



LOON ORGANICS

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August 31, 2006

This Week's Box:

Carrots- Baby Danvers (short, wide) or Sugarsnax (long, slim)

Bush Beans – All green.

Reddish/Orange

Peppers – All Sweet:

Bell, Lipstick (medium size red ones), Jimmy Nardello(long reddish)

Hot Pepper- Jalapeno to warm up your salsa and sauces. Chipotle peppers are roasted jalapenos.

Salad Mix –Baby lettuce varieties oh so good.

Parsley Bunch- Italian flat-leaf or Curly.

Tomato- Green Zebra, Brandywine, Black Krim Heirlooms, Romas

Eggplant- Japanese or Globe.

Baby Shallots

Onions-White Cippolini

Garlic – Chesnok Red-marbled purple stripe hardneck variety.

Flower bouquet: Cosmos, zinnias, snaps, and black sunflowers. Change water daily to keep flowers fresh. Use on ly room temp water. Flowers don't absorb cold water.

Week 12: Thanking our lucky stars.

Last Thursday as we were starting to pack your boxes, we noticed the patter of rain on the metal roof started to become more of a pummeling thud. Without a word our CSA crew all stopped working and watched as marble to golf ball sized hail thrashed the trees and bounced off our cars! Whenever it hails minutes turn to hours and the mind races to think of what is happening in the fields, which vegetables are most at risk (tomatoes!), and how long the hail will continue? Fortunately, the hail only lasted five minutes and the worst of the storm was the three or four inches of heavy rain we received and not the hail! While we were lucky, our neighbors in Northfield 10 miles away were not as... The city was inundated with baseball/softball sized hail large enough to break just about anything and everything. After the storm it looked like a riot had taken place. As is common with extreme hail, the calamity was extremely isolated and localized almost precisely in Northfield alone. A few Northfield vegetable farmers, as well as St.Olaf college's veggie gardens were pretty well devastated, while other farmers on the outskirts of Northfield didn't suffer the brunt of the hail, but still received some wayward baseballs of ice. We feel so incredibly lucky and it sends chills up my spine. Windshields can be replaced, but 100-acres of organic vegetables can't!

That three to four inch rain we got was heavy, hard, and unrelenting. It was a few more inches than we needed or wanted. At this time of year, the summer crops are slowing down because there is less daylight, less heat, and therefore the soil cools down by 10-20 degrees as well. When we get so much rain, it can start a process of decay in the plants that is exacerbated by the above conditions I just mentioned (less daylight, cooler temps=cooler soil). It seems right now that our tomatoes could end earlier than usual and eggplant and basil also struggle when the temperatures drop into the 40's at night. There is usually an Indian Summer again in September that gives another burst of productivity, but we're also watching for the possibility of frost in another few weeks. That autumnal feeling signals a big change, so what do we have planned for your CSA box?

Succulent, tender, sweet lettuces, arugula, baby Red Russian kale, radishes, fennel, kohlrabi, and spinach unlike any other you've tasted (at least since our last spring crop). The last boxes will be plum full with those hearty root crops, winter squash, broccoli, a head of cabbage or two, as well as more salad greens. Many of the items in the last few boxes will store quite well in your refrigerator or cupboard for many weeks, so that once the CSA ends, your connection with the farm and its bounty can continue. In the future (3 or 4 seasons) we hope to be able to offer a winter CSA share, featuring storage items, root crops, and greens grown in an unheated greenhouse. Stay tuned. –Laura + Adam

Carrots Forever!!



Market gardeners in Danvers, Massachusetts, developed this variety and shared it with Burpee in 1886. Our soil is somewhat heavy so some carrot varieties are difficult for us to grow and actually get out of the ground without breaking many shovels and diggers (not to mention our backs). Danvers works particularly well in our heavy soil because of its higher fiber content.

Interested in doing some additional canning or freezing?

We do not have a lot of surplus product, but Gardens of Eagan is selling bulk tomatoes for canning at their roadside stand, as well as green and red peppers for salsa, sauces, or canning. The tomatoes and peppers are seconds, which means they are less expensive due to some superficial blemishes. The product is perfect for processing, cooking and preserving, and one surely won't find a more affordable option for buying large quantities of certified organic produce. In the fall they also have bulk cabbage available for making sauerkraut. Call the stand at (651)454-6188 or stop by on Highway 3 between Diffley and Cliff Roads in Eagan.

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Recipe Corner

From CSA member and Chef Carolyn Bock. Caramelized onions are the way to my stomach. Plus heirloom tomatoes?? An unstoppable combination.

Heirloom Tomatoes with Caramelized Onions and Herbs

SALAD

1 teaspoon vegetable oil
1 teaspoon sugar
1/4 cup chopped pecans, if desired

1 large onion, thinly sliced
3 large heirloom tomatoes, sliced (3/8 inch)

VINAIGRETTE

3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup coarsely chopped fresh parsley, tarragon and/or chives
1/2 teaspoon salt

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

1. Heat vegetable oil in large skillet over medium heat until hot. Add onion; cook 5 minutes or until softened and lightly browned. Add sugar; stir to coat onions. Cook an additional 4 minutes or until golden brown.
2. In small bowl, whisk together vinegar and olive oil. Whisk in herbs, salt and pepper.
3. Arrange tomato slices on serving platter; drizzle with vinaigrette. Top with onions; sprinkle with pecans. Garnish with fresh herbs, if desired. Serves 6.

Lipstick Sweet Peppers- The lipstick pepper, although not an heirloom like Jimmy Nardello, is still considered one of the most delicious sweet peppers. It is around 4" with a blunt tapered end, thick, juicy, and sweet for salads, cooking, roasting, and salsa. This is the first year we have tried Lipstick and the plants have good yields with little disease. Store your peppers in the fridge, and if you can't get to them, de-core the peppers and slice thinly. Freeze in airtight freezer bag and add them to your soup, chili, pizzas this winter. You will be patting yourself on the back all winter long, especially when you look at the often \$7 price/pound of organic red peppers this winter that are shipped all the way from Holland. Ouch.

The Lipstick peppers or your larger Sweet Bell Peppers would work well for the recipes below. 1st Recipe from Molly Katzen's Enchanted Broccoli Forest. It seems like it could be real appealing with the kiddies, especially if you go easy on the herbs. 2nd recipe is from Chef and recipe sender extraordinaire, Carolyn Bock.

Cold Stuffed Peppers with Freshly-Herbed Cottage Cheese

-Cottage Cheese: Any combination of fresh herbs is recommended, mince them with scissors or a very sharp knife. Start with a small quantity (maybe 2 Tbs. each herb: 2 cups cottage cheese) and increase to taste. Think basil, parsley, thyme, oregano, parsley, mint, dill.

-Stuffed Peppers: Choose small vegetables for stuffing. For peppers, cut each one lengthwise, and just pull out the pith and seeds. Lay each half on its back, and fill it generously (about 1/2 cup filling per half). For other pepper fillings, try enchilada filling or mushroom pâté.

Broiled Sweet Peppers

3 to 4 Tablespoons olive oil
2-3 Tablespoons finely shredded fresh basil
1 Tablespoon kosher (coarse) salt

4-6 small sweet peppers
2 Tablespoons fresh oregano

1. Heat broiler. Oil broiler pan with 2 teaspoons olive oil (or nonstick cooking spray). Cut peppers into 3/4-inch strips; arrange on pan, cut sides down. Brush with oil; sprinkle with basil, salt and oregano. Drizzle with remaining oil.
2. Broil 4 to 6 inches from heat until skins begin to char. Turn off heat; cover loosely with foil. Leave in oven 5 minutes. Serve hot. Serves 4.

-Here's to a great Labor Day Weekend! Cheers! Your Farmers, Laura and Adam