolds and/or Red Cherries and heirloom or slicing tomatoes. The different colored ones are ready to eat when they a bit soft to the touch, not firm anymore.

Potatoes: On the grill with onions and garlic?

Salad Mix: A mix of arugula, mizuna, and lettuce.

Italian Parsley: Check out page 2 for a parsley recipe.

Broccoli or Cabbage: Very sweet for this time of year. Cabbage will store for months in your fridge.

Week 10: Day by Day

We are in a weekly routine now which mainly involves harvesting! Here's a quick snapshot of what happens on the farm here each week:

Monday mornings at 7 a.m., five of us begin to harvest veggies for 65 CSA boxes. By 3 p.m. on Monday we are packing the boxes, printing newsletters, cleaning up, and around 20 people come out to the farm to pick up their fresh veggies. We usually then head into the tomato hoophouse (unheated greenhouse) to prune suckers and train the new tomato branches to grow up the strings attached to the greenhouse ceiling. Around 5 p.m., our crew is done for the day and Adam and I head inside to make dinner and eat. After dinner there always seems to be something to be taken care of—

bookwork, e-mails, phone calls, plus figuring out what we need to do the rest of the week. On Tuesdays 45 CSA boxes are delivered to Chanhassen in the morning, and the rest of the farm crew usually does some weeding, odd jobs, pre-harvest. Wednesdays we have another workshare join us to harvest 45 CSA boxes in the morning (seems like a breeze after 65!). Wednesday afternoons are usually spent transplanting (fall broccoli/cabbage/cauli nearly every week for the past 2 months) and Adam cultivates or seeds (spinach and salad mix right now). Thursday is pre-harvest now—checking on the tomatoes, cukes, beans, or whatever else is in abundance that must be picked almost daily. Or we work on a big project like cleaning and sorting garlic, pulling the storage onions, etc. Friday is another big harvest day for our farmers market and the 30 CSA boxes picked up at our market stand. Saturdays we get up at 4:30 a.m., pack our van, and drive into downtown Minneapolis for the Mill City Farmers Market. Market is over by 1 p.m.—hopefully we have sold most of our wares and we pack up and arrive home by 4 p.m. I'm tired just writing this! Still, I think we can say that we love our jobs even in August. The great food that we get to eat is a wonderful bonus. And knowing that we are providing healthy food for you all to eat too is an even bigger motivator. We'll keep growing it if you keep eating it!

In last week's newsletter I talked about our "watermelon monitoring" that we had to do all last week. In order for us to know if the melons are reaching peak ripeness, we have to try a few out from various vines. But one must pace yourself otherwise you end up with a belly like a watermelon and you still have to pack all of the melons you've harvested. It's easy to get a little watermelon woozy. We've learned not to eat the whole watermelon, just test the "heart" to see if it has good sweetness and texture. After a hard week of sampling, we concluded that the melons were reaching perfection on Friday afternoon. So, the harvesting process begins. Now you too can experience watermelon wooziness! We hope yours is tasty and not overripe. We've been erring on the side of caution, so they should be less ripe/perfect rather than overripe. You received a red watermelon. We also have orange and yellow ones on the way. All are very sweet and juicy. The first sweet corn is also so so close. All the plantings are coming in at once. It should come in next week, and when it starts coming in we should have a lot of it. Finally the tomatoes are also really starting. We were getting impatient these last few weeks, until we heard that there are NO local, organic tomatoes on the East Coast due to an infestation of late blight. Late blight was the culprit of the infamous Irish potato famine. It is bad news! Makes us feel like we don't have it so bad here after all.

Produce Storage: All produce should be stored in the fridge, preferably in plastic bags EXCEPT FOR eggplant, tomatoes, garlic, and onions. Garlic and onions are mostly cured, but if you don't use them right away keep them in a dry well-ventilated spot on your counter (out of the sun). They will continue to "cure" until you use them. Eggplant is a bit perishable. If you can't use your eggplant right away, then store it in the crisper drawer of your fridge. It is somewhat cold sensitive—some people wrap it in a clean dish towel to give it a little insulation. It is best eaten within a few days though.

Eggplant: In the nightshade family of vegetables, which includes tomatoes, potatoes and peppers. Eggplant has an abundant source of fiber, along with vitamins, minerals and lots of antioxidants that are potent cancer fighters. Plants produce antioxidants basically as a protectant from stresses: weather, pests, bacteria and fungi that can lead to disease. The benefit is that these antioxidants are very good for us when we eat them. Often the antioxidants are potent cancer-fighters. Eggplant is rich in phenolic antioxidant compounds, which are anti-cancer, anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, and anti-viral activities.

We got a few more cookbook recommendations from CSA members to add to last week's list. Next week we'll highlight great books on food.

- World Vegetarian*, by Madhur Jaffrey
- Vegan Gourmet*, by Susann Geiskopf-Hadler
- Asian Vegan Kitchen*, by Hema Parekh
- Simply in Season*, by Cathleen Hockman -Wert and Mary Beth Lind
- Greens Glorious Greens: More than 140 Ways to Prepare All Those Great Tasting, Super Healthy, Beautiful Leafy Greens*, by Johnna Albi

Recipe Corner

Eggplants as a culinary item act somewhat like sponges. They can soak up a lot of oil when cooking which is why they are often salted and drained before cooking. However, they are a fabulous compliment to other foods in dishes such as eggplant parmesan, Thai curries, and the famous ratatouille. Or roast whole, scrape out insides and combine with parsley, garlic, olive oil, and lemon to make baba ghanoush—an eggplant spread similar in texture to hummus.

Eggplant Basil Sandwiches

- 1 firm, medium eggplant, peeled and cut crosswise into 1/4 inch thick slices (4 cups)
- 3/4 cup soft bread crumbs
- 1/4 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- Kosher salt
- 1/2 cup minced fresh basil
- 3/4 teaspoons salt
- 2 large eggs
- 1 package (8 oz) cream cheese, softened
- vegetable oil (for cooking eggplant)

Lightly salt eggplant slices with kosher salt; place in colander and weight the slices with a heavy pot. Let stand in sink at least 30 minutes. Rinse with cold water and pat dry with paper towels. Mix cream cheese and basil in small bowl until smooth. Combine bread crumbs, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and cayenne pepper on sheet of waxed paper. Crack eggs into a pie plate or shallow dish; froth with a fork. Spread eggplant slices with herbed cheese, using about 2 teaspoons on smaller slices and slightly more on larger ones. Make sandwiches with the slices. Dip sandwiches first in beaten eggs, then in crumbs until well coated. Heat oil to 1/8-inch depth in large, nonstick skillet over medium heat. When very hot, fry sandwiches, in batches without crowding, until crisp and golden on both sides, about 3 minutes per side. Serve warm (not hot). Sandwiches can be kept warm in preheated 225-degree oven while remaining sandwiches are cooked. These are nice with a thick tomato sauce. Makes 8-10 small sandwiches.

This recipe is contributed by Abby Mandel and is from her book, *Celebrating the Midwestern Table*. It was reprinted in *From Asparagus to Zucchini*.

** Italian Parsley is a staple in our kitchen. We use it nearly every week from basil parsley pesto and scrambled eggs to a topping for grilled/roasted chicken or tofu. It's great chopped up and added to your hamburgers. The parsley sauce below is the catch all for nearly anything. It compliments nearly all fish, fowl, and veggie dishes. I got this version of salsa verde from Orangette, a foodie blog that is pretty spectacular (www.orangette.blogspot.com). She recommended tossing it on freshly roasted potatoes. It will keep well in the fridge for you to use all week and put a spoonful here or there. If you don't have capers on hand, you can make it without and still have good results.

Salsa Verde (Parsley Sauce for Everything)

- 6 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. finely chopped Italian parsley
- 2 medium garlic cloves, pressed or minced
- 1 1/2 tsp. lemon juice
- 1/8 tsp. kosher salt
- 3 Tbsp. capers, drained and coarsely chopped
- 1/2 tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- Pinch of red pepper flakes

Combine the ingredients in a small bowl, and whisk to mix well. Set aside for 15 to 30 minutes, to allow the flavors to meld.

Basil Parsley Pesto

- 1 cup basil
- 1/2 cup pecans
- 1/2 Tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1 cup parsley
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 tsp. pepper

Puree together in a blender or food processor until it becomes uniform. Enjoy! Pesto recipe from CSA member, Beth Kessler. If you came to the farm tour/potluck, you may have tried Beth's pesto. It's delicious with cherry tomatoes and cabbage! Have a great week! Your farmers, Laura and Adam