



# LOON ORGANICS

www.loonorganics.com

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## This Week's Box:

**Potatoes:** Red potatoes

**Apples:** Not bad eating, but great for crisps or pies!

Organic, from apple trees at Adam's parents house.

**Sweet Peppers: Jimmy Nardello Peppers, Mini Bells, Colored Bells or Italian** – Nardello peppers are long, skinny, reddish and very sweet. **They look like a cayenne, but they are not hot at all!** Mini bells are

red/green or orange and very thick and juicy. Larger Italian peppers are elongated, orangish or reddish. Then there are orange Gypsy peppers that look kind of like an Italian pepper and are very sweet. All are sweet peppers and good raw or cooked.

**Onions:** Red variety

**Leeks:** Sauté with sweet peppers.

**Carrots:** Orange or purple

**Assorted Tomatoes:** A few slicers, a few saladettes.

**Dill:** Our favorite with mayo on sandwiches and dip.

**Jalapeno:** De-seeding and deveining the pepper can reduce the heat imparted to a recipe. Careful when handling; they can be a skin irritant so gloves are recommended.

**Cauliflower:** Perfectly beautiful, amazingly nutty and buttery. Try a curried cauliflower salad.

**Garlic:**

**Next week:**

**Rooty goodness**

## Week 15: Seeds Part II

Whoa, one last boost of heat here, and it's been awesome for the crops! Finally we're getting an abundance of peppers turning colors. Yippee. A reminder that our last delivery is Week 18: October 18, so there are only 3 more weekly full share deliveries! If you're getting a 1/2 share this week, you have 1 more delivery on October 11!! We'd appreciate it if you could bring back any extra CSA boxes you've been meaning to return.

To read last week's Seeds Part I about hybrid and open-pollinated seeds, go to the CSA page on our website and click on newsletters. There are a few big issues facing organic farmers right now in terms of organic seed: The first is that while the demand for organic crops rises by 20% a year, there is not a corresponding supply of organic seed available. Although organic growers are required to use organic seed, many varieties are not yet available organically. The second issue is the conglomeration of vegetable seed companies. Monsanto bought two of the largest vegetable seed companies within the past couple years and they now own a large portion of veg. hybrids (up to 75% of the tomato seed market). Since taking over ownership of these seed companies, they've discontinued many stand-by varieties that growers had relied on for decades. Since these seeds are hybrids and patented, no other companies are allowed to market them (unless given permission by Monsanto). Gardens of Eagan had an amazing saladette tomato ("like a roma, but better") that was discontinued by Monsanto last year. What is a grower to do? Embark on your own seed breeding adventure. Gardens of Eagan is now in the process of de-hybridizing this variety of tomato seed, and select and breed an open-pollinated version of this saladette. This process will take 7 years of growing out the genetic lines, selecting the most disease-free fruits, and then selecting for appearance and taste. After 7 years, they will hopefully have selected a tomato that will rival the original hybrid for flavor, yield, and disease resistance. The benefit is that the seed will be open-pollinated and can be continuously reselected according to the organic growing conditions. They are performing a similar de-hybridizing process with a sweet corn hybrid.

The third issue that is gaining steam is the genetic modification of some vegetable varieties. For the most part, transgenic crops have been limited to grain and hay crops. Now it is moving into the vegetable world and Monsanto is poised to control much of the genetic modification of many key seed varieties. Already this year, they have introduced GMO "Roundup Ready" sugar beets, now being grown extensively in the Red River Valley region. What we see as a danger is the cross-contamination of GMO crops with non-GMO, so that there would no longer be a choice of GMO-free crops. With something like GMO beets, they can cross-pollinate with Swiss chard, table beets, and spinach growing within 6 miles, and if you were growing those crops out for seed, that seed would then be contaminated with the transgenic genes. As GMO crops proliferate, the burden falls on the small grower and seed producer to protect their crop, instead of the other way around. This is the next frontier of knowing where your food comes from, and is starting to play out in the judicial system between farmers and agribusiness giants.

The safety and health issues of consumption of GMO crops are hotly contested, but we feel that we should be able to have a choice of whether or not we want to grow and produce them. Consumers should have a right to be able to buy GMO free food, if they so wish. For more information on combating GMOs, two great resources: Organic Consumers Association ([www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org)) and Organic Seed Alliance ([www.seedalliance.org](http://www.seedalliance.org)). Of course, your support of local organic farms is one of the most important things you do! Thanks.

## What we would do with your box:

Everything should still be refrigerated, except for the tomatoes, potatoes, garlic, and onions. Keep refrigerated things in plastic to prevent dehydration and if you aren't using your carrots/beets right away, you'll want to remove the tops so that the roots store longer.

First off, this cauliflower is some of the best we've ever eaten. Steam florets until tender; add butter if you dare! Secondly, chop apples for a crisp, pie, cobbler, or apple sauce with vanilla ice cream. They are good eating apples, but they are very ripe and should be enjoyed soon.

Carmelize the leeks for an apple and cauliflower salad. Adam also likes his leeks fresh on a salad for a mild spring onion flavor. Roast your peppers for an all-purpose sauce with garlic, carrots, onions, and tomato served with pasta or with rice in stuffed peppers. With the rest of your veggies? Some great soup options: potato and cauliflower soup with dill and garlic. Tomato and roasted pepper soup with cream? Carrot soup with dill, and there's always the stand-by but oh so delicious, potato leek soup. To dry your herbs, hang upside down in a dry place out of the sun until dry. You can then either crush and place in a jar (again, store out of the sun) or place whole in a jar. And a reminder to freeze any extra peppers you're not able to use!

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## Recipe corner

We will have parsnips next week, but I couldn't resist this recipe from Mark Bittman, author of *How to Cook Everything*. Mainly because it has roasted cauliflower in it, and I also love crepes.

### *Roasted Cauliflower, Parsnip, and Leek Filling for Crepes*

2 pounds (1 small or half a large) cauliflower, broken into small florets, stem and leaves discarded  
1/3 cup olive oil  
2 teaspoons dry (powdered) mustard  
2 small leeks or 1 large leek, white and light green parts only  
3/4 pound (about 3 medium) parsnips, quartered lengthwise, tough core discarded  
3 large egg yolks  
3 cups vegetable or chicken broth

6 tablespoons melted butter  
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
2 1/2 teaspoons salt  
2 tablespoons cream or whole milk  
3 tablespoons flour

1. Place a roasting pan in oven and preheat to 425 degrees. Place cauliflower in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, mix 3 tablespoons butter, the olive oil, pepper and mustard. Drizzle about two-thirds of mixture over cauliflower; mix well. Sprinkle with 1 1/2 teaspoons salt.
  2. Spread cauliflower evenly in heated roasting pan and bake for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, halve leeks almost to root end, leaving root end in one piece. In a large bowl, combine leeks, parsnips, remaining 1 teaspoon salt and remaining butter-oil mixture. Mix well. Turn cauliflower over in pan, then add parsnips and leeks. Roast for 20 minutes, turning vegetables halfway through. Reduce heat to 325 degrees and roast until golden brown and tender, 20 to 30 minutes.
  3. Transfer vegetables to a cutting board and chop into 1/4- to 1/2-inch pieces. Set aside. In a medium bowl, combine egg yolks and cream or milk and set aside.
  4. In a small saucepan, bring broth to a simmer. In another small saucepan over medium-low heat, whisk remaining 3 tablespoons butter with flour. Continue whisking for about 3 minutes; mixture should bubble gently but not brown. Remove from heat and slowly add broth, whisking to incorporate. Continue until all broth is used and sauce is smooth and creamy. Return to low heat and cook until slightly thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Whisk into bowl of egg yolks and cream. Return to pan over medium-low heat just until steaming, 2 to 3 minutes; do not boil. Reserve 1 cup sauce for garnishing filled crepes. Add chopped vegetables to remaining sauce.
- Yield:** Filling and sauce for 12 crepes.

### *Tomato, Onion, and Potato Gratin*

1 medium onion  
2 pounds red potatoes  
1 1/2 pounds tomatoes  
2 cloves garlic  
Salt and pepper

1 tablespoon chopped thyme leaves  
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
2 tablespoons white wine  
1 1/2 cups chicken stock

You will need a 9-inch square or oval gratin dish with 2-inch sides. Peel the onion, cut it in half lengthwise, and slice it as thin as possible. Peel and slice the potatoes 1/8 inch thick, and hold in cold water until ready to use. Cut out stem end of tomatoes and slice them 1/8 inch thick. Peel garlic and slice thin. Preheat oven to 375. Lightly oil gratin dish and distribute the onion slices evenly over the bottom. Season with salt and pepper. Drain the potatoes and arrange half of them over the onions, overlapping like shingles. Season with salt and pepper and half of the thyme. Make a layer of tomato slices on top of the potato slices, salt and pepper them, and sprinkle with the rest of the thyme and garlic slices. Finish with a final layer of overlapping potatoes and more salt and pepper. Drizzle with olive oil and white wine, add enough chicken stock to come 2/3 of the way up the sides of the gratin. (You may need to add more liquid later, but you must allow for the juice the tomatoes will give off.) Cover with foil and bake for 40 minutes. Uncover and press down on the mixture, flattening it to ensure that the top layer of potatoes is moistened. The liquid will emulsify somewhat as it continues to cook. Bake uncovered for another 40 minutes, or until a knife pierces through easily and the top is golden brown. Serve either warm or at room temperature. Serves 6 to 8. From Alice Waters' *Chez Panisse* Enjoy your box! Your farmers, Laura and Adam