



# LOON ORGANICS

www.loonorganics.com

August 3, 2006

## This Week's Box:

**Sweet Corn-** Bi-color sugar enhanced corn from GOE.

**Yellow Baby Watermelon**

From GOE. Sweet, juicy, even better than red melons

**Zucchini/Yellow**

**Summer Squash** – These varieties have great flavor.

**Bell Pepper** – The first of the green peppers are turning red/orange at the moment.

**Purple Green Beans** –

Stay purple if you blanch them, but turn green if cooked!

**Carrots** – We recommend cooking, roasting, or grilling this variety (Chantenay).

**Kale** – Full share. We've been stir-frying it with summer squash, green beans, garlic, onion, carrots, and a bit of fresh tomato.

**Salad Mix** –Tender lettuces. We're glad it survived through the heat!

**Assorted Herbs** –Sage, Thyme, Parsleys, Basil.

**Tomato-** cherrys, heirloom (eat right away), romas

**Onions-**White

**Jalapeno/Super Chili-**hot peppers.

**Scallions** – Use whites and green tops fresh or cooked.

**Garlic** – Chesnok Red

## Week 8: Rain! And Eat Your Heirloom Tomatoes Soon!

We have been waiting patiently...waiting and watching as storms move across the northern horizon and only drops fall on the farm. But finally on Tuesday we got our much deserved (and desperately needed) rain. The rain this summer has been extremely isolated. We have had several rain showers while just 12 miles south in Northfield there hasn't been a drop. I couldn't imagine farming without our irrigation system. If we had no irrigation we simply couldn't have planted the salad mix in your box this week. When drought conditions dry the soil deep below the top horizon, even irrigation makes for uneven and poor seed germination. Dry soil absorbs so much moisture that we must water in the morning and evening for a week to saturate the soil with enough moisture for the seeds. On the other hand, a good rain can provide that same amount of water (evenly distributed too) in just 30 minutes. There is really no way to replicate natural rain...but we try. Well, I have been awfully glad to be off irrigation duties for a few days. The only down side to the rain is the flush of weeds that inevitably follows a good rain. The balance has been shifted from watering to weeding, which is just fine for me. Another note related to rain. Your heirloom tomato might have a slight crack in it; they are not overripe but eat it soon so that it doesn't spoil. Heirloom tomatoes have somewhat thin skins so if there is a copious rainfall the additional moisture makes the ripe ones crack. They are still good eating. -Adam

## Come out to the Farm

In the coming weeks there will be two opportunities to visit the farm, actually both farms- Gardens of Eagan's 100 acres and Loon Organics' 2 acre fields that we rent from Gardens of Eagan. Your first chance is for Gardens of Eagan's farm tour and author talk on August 13<sup>th</sup>. If you can't make that, you are welcome to visit Loon Organics on the 20<sup>th</sup> for a short look at our fields and some fresh-picked produce: cherry tomatoes, hopefully watermelon, and more!

**The Gardens of Eagan tour—Sunday, August 13<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.** Sweet corn, watermelons, a fun farm tour on wagons, and author, Jessica Prentice, speaking on her new book, cooking and nutrition, and local organic agriculture! The farm wagons will pass by our field briefly and we'll talk about our operation, but this is really a chance to have veteran organic farmers, Martin and Atina Diffley, show you around their farm and talk about their life's work: growing great, healthy organic vegetables. They are engaging educators and have a plethora of information about everything farm related. Open to the public so you're also welcome to bring other friends and non-CSA members! Check out the e-mail we sent for full info. **Loon Organics CSA tour-Sunday, August 20 from 2-4 p.m.** We will welcome Loon Organics CSA members at our own personal field tour! Walk through and pick some of your favorite crops, eat some watermelons, tomatoes, maybe even sweet corn (if it's still around). We'd also love to meet and chat with you all. We're looking forward to it. If you know you will come, please e-mail or phone so we know how many watermelons we need! See you then.

## Parsley



Italian Flat Leaf

## Recipe Corner

**Herbs:** Fresh herbs such as Italian and Curly Parsley, Basil, Thyme, and Sage are all very aromatic and very nutritious for you! Parsley, which many of us know as a garnish more than a key ingredient, is a nutritional powerhouse and detoxifier. Chop up your herbs and try adding them to your dishes. I can almost guarantee that no matter what you're eating, adding some fresh herbs during the cooking process or as a fresh topping will be a positive addition. If you're unsure, try experimenting with a small amount to get used to the different flavors. Soon you'll be begging us for more!

### *Spaghettini with Walnuts and Parsley Herbed Pesto*

1 lb. spaghettini	½ cup chopped walnuts
4 cups Italian/curly parsley, basil, sage, thyme	½ cup grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
¼ cup fresh lemon juice	¼ cup olive oil
1 medium-sized cucumber, peeled, seeded and finely chopped	3-5 cloves garlic, minced (1 to 1 ½ Tbs)

1. Cook pasta according to package directions; drain.

2. Toast walnuts in skillet over medium heat 3 to 4 minutes or until browned and fragrant, shaking often. 3. Place parsley and other herbs, cheese, oil, lemon juice and garlic in bowl of food processor. Pulse several times, or until parsley is finely chopped. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to serving bowl. 4. Add walnuts, cucumber and hot pasta to pesto. Toss to combine. Taste, and adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve immediately. Serves 6.

--"When storing any homemade or prepared pesto in the fridge, pour a thin layer of olive oil on top of the sauce before closing the lid. The oil seals out the air and keeps the sauce a bright, vibrant green for weeks." *Vegetarian Times July/August 06*

**Heirloom tomatoes:** these varieties of tomatoes are open-pollinated or non-hybridized. If you save the seeds of these tomatoes and grow them next year, they will be a true replica of their parent tomato. Hybrid plants have sterile seed or their seed will not be true to the parent plant. Heirloom varieties usually have a long history, and some date back over 300 years. The heirlooms we grow often have superior taste to many hybrid tomatoes. Hybrids are often bred for appearance, storability, and disease-resistance, not taste!

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**Watermelon**-the quintessential summer fruit. It's amazing, but you can grow great, sweet, juicy watermelon in Minnesota! Just ask the Diffleys they've been doing it for over 30 years. They grow a variety of red watermelons, as well as yellow and orange. The orange and yellow taste just like red watermelon, sometimes even a sweeter and juicier version. We don't see orange or yellow ones in the store often because they are difficult to ship over long distances. The rinds are very thin and are prone to bursting when the melon is at the perfectly ripe stage. If your melon does happen to burst before you'd like it to that means you have a GREAT watermelon. Eat it promptly or put the melon in a plastic bag in your fridge until you can get to it. And YOU CAN EAT THE SEEDS! They are NUTRITIOUS! We have not yet had a watermelon grow out of our stomachs and we've been eating the seeds for four years. The seeds are high in iron and zinc, a nutrient that is difficult to get from other food sources. Zinc is required for mental development, healthy reproductive organs (particularly the prostate), protein synthesis and collagen formation. I think the seeds taste kind of nutty and it is much easier to eat them rather than pick them out. The Diffleys have grown seedless watermelon in previous years and they are inferior melons in taste, appearance, and texture. Watermelons help decrease inflammation that contributes to conditions like asthma, arteriosclerosis, diabetes, colon cancer, and arthritis. They are a concentrated source of the carotenoid lycopene. Recent research shows watermelon contains more lycopene than any other fresh fruit or vegetable, even tomatoes.

Watermelons are originally native to Egypt and other desert areas. Each year at watermelon picking time, Martin Diffley spreads mysterious tales of the Blue Nile watermelon. It has a blue rind and is the best-tasting, most prized watermelon ever grown in the world. Its origins and location are unknown (other than being along the Nile in Africa). When I grow up I want to be a watermelon detective!

### *Agua Fresca*

Blend 4 cups watermelon with 1 cup water and 2 Tbs. lime juice, then strain the liquid and sweeten with sugar. Recipe from Fiona Kennedy of *Vegetarian Times*.

Have a great weekend. Your Farmers, Laura and Adam