



LOON ORGANICS

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What's in the box 9/4:

Jimmy Nardello Sweet Italian

Peppers: De-seed, cut in half, sauté and stuff with goat cheese.

Red &/or Orange Bell Pepper:

These are great chopped the long way, roasted in a 400° oven for 30 minutes and used as a pizza topper.

Tomatoes: This is the peak of our tomatoes, so eat them while they're good! Great tomato soup recipe on our website. The different colored heirloom tomatoes are ready to eat when they are slightly soft—most should be ready.

Globe Eggplants: Try something new w/ eggplant! 3 recipes on Pg 2.

Garlic: This variety is called Music and is great for using raw.

Rainbow Carrots: Yellow and purple carrot mix. No need to peel these carrots.

Blue Potatoes: These potatoes hold their shape well after they are cooked. Makes them perfect for potato or veggie salads.

Leeks: White and light green parts are the most usable portion for cooking. Can use in place of onion.

Hot Pepper: This is a Black Hungarian. Slightly milder than a jalapeno pepper.

Celery: Ants on a log or try a fresh salad with grated colored carrots, lots of finely chopped celery, diced sweet peppers in a lemon basil dressing.

Basil: This will only be around a few more weeks before colder weather comes. Get your taste of summer in.

Week 13: Delicious Autumn

Here is what early September on the farm means to us: picking hundreds of pounds of tomatoes, sorting tomatoes into beauties and canners, canning said tomatoes in the evening, baking an apple pie or three, donning caps in the morn, peeling off layers of clothing by noon, swatting at mosquitoes and hoping (sometimes) for an early frost! The weather is apparently in tune with the calendar this year because on September 1st we went from hot, humid, nearly unbearable weather to sunny perfection to blustery fall. The past week encapsulates Minnesota weather in a nutshell! After today's chilly harvest, I'm thinking about long underwear for tomorrow morning's market. The weather will never cease to amaze us.

We were frustrated again by worms this week and not the earthworm kind! The looper worms come from white fluttery moths that lay their eggs on green growing crops. When the eggs hatch, tiny green worms begin to eat holes through the crop leaf they are on. The loopers are a hundred times worse this year, due to the hot, humid summer and warm Spring and they have wreaked havoc with the last batches of our salad mix. Talking with other farmers and crop specialists, it seems that we've had a gangbuster year for insects in MN. We have seen many, many different kinds of bugs in the field that we have never laid eyes upon before. Most of them don't seem to be doing any crop damage and it's likely that many of them are beneficial insects: eating other negative insects, pollinating our flowering crops, or just enjoying their trip north to MN! We get to wear a lot of "hats" on the farm: growers, marketers, educators, weather forecasters and ruminators, book keepers, soil scientists and entomologists. The arrival and discovery of new bugs on the farm is a joyful day for our inner entomologist, as long as those bugs don't eat too many of our veggies!

We have other plantings of salad mix, spinach, and arugula coming to make up for the lost salad mix we've had this summer and fall. It's a very different situation than we had last season when the cool summer allowed us to grow plentiful salad greens and provide them in the boxes weekly. Thanks for being patient with the worms and the weather. Every year of farming is a new adventure. We sampled the first acorn squashes of the year tonight for dinner and they're pretty tasty! They may be in next week's box along with red cabbage and cauliflower. Tomatoes should taper off now with the cool and wet weather. Celery is about done, but carrots will probably appear in the rest of your CSA boxes for the season. Our season is 18 weeks total, which means that we have 5 more boxes after today's box. If you love the fall veggies though, a reminder that you can still sign up for our Thanksgiving fall CSA box! It's 55 pounds of storage veggies for \$55. See last week's newsletter for more details. E-mail us to sign up—we still have fall boxes available!

WHAT YOU CAN PRESERVE

THIS WEEK: Eggplant, peppers, carrots, celery and tomatoes would all freeze well, if you can't eat it all. Summer squash/zucchini can be shredded or cubed and frozen raw for use later in zucchini muffins, bread or cake. Eggplant freezes well if it is already cooked—preferably in a sauce, soup or you can also make the eggplant spread, baba ganouj, which freezes very well. Peppers can be chopped raw and frozen in Ziploc bags to be thrown in soups and chili this winter. Carrots and celery should be steamed first and then frozen. Tomatoes can be frozen raw and used in cooked dishes later.

Produce Storage: All produce this week should be stored in the fridge, EXCEPT FOR EGGPLANT, POTATO, TOMATO, BASIL and GARLIC. Store eggplant and tomatoes on the counter out of the sun. The garlic is cured now and can be set on your counter or stored wherever you normally store garlic. Everything else goes in the fridge in plastic bags preferably. Eat eggplant and basil within a few days!!

There's a great Italian "**September Soup**" recipe on our blog. I include it in our newsletter every September so some of you have already seen it. It's basically roasted tomatoes, peppers, and basil (plus a few more yummy things) and served with garlic croutons. It is about the best end of summer soup out there and perfect for these chillier nights. Our blog is at www.loonorganics.com and click on "blog".

Contact us:
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Recipe Corner

We realize we've given you a lot of eggplant in your CSA boxes this year, but the eggplant keeps giving and giving. This is the best eggplant year we've ever had! I admit that we have been struggling at times this summer to use it in our kitchen before it gets a bit mushy and tired. It does have a short shelf life, so I recommend that it be one of the first items you use from your box. Here's some ideas to get you started.

Eggplant Salad Toasts (Eggplant Bruschetta)

Makes about 8 toasts; double the recipe if you'd like to eat the salad straight

1 medium eggplant, about 3/4 pound, cut into 1/2-inch cubes

2 tablespoons olive oil plus additional for oiling baking sheet

1/4 teaspoon salt

Black pepper

1 teaspoon red wine vinegar

1/4 cup crumbled feta

1 scallion or leek, thinly sliced

8 1/2-inch slices of baguette, brushed with olive oil (I used 1-inch slices in the photos, then decided they were too thick)

1 small clove garlic, peeled and halved

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Lightly oil a baking sheet or roasting pan. Toss eggplant, 2 tablespoons olive oil, salt and a generous amount of black pepper together in a medium bowl until evenly coated. Spread on prepared baking sheet and roast for about 25 minutes, moving pieces around occasional so they evenly brown. For a cold salad, let the eggplant cool a bit before mixing it with red wine vinegar, feta and scallion/leek. For a warm salad where the feta glues itself to the eggplant a bit, toss the vinegar, feta and scallion together when the eggplant just comes out of the oven. You'll want to eat the warm salad quickly. Broil or toast baguette slices then rub them with a garlic clove before heaping on eggplant salad. Recipe from www.smittenkitchen.com/2010/08/eggplant-salad-toasts/#more-6673.

Baba Ganouj

This is a Middle Eastern eggplant dip that is one of our favorite ways to prepare eggplant.

You can cut the recipe in half and just use 1 eggplant.

2 medium to large eggplant

3-4 cloves garlic, minced

1/3 c. lemon juice

1/3 c. sesame tahini

1 t. salt

Black pepper and cayenne, to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Slice eggplant in half lengthwise and place face down on oiled baking sheet. Bake for 30 minutes or until very tender. Scoop out eggplant pulp, discard skin. Place pulp in food processor or blender, add remaining ingredients, and blend until smooth. If you don't have a blender or food processor, you can also mash the ingredients together by hand and leave slightly chunky. This is delicious on bread or crackers. You could also serve as a side alongside a roast and rice.

Roasted Ratatouille

I should have included this when the zucchini was still around, but maybe you have some stashed away in your fridge or freezer. Ratatouille is a classic French dish made popular by the movie with the same name. See if your kids are interested in trying this once you mention the movie!

1 eggplant, chopped into 1 1/2 inch pieces

2 zucchini (3/4 lb) chopped into 1 1/2" pieces

1 bell pepper, chopped into 1 1/2" pieces

1 pint cherry tomatoes

1/2 large onion, chopped into 1 1/2" pieces

2 T. olive oil

2 T. red wine vinegar

1 T. tomato paste

1 tsp. dried basil or 1 T. fresh basil

1 tsp. sea salt

1 sprig fresh thyme or 1/2 tsp dried

1/2 tsp. black pepper

1/2 tsp. dried rosemary

1/4 c. red wine

3 cloves garlic, minced

Preheat the oven to 400°. In a large mixing bowl, stir all marinade ingredients together (olive oil and all ingredients listed after the oil). Toss the chopped vegetables in the marinade and let sit for 30-60 minutes. Place vegetables and marinade in a large baking pan and roast in the oven for 30-40 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes, until vegetables are beginning to brown a bit on edges and are tender. Serve as a side dish or with couscous. Recipe is from www.themix.coop.