



LOON ORGANICS

www.loonorganics.com

September 28, 2006

This Week's Box:

Carrots- Our favorite fall carrot

Herbs- dill bunch, thyme, oregano, sage, parsley

Sweet Peppers – Green and Red Bell Peppers, Lipstick, Jimmy Nardello

Hot Peppers – jalapeno, super chili (tiny but hot), or habanero

(green/orange, very hot)

Salad Mix – Lettuce and asian greens

Potatoes – Baby Blues from Driftless

Winter Squash – Buttercup (large creamy color), Delicata (small with stripes)

Onions-Yellow Storage Copra or Red Mars

Garlic – Inchelium Red.

Sweet Potato Sample – A few samples from Driftless. Wash and scrub them, then pop them in the oven, bake until soft. Very sweet. More next week.

Radishes- French Breakfast (red with white tips) or assorted “Easter Egg” varieties. Greens are quite good sautéed or added to soups.

Week 16: Robust Roots and Rhizomes

The contents of your box this week have ventured over into the realm of fall crops: hearty, with an earthy sweetness, not quite as well-known and loved as the summer “candy crops” of sweet corn, tomatoes, melons, but just as tasty. This time of year brings some of my favorite vegetables, just in time for those chilly days when you really need a creamy soup or a big plate of roasted root goodness.

This week was the beginning of the big clean-up of our fields, getting all of our irrigation system taken apart, hundreds of feet of drip irrigation line rolled up, the stakes and twine holding up our tomatoes cut down and removed. We were all ready to start pulling out the tomato, eggplant, and pepper plants to add to the farm compost pile, but after Tuesday night’s rain, it is a little too wet to be doing intensive fieldwork which would cause detrimental soil compaction. So we wait. Probably until this weekend when the soil dries out and we can borrow a big dump truck from Gardens of Eagan. It’s really a race against the impending colder weather to get our green manure crop in—we want that to germinate and begin growing for about 4 weeks before snow and deep cold sets in. Otherwise the cold may winterkill our hairy vetch and it won’t continue to grow in spring, fixing nitrogen in the soil, preventing erosion, and adding organic matter when we incorporate it into the soil. Many of Gardens of Eagan’s fields surrounding us were seeded with green manure in early September after their early summer corn or broccoli was finished, and now they sport a fuzzy green carpet of hairy vetch. It’s nice to see some green, new life growing all around us and shimmering in the fall sunlight!

Can you believe we have just two boxes left after this one?! The season has flown by! But it’s not over yet, and we are hoping to have apples for you from Amador Orchard at the Women’s Environmental Institute, one of the few certified organic orchards in Minnesota! I’m keeping my fingers crossed that they will have a good crop this year and enough apples for us. More winter squash next week, along with broccoli, and that spinach is on its way. Oh, and more sweet potatoes!

Something else I should mention is to wear gloves when cutting the hot peppers, particularly the habanero and superchili. These peppers are some of the hottest around with extremely high levels of capsaicin, the chemical responsible for that hotness. The peppers can actually burn your skin, and if you happen to touch or rub your eyes, it is very painful indeed. If you don’t have gloves, just put a plastic bag over your handling hand. Medically, capsaicin has been studied and prescribed for its anti-coagulant effects in the blood and most recently to having cancer fighting properties. -Laura



Delicata Squash

Squash is delicious roasted or baked. We cut smaller squashes like Delicata in half lengthwise, scoop out seeds, pour a thin layer of olive oil inside and set both pieces face down on baking pan. We do the same with butternut but often cut it in quarters when it is especially large. If you'd like to avoid the oil, you can cook the squashes with a thin layer of water on the bottom of baking pan. Bake at 400° until squash is soft all the way through—30 minutes for delicata and more for butternut. Eat roasted squash as is with butter or olive oil. It also makes a wonderful creamy soup. Many squash recipes to come!

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Recipe Corner

Boo hoo. I think this will be the last week of **sweet bell peppers** ☹. In the last days of September savor the last tastes of summer with this soup. Thanks to CSA member Susie Tangen for the recipe.

Zuppa per Settembre (September Soup)

- 1 ½ lbs plum tomatoes (about 9) cored, quartered and seeded (I forgot to seed and it worked out fine)
- 1 lb red bell peppers (about 3) trimmed, quartered and seeded
- Hot pepper to taste (I used ½ of a tiny red superchili)
- 2 red or yellow onions cut into wedges
- 2 cloves garlic quartered lengthwise
- 1 tsp kosher or sea salt
- ground pepper
- 1 tsp sweet Hungarian paprika
- 1 tsp finely chopped fresh thyme
- 6 large fresh basil leaves cut crosswise into fine strips or coarsely chopped
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 2 cups best quality chicken broth
- ¼ cup heavy cream –room temperature
- sourdough croutons

Heat oven to 450. Place tomatoes, peppers, onions and garlic on a single layer in a large roasting pan. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, thyme, paprika and basil, then drizzle with oil. Toss well to coat evenly. Roast veggies for 45-60 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes until veggies are completely tender and well browned in places. Remove from oven and let cool for at least 10-15 minutes. In blender or food processor, work in batches to puree the veggies with the broth until smooth. Transfer the puree to a saucepan and reheat over low heat. Stir in the cream and heat the soup just until warmed but not boiling. Top each bowl with sourdough croutons.

Carrot recipe is from Black Cat Natural Foods, a catering company that sources organic, in-season ingredients (www.blackcatnaturalfoods.com). They sell their fine delicacies at the Mill City Farmers Market and developed this recipe after purchasing some of our great early summer carrots. We were generously provided with a recipe and a large serving, which was so good we ate it up at 7 a.m.—no joke!! Carrots are supposed to marinate for 4 or 5 days in advance of eating; I usually can't wait that long, but it is tastiest if you do.

Greek Marinated Baby Carrots

- 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- 2 teaspoons packed brown sugar (optional)
- ¼ cup minced fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons dried oregano
- 2 bunches Loon Organics' carrots
- ½ small red onion, thinly sliced
- Feta cheese, crumbled
- Fresh herbs, minced (optional)

Combine all dressing ingredients (first 8 ingredients), mix well. Scrub and trim carrots, put in large jar, bowl, or other nonmetallic container, and pour marinade over carrots to cover. Marinade can be thinned with water in order to cover vegetables, or more oil and vinegar can be added. Refrigerate for 4-6 days (I'm not sure if I could wait that long!!). Periodically stir the carrots in the bowl or gently shake the jar. One day before serving, stir the red onions into the marinade. To serve, place carrots in a serving bowl with tongs. Ladle out some of the marinade and let come to room temperature for about 5 minutes, then whisk. Pour marinade over carrots, and top with crumbled feta cheese, and more fresh minced herbs, if desired. The feta cheese will melt into the marinade, creating a delicious tangy dressing. When the carrots are gone, use leftover marinade as Greek Salad dressing on our salad mix!

Have a wonderful weekend everyone.
Your farmers, Laura and Adam