



LOON ORGANICS

Laura Frerichs & Adam Cullip

23229 200th St Hutchinson, MN 55350

Phone: 320.587.0140

loonorganics@hotmail.com

www.loonorganics.com

What's in the box 7/12:

Broccoli: Still tasting good and coming in strong.

Cauliflower: Some small heads, some medium-sized heads. Either way it tastes great raw or cooked.

Purple Kohlrabi: The kohlrabi pickle recipe in last week's newsletter was a favorite of many. Try it out! Last week of kohlrabi.

Red Kale: Another recipe on page 2. We also like to sauté up with corn, scallions, red pepper and pork sausage.

Scallions: We enjoy slicing these and adding them to just about every savory dish we eat. So fresh tasting!

Cilantro: A recipe on page 2.

Head Lettuce: Goes great with bits of sliced fennel, steamed broccoli florets, olives and your favorite salad dressing. We've also been using the leaves for sandwich wraps instead of bread.

Baby Beets: Both beets and greens are edible. The greens are like spinach or chard—use them in the chard taco recipe from 2 wks back. We like to steam or boil the small beets whole and eat with a salad or with butter.

Zucchini and Summer Squash: 1st of year. Slice in 1/4" strips and grill them until fork tender. Yum!

Sugar Snap Peas: The plants are not loving the heat, but the peas are still sweet, sweet! Snap the pea top and pull down to take off the stringy seam. The pod and peas are meant to be eaten together and are both very sweet.

Week 4: Catching Up With Summer

The summer we know and love has finally arrived! We had been bracing ourselves for a continuation of our Spring cool and wet conditions, and are pleased that July is shaping up to be pretty 'normal' weather-wise. The new warm and sunny weather pattern we are in is helping the summer crops catch up after a very late start. It's also a bit of an in-between time on the farm—a period we call the "tween" weeks. (Luckily this stage is a matter of weeks and not a matter of years, as it is with adolescents!) The heat has burnt out some of the spring and early summer crops like lettuces, radishes and arugula, and the first mid-summer crops are just on the verge of ripening but need another week or two to really come in strong. Quite a few crops are in their "tween" times: summer squash/zucchini, cucumbers, green beans, carrots, new potatoes and more basil. Another good week of warm weather and some rain or irrigation, and we will be harvesting some of these mid-summer gems for your box.

We were able to pick the first summer squash and zucchini of the season for your box today. The plants are just starting to produce, but soon we will be picking them every day to prevent them from getting too big. We'll also have small cabbages coming in for the next few weeks, baby carrots, salad mix and the first cauliflower is trickling in. The green beans are flowering and the red new potatoes are the size of golf balls and growing larger every day. Slowly but surely we are making our way into summer and into some good summer eating! The Loon farm crew was pretty excited about the first beet harvest this week, and the beets were divine sautéed up in butter for dinner tonight. The Spring/early summer crops have mostly petered out, but we were still able to get in on a harvest of peas and the last picking of head lettuce until fall. The July heat is too much for the young lettuce and we needed to get it out of the field before it turned bitter. Most CSA boxes have romaine lettuce, but some have butter or red leaf instead. We should have salad mix next week to replace the head lettuce.

Onto an update on the most beloved summer crop: tomatoes! The tomatoes planted in the field are loving this heat and growing rapidly. The rain we got over the weekend will help push them along as well. The tomatoes in our hoop house (the house that withstood last week's storm) are looking great and they have medium-sized green tomatoes on the vine. Those, along with the cherry tomatoes, may start to turn red and ripen up in the next few weeks here—well before the field tomatoes. We also have eggplants and peppers that got a head start in our other hoop house and there are tiny peppers and eggplants on those plants. We should have those a good 2-3 weeks earlier than our field peppers and eggplant.

The plants in the damaged hoop house look great, but the hoop house itself is a mess. We've been ruminating over what we will do with it the rest of the season. There are several options—most involving some serious construction and de-constructing work for Adam at a time when we are not eager to take on anymore new projects. A baby in August is enough of a new project for us this season. For now we have time to figure out what we will do, as we're still waiting for the insurance adjuster to stop by our farm and assess the damage to the hoop house from last Friday's storm. We will see!

Produce Storage: All produce this week should be stored in the fridge. Store everything in plastic bags in the fridge, if it isn't packed in one already, to keep in moisture and prevent greens from wilting. Everything should last over a week if stored properly.

Preserving Tips: All of the cooking greens that appear in the box throughout the year like collards, kale, beet greens, chard, and spinach can be easily frozen for the winter months. The greens are great added to soups like minestrone or chicken noodle. You can also use the frozen greens in dishes like quiche and scrambled eggs with great results. Broccoli and Cauliflower can also be frozen—cook the same way as the greens.

To freeze: De-stem the large mid-ribs of leaves, wash leaves, and roughly chop or you can let the leaves remain whole. Drop leaves in boiling water for 2-3 minutes, just until they turn bright green. Remove from boiling water with a slotted spoon (alternately, you can immerse the greens in a strainer in the boiling water for easy removal). Dunk greens in a cold ice water bath in your kitchen sink to stop the cooking process. After a few minutes of cooling, squeeze excess water out of greens. Pack cooked greens in freezer bags or freezer containers and pop in freezer.

To use your frozen greens in cooked dishes it is best to take them directly out of the freezer and reheat them immediately or just add to your soup, stew, or sauce to cook. We have found that if we let the greens defrost for a few hours first and then add them to dishes or cook them, they get mushy.

****Our favorite Beet Salad Recipe is on our website "Recipe Page". The salad can serve as a light meal along with some bread. Great way to use up your beets and lettuce!****

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Recipe Corner

The original recipe below calls for radishes in place of broccoli, but our radishes are done until fall and broccoli or kohlrabi is a great stand-in for the radishes. Plus it's a great way to use your cilantro and scallions! Thanks to our employee, Irene, for passing this on to us with high recommendations! Vegetarians—try it out with tofu. © Adapted from the cookbook, *Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini* by Elizabeth Schneider.

Stir-Fried Cilantro Chicken and Broccoli

¾ lb boned and skinned chicken breasts
1 med-lg. broccoli or 2 small broccolis, stem peeled and florets broken up
1 bunch cilantro
1 T peanut oil
Big pinch of ground hot pepper
½ C vegetable or chicken broth
½ T brown sugar

3 thin scallions
2 tsp. minced garlic
1-1/2 T fish sauce
2 T rice vinegar

Cut chicken into bite-size pieces. Cut broccoli stem and florets into bite-size pieces. Rinse cilantro leaves and pull from stems. Mince half. Trim scallions and cut into 1-1/2 inch diagonals. Measure out the other ingredients. Heat wok or skillet over high heat; add oil, and tip to coat pan. Add broccoli and stir-fry for a minute or so before adding chicken. Cook chicken and broccoli mixture until the meat has just barely whitened, less than a minute. Add two-thirds of scallions, the garlic, hot pepper, and fish sauce and toss until chicken is not quite cooked through, 3 to 4 minutes. Scoop into a warmed serving dish; set aside. Add broth, vinegar, and sugar to pan and boil briefly to reduce to lightly syrupy consistency. Add chicken and broccoli and remaining scallions, tossing to heat through. Scoop into the dish and toss with the minced cilantro leaves. Add whole cilantro leaves to taste. Serve at once.

More ideas for your cooking greens... Early summer CSA boxes feature regular cooking greens and they can be a challenging crop for some to like. However, we keep growing them and putting them in the boxes because they are the most nutritious vegetables for you, they grow really well in our climate, and this time of year they are at their peak of taste, flavor and nutrition. We hope you'll give them a couple chances and discover a favorite way to prepare them. The recipe below is a fast favorite at our house. It's based upon the classic Italian dish, *Pansoti*, a greens-filled pasta from Genoa which is served with a mild ricotta and walnut sauce. Except this dish takes 20 minutes to make, instead of all day. We usually sub cottage cheese for the ricotta in this dish, but if you have fresh ricotta, then by all means use it! Pretty much any and every cooking green will do in this recipe. Adapted from the cookbook *Moosewood Restaurant Cooks at Home*.

Pasta with Greens and Ricotta

5 cups chopped cooking greens, tough stems removed (kale, chard, beet greens, collards, spinach or any combination of those)
2 garlic cloves, minced
Dash of salt and pepper
¾ cup cottage cheese or ricotta cheese
1 pound pasta (fettuccini, penne, macaroni, fusilli or shells)
Grated Parmesan cheese (or other favorite cheese)

Toasted Walnuts
Optional: Chopped fresh tomatoes

Bring a large covered pot of water to a rapid boil. While the water boils, rinse the greens, shake off excess water and chop coarsely. Sauté the garlic in the oil for a minute, until soft and golden, taking care not to scorch it. Add the damp greens and sauté, stirring often, until they are wilted but still bright green (this takes longer for kale, and less time for chard). Sprinkle with salt, pepper and nutmeg, and remove from heat. In a blender or food processor, puree the cooked greens with the ricotta/cottage cheese until smooth and evenly colored. Add more salt and pepper to taste. When water boils, stir in pasta, cover, and return to boil. Then uncover the pot and cook the pasta until al dente. Drain pasta and immediately toss it with the sauce in a warmed serving bowl. Top with parmesan or your choice of cheese, toasted walnuts and optional tomatoes.