



LOON ORGANICS

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What's in the box 8/24:

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.

Savoy Cabbage: Is this the prettiest cabbage you've ever seen? It may be for us.

Sweet Peppers: Combo of a Jimmy Nardello Sweet Peppers (long, skinny RED) or Green/Red/Orange Sweet Bell Pepper.

Watermelons or

Muskmelons: Red, yellow or orange watermelons. Or a muskmelon. These should be ripe and ready to eat.

Onions: red or yellow

Green Beans: These are good!
Very tender.

Garlic: Store on counter

Cucumbers: we've toned it down—just one for today.

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

Baby Carrots: Purple or Orange ones that are great enjoyed raw, without peeling.

Salad Mix: A mix of lettuces.

Cilantro: For your first batch of local salsa?

Week 11: The Fruits of Summer

The fruits of summer are beginning and it feels like October! In the past two weeks, we've received around 10 inches of rain. June in August or is it October in August?? Either way, we are looking forward to the sunny, summer-like weather to dry things out and keep ripening up those delectable fruits of summer.

Speaking of which, we have more melons in our box today! So far, most of the melons we've tried have been pretty good. To grow a sweet, tasty melon in Minnesota is no easy task. Melons are native to desert environments; a far cry from our temperate climate and prairie soil. Still, seed breeding can do a lot and the drought helped us out immensely too in mimicking those dry desert conditions. We've been erring on the side of caution when harvesting, preferring melons that are hopefully perfectly ripe or just a tad underripe (but still very sweet and incredibly edible). Still it can be a crapshoot harvesting melons, so if we picked out a bad one, we're sorry and don't fret because we will have lots more melons and some Amazing Muskmelons that are just starting and many more coming soon. Musky sweet melons in Minnesota?! Oh heavenly days!! Your watermelon is either red, orange or yellow fleshed. All are very sweet and juicy.

We have a huge 2nd and 3rd planting of corn which are all coming in at once—you may get a ton of corn in your box soon. Our first planting of corn was quite small, so we just didn't have enough ears for all the CSA boxes. But the corn has been tasting quite good, so although it is late, we will have some tasty ears. Another thing you may notice (with relief) is that the summer squash is taking a bit of hiatus, along with the cucumbers. The cukes in your box today are from a new planting of cucumbers and they are very nice quality. Same with the green beans. They are from a new planting that is just starting to produce beans. Very tender, tasty, and more beans to come next week.

Lastly, finally the tomatoes are also starting! Yippee. We are growing several heirloom varieties of tomatoes. These are the different colored tomatoes that look quite different from the red, round slicing tomatoes that you buy at the grocery store. The heirlooms are exactly that—they are usually family heirloom varieties that the seeds have been passed down from generation to generation. Families grew these tomatoes for their flavor primarily which is why we grow them, not for their appearance. They can be wacky-looking; those are usually the best tasting ones. In general, heirlooms are much more fragile—they have thin skins, bruise easily, and can spoil rapidly. Your heirlooms are ripe when they are slightly soft to the touch. If they are not quite ripe, place them on your counter out of the sun for a couple days. They are best enjoyed fresh (as opposed to cooking them) to appreciate their full tomato-ey flavor.

You should see the tomatoes in our hoop house! The cherry tomato plants are like small tropical trees. They are now 13 feet tall and still growing. We will need ladders to pick them soon. More heirlooms and slicers from the field are ripening daily—we should have a lot of them in your box next week. Enjoy those 'maters everyone.....and the other fruits of summer.

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.

If you'd like an inside look into our operation and farm this season, our friend Barth Anderson wrote a short piece on the Loon Farm complete with some great photos by Greg Thompson. You can read the piece on www.fairfoodfight.org; scroll down the page to "Loon Organics: A Youth Movement". You'll be introduced to Toblerone, the farm dog. He is a true vegetable farmer's dog—he loves to eat veggies straight out of the field just like us! His favorites include sugar snap peas, strawberries, and sweet corn. He even gnaws on an occasional raw eggplant, but also hunts our pesky rabbit population...

Great books on food. Send us your favorite title!

- Omnivore's Dilemma*, by Michael Pollan
- In Defense of Food*, by Michael Pollan
- How To Eat Supper*, by Lynne Rossetto Kasper
- 660 Curries*, by Raghavan Iyer
- Epitaph of a Peach*, by Mas Masumoto
- Coming Home to Eat*, by Gary Paul Nabhan
- Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver
- Plenty: One Man, One Woman, and a Raucous Year of Eating Locally*, by Alison Smith & J.B. Mackinnon
- Deep Economy*, by Bill McKibben

Recipe Corner

Savoy Cabbage: We couldn't resist putting some of the beautiful savoy cabbage in your box. Hopefully we are not overwhelming you with cabbage this season; this is probably one of the last times you'll receive it for the season. I think many people consider cabbage to be more of a boring vegetable. Next to watermelons I guess it is, but I turned to Alice Water's *Chez Panisse Vegetables* to be cabbage inspired. Here's what she says, "Cooked well, cabbage has wonderful texture and lots of spicy, sweet flavor...cabbage has developed a lingering reputation as a commonplace food, but it is worthy of the most refined preparations. Its sweetness complements the richness of duck and pork. It is surprisingly good with fish, wrapped around salmon and steamed, for example, trapping juiciness and flavor. Braised, steamed, or stir-fried, it is a treat by itself." The savoy variety of cabbage is especially wonderful in raw dishes or lightly cooked since the inner leaves are very tender and delicious. Try it out in the recipe below by Carrie Floyd from Culinate.com. "*I like to make this in summer when I have lots of fresh thyme growing in my garden. This salad, with a plate of ripe tomatoes, a bowl of olives, and pita or whole-grain bread, makes for a light dinner on those hot nights when no one wants to cook.*"

Greek Cabbage Salad

- 1 small head Savoy cabbage (or 1/2 a large head), tough outer leaves removed, cored and sliced into thin slivers.
- 4 Tablespoons Olive Oil
- 5 oz. sheep milk's feta leaves removed, stems discarded.
- 3 Tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 2 1/2 Tablespoons fresh thyme leaves,
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

In a medium bowl, toss the sliced cabbage with the oil, vinegar, crumbled feta, and fresh thyme leaves. Season to taste with salt and a generous amount of freshly ground pepper. (Go easy on the salt as the feta is already salted). This salad can be served immediately or allowed to rest and wilt (the way I like it) before serving.

--The delicate flavors of cucumber and watermelon go hand in hand to create a sweet-and-savory chilled soup, perfect as a first course on a hot night. Recipe from www.eatingwell.com. I would personally add a bit of fresh, diced hot pepper to the mix.

Watermelon Gazpacho

- 8 cups finely diced watermelon (about 6 pounds with the rind)
- 1 medium cucumber, peeled, seeded and finely diced
- 1/2 red bell pepper, finely diced
- 1/4 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 2 tablespoons minced shallot/fresh onion
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh basil
- 3 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 3/4 teaspoon salt

De-seed watermelon. Mix watermelon, cucumber, bell pepper, basil, parsley, vinegar, shallot, oil and salt in a large bowl. Puree 3 cups of the mixture in a blender or food processor to the desired smoothness; transfer to another large bowl. Puree another 3 cups and add to the bowl. Stir in the remaining diced mixture. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

Garlic Fest last Saturday was a great, festive event with around 2500 people in attendance. The rain held out until 4 p.m. so everyone could get their fill of garlic ice cream and amazing food in the Great Scape Café. In the café, they served roasted sweet corn with a chipotle cilantro butter. Holy buttery goodness! It was delicious (the corn, but even more so the butter). The recipe was from the Birchwood Café I believe, but here's another variation that I hope is close from *Asparagus to Zucchini*.

Jalapeño Lime Cilantro Butter

- 4 Tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 1 teaspoon finely minced jalapeno
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon fresh lime juice
- 1 Tablespoon minced cilantro

Put all ingredients in a mini food processor and pulse until all ingredients have combined (alternatively you can beat them with a wooden spoon until smooth). The butter can then be rolled into logs in plastic wrap and refrigerated or frozen for future use.

Have a great week! Your farmers, Laura and Adam