



LOON ORGANICS

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What's in the box 9/13:

Savoy cabbage: Use in the summer pasta recipe on pg 2. Or see Week 6 newsletter for recipes.

Rainbow Carrots: Either yellow or purple carrots. Fun!

Poblano Hot Pepper: DARK GREEN in color. Pretty mild, but still handle with care.

Typically these are Stuffed (chile rellenos), roasted and peeled, battered and fried, or dried to make ancho chile powder.

Jimmy Nardello Sweet Italian Peppers (long, skinny reddish-green pepper. SWEET not hot).

Italian Sweet Pepper & Bell Pepper: These are SWEET.

Red, orange or yellow in color.

Arugula: Very tasty raw! Or lightly cook to mellow the flavor.

Garlic: Use it up in our pasta or potato, tomato, eggplant bake.

Recipes on the 2nd page.

Cucumbers: Getting down to the last weeks of cucumbers. Try our refrigerator pickle recipe.

Yukon Potatoes: Two potato recipes on page 2.

Tomatoes: Red slicing tomatoes from our hoop house, a few heirlooms from the field, and mixed cherry tomatoes.

Globe Eggplant: another great eggplant recipe on page 2.

Scallions: a wonderful addition to salsa, salads or to top an omelette or other egg dish. See recipe on page 2.

Purple or Green Beans: purple beans turn green when cooked. Wonderful in a stir-fry or sauteed in a pasta dish.

Week 13: Weather Watchers

Talk to just about any farmer and conversation will usually include some mention, rant or rave about the weather. The weather and climate is our biggest challenge and can dictate a year of success (or failure) in this business, and we can't do a darn thing to control it. Every morning and every evening (and nearly every couple hours in between!) we check the NOAA weather forecast for our area and also read a couple meteorologist's weather blogs to keep up with the weather on the horizon. Adam is so fascinated by the weather that he has pondered taking winter college classes on meteorology in the future. It sure would come in handy on the farm! So bear with me as I talk about the weather once again this week.

After such a rainy and wet Spring, I would have never imagined saying this but...we need some rain! We've had an absolutely gorgeous stretch of weather these last few weeks, finally giving us the summer dreamy blue skies and warm, dry days to make up for a cold June and a beastly July. It's been wonderful weather for farm work and great for all the dairy and hay farmers that need to get their hay cut and put up for the winter. We vegetable farmers wouldn't mind getting a little shower now though to help along some of our fall greens and broccoli. It's been about 3 weeks now since we've received any measurable rainfall. Finally we can say that all parts of the farm have truly dried out and some of our crops we have already been irrigating to help them along. Looks like a cold front is moving through on Monday night and we will hope to get a shower as that passes through.

When we need to water our farm's crops we have a couple different options, depending on what field needs water. For fields close to our barn, we can easily run hoses and irrigation lines out to hook up to our "drip tape"—an irrigation hose that has small slits to let the water drip out every 8-12 inches. The drip tape is a very efficient way to water, delivering the moisture directly to the soil which minimizes evaporation and concentrates the moisture to the plant's root zone. For larger areas, we use either drip tape or we run our sprinkler off of the farm's irrigation pond. We also have a 500-gallon water tank that we can pull around the farm and hook up to a row or two of vegetables to give them a little drink. Although we can water everything on the farm if need be, it does take a long time. In a really bad drought, we may need to water everything in a matter of days, not weeks. The dry spell this fall, although nothing serious, reminds us that we would like to eventually improve our irrigation system, and that means putting in a 2nd well on our farm solely for irrigation. Our current farm well has sufficient water for household use and light farm watering, but not enough pressure for us to run high-powered sprinklers or run several acres of drip irrigation at a time. With the dynamic, extreme weather that we are dealing with more and more often lately, an irrigation well seems like some of the best crop insurance we can invest in.

We're picking our tomatoes, beans, and peppers heavily on Tuesday and Wednesday as temps could drop down to 33° on Wed night and a light frost could be likely. September 15th is our average frost date and we might just get exactly an 'average' frost this year. Obviously, we are hoping that we miss the frost so that we have a few more weeks of peppers, tomatoes, eggplant and beans for CSA. Our fingers are crossed!

Produce Storage: All produce this week should be stored in the fridge, EXCEPT for Tomatoes, onions, potatoes, and Garlic. Potatoes are cured now and should stay in their paper bag on the counter. The garlic and onions are pretty dry now and should be left out of the fridge. Store everything else (cukes, beans, peppers etc) in plastic bags in the fridge, if it isn't packed in one already, to keep in moisture and prevent greens from wilting. Everything else should last over a week if stored properly.

Preserving Tips: Make refrigerator pickles with your cucumbers. Peppers can be chopped and frozen raw for adding to soups, sauces and pizzas this winter. Beans can be steamed and frozen. Tomatoes can be frozen—de-core and quarter and throw in freezer bags. We don't de-skin or de-seed our tomatoes, but you have that option before freezing. Frozen tomatoes are best used in sauces or soups. Cabbage will keep for weeks (months even) if stored in plastic bag. Take off any wilted outer leaves before using. Savoy cabbage can be substituted for Napa cabbage in any recipe. Our 2011 Week 6 newsletter (on our website) had several napa cabbage recipes that you could use savoy cabbage in.

These are our favorite refrigerator pickles! They will store for months if kept refrigerated—no need to can.

Refrigerator Pickles

1 quart jar of sliced, unpeeled cucumbers
1 medium onions sliced thin
1 cup sugar
1 cup vinegar
2 Tbsp salt
1/4 tsp celery salt
1/4 tsp. ground tumeric
1/4 tsp mustard seed
Mix together sugar, vinegar and spices. Heat and pour over cucumbers. Let cool completely. Store in refrigerator.

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Recipe Corner

We usually make a variation of the pasta dish below for supper at least once a week. It's easy, healthy and uses up a lot of your veggies. You can sub, take out, or add in just about any veggie you have on hand. Pesto is also a nice addition. Lately we've been leaving out the pesto and just toss the finished dish with a lot of olive oil, salt and pepper, freshly grated parmesan and maybe a little goat cheese or feta, if we have it on hand.

Summer Pasta

1/2 pound pasta noodles or spaghetti (we like penne, spiral or bow-tie noodles)
3 Tbsp olive oil
1 medium onion or 1 bunch scallions
3-4 small to medium carrots (optional)
2 Jimmy Nardello sweet peppers (long, red skinny)
1 large bell pepper or 2 Italian sweet peppers (red, orange, yellow or green in color)
1 Globe eggplant or 2 Japanese eggplants
1/4 of a savoy cabbage, thinly sliced OR 1/4 pound of arugula (1/2 your CSA bag) —or sub kale, chard, collards

2 garlic cloves
1/2 pound green or purple beans
1 zucchini or summer squash (if have)
1 lg or 2 med tomatoes
Salt and pepper
Minced basil or other fresh herb
~Boil the water for pasta. Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a large skillet on medium heat. Chop the onion or white and light green parts of the scallions, along with the garlic and add to olive oil. Saute garlic/onions for a couple minutes, being careful not to burn the garlic and scallion mixture. Add chopped carrot and eggplant to skillet, sautéing for a few minutes while you chop up the zucchini/summer squash and sweet peppers. Snap the ends of the beans off and chop in half. Add zucchini, sweet peppers and beans to the skillet and sauté for 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Add diced tomatoes and greens (arugula, kale etc) and cook until greens are wilted and tender and tomatoes have cooked down and released some of their juices—5-10 minutes. Season again to taste with salt and pepper. Add pasta to boiled water and cook until al dente. Drain pasta and combine pasta and veggies in a large bowl. Toss with more olive oil, freshly grated parmesan cheese, salt and pepper, and fresh minced basil or other herb. Add pesto if desired or goat or feta cheese.

A CSA member passed along this recipe that utilizes many of your CSA veggies. It's an easy meal from a great cookbook!

Summer Tomato, Potato, and Eggplant Bake

1# boiling potatoes (about 4-6 potatoes), peeled and cut into 1/8 inch slices
Salt and freshly ground pepper
1 large unpeeled eggplant, cut into 1/2 inch slices, then cut in half
1# Zucchini (about 3-4 small), cut into 1/2 inch slices
1 each yellow, red and green bell peppers, halved, seeded, and cut into 1/2 inch strips
2 onions, peeled and cut into 1/2 inch strips
3 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
20 kalamata olives, pitted
4 big tomatoes, cut into 1 inch chunks

1 cup chunks of feta cheese (optional)
~Arrange potatoes in a single layer on the bottom of an ovenproof glass baking pan (about 9 x 12 inches). Sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper and drizzle with a little of the oil.
Toss the vegetables with the remaining oil and spread them over the potato layer. Scatter the olives and feta cheese, if you are using it, over the vegetables and cover tightly with aluminum foil. Place in a preheated 375 degree oven for 30 minutes. Remove the aluminum foil and continue baking another hour to 1 1/2 hours, or until all the vegetables are cooked through. Brush with additional oil if the vegetables seem to be getting dry. From *Savoring the Seasons of the Northern Heartland* by Beth Dooley and Lucia Watson

Potato Skin Battalions

3 potatoes, baked
1/3 c. plain yogurt
4-6 scallions, chopped
1/2 c. salsa & Sprigs of cilantro
Heat the oven to 350. Bake the potatoes in the oven for 1 hour. Halve the potatoes. Scoop the soft potato out of the skins and into a bowl. Mix in the onions and yogurt, mashing together with a fork. Put the mixture back in the skins, garnish with a dollop of salsa and a sprig of cilantro. From "Top 100 Recipes for Happy Kids"