



# LOON ORGANICS

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## What's in the box 9/27:

**Leeks:** Not to be confused with green onions or scallions, leeks are in the onion family, but sweeter flavor when cooked. See more info on page 2.

**Herb Bouquet:** Sage, parsley and oregano combined. Great to add to a roasting chicken or veggies. Or chop up all the herbs and add to softened butter for an herb spread. Hang herbs upside down out of sun to dry, if you can't use them all.

**Green Bell Sweet Pepper and Colored Sweet Italian Pepper:** We still have some peppers we picked before the frost. This is probably the last of them for the year.

**Romaine Lettuce:** Makes a great combo. with your beets in a salad.

**Garlic:** store on your counter or in your cupboard for use this winter, if you can't use it all.

**Yukon Potatoes:** Make mashed potatoes to top a shepherd's pie. Comfort food at its best.

**Tomatoes:** Red slicing tomatoes and roma tomatoes. Use in our soup recipe on page 2.

**Acorn & Delicata Squash:** First of year. Cut in half and bake up.

**Red Beets:** Very sweet! Slice up and roast or steam. If you're not a beet fan, then make chocolate cake! Recipe on page 2.

**Broccoli:** Nice in a stir-fry with your cabbage, green peppers, chicken, beef or tofu.

**Yellow Onions:** Roast in the September Soup Recipe (pg 2).

## Week 15: Twilight of the Season

It's official: It is fall and it sure feels and looks it too! Our crew last week donned many layers of clothes, windbreakers, hats and even a snowmobile suit while working to keep out the chill of the cold, dewy mornings. We pushed back our start time for the rest of the season to 8 a.m. now that the mornings are so chilly and the sun doesn't rise until shortly after 7. There have been some spectacular sunrises with low clouds and fog burning off in a pinkey-orange sunlit haze over green and copper farm fields. The sunsets come early too; we've been surprised to find it dark as night by 8 p.m. We are entering the twilight of the farming season.

The workload has lessened considerably since losing the summer crops in the frost. Only a handful of the fields we cultivate still have crops in them, mainly the fall brassicas, herbs and fall root vegetable fields. The rest of the fields have been cleaned up and disced with the tractor. We will apply compost to many of our fields this fall to prepare them for next Spring and some fields will get seeded with 'hairy vetch', a leguminous cover crop that will overwinter and continue growing next Spring. This week's big task was to work on bringing the winter squash harvest in and get the squashes in our greenhouse to cure. We're over halfway on the squash harvest and will finish that up in the coming week. The squash looks pretty good overall. We are growing acorn squashes (in your box today), butternuts, buttercups (both the traditional blue-skinned and orange-skinned varieties), delicata, carnivals (cross between an acorn and delicata) and some pie pumpkins. The delicata variety of squash had some bug damage, so yields are low on that variety. However we have plenty of other varieties of squash to make up for the delicata. The buttercup varieties are our favorite squashes. They have dry, dense, sweet flesh that is almost flaky in texture—not stringy at all. In past years, we have tried growing spaghetti squash, and many of the varieties we have tried never ripen up well and end up rotting in the field before they are ripe, so we refrained from growing spaghettis this year.

Next week we will add Brussels Sprouts to the box, more squashes, kale and continue on with taters, beets, maybe carrots, etc. We are looking forward to a bit of a warm up this week, getting back into the seventies (even a shot at 80°!) and only down in the forties at night. I don't know about you, but every year as fall moves in we find ourselves craving warm, steaming comfort foods! Check out the 2<sup>nd</sup> page of the newsletter for some of our favorite fall dishes. Here's what we have on our to-cook list this week: garlicky potatoes, September soup, baked squash, cabbage sautéed with bacon and garlic, and for dessert: chocolate beet cake with milk chocolate ganache frosting (maybe with vanilla ice cream too!). Sounds like a feast! Enjoy your veggies.

**Produce Storage:** All produce this week should be stored in the fridge, EXCEPT for Tomatoes, onions, potatoes, squash, 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 (beets, 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:** Peppers can be chopped and frozen raw for adding to soups, sauces and pizzas this winter. 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 and beets will store in a bag for months in the crisper drawer of your fridge. If stored, just peel outer leaves off before using.

**Leeks** are related to onions and garlic, but are milder and sweeter to both of their cousins. The best way to enjoy your leeks is to slowly sauté them in olive oil until they soften and caramelize. Most recipes with leeks start out this way or you can enjoy caramelized leeks on bruschetta with a favorite cheese.

One of my favorite dishes with leeks is a **Leek and Goat Cheese Galette** (a galette is a free-form pie) in Deborah Madison's Cookbook *Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone*. The recipe is on-line at Cookerati blog:

<http://www.cookerati.com/leek-and-goat-cheese-galette/>

Recipe calls for 6 leeks—you can use a combination of your leeks and onions to make up the difference. This takes a little bit of time; it would be a great weekend dish to try.

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## Recipe Corner

Turn on the oven and bake up some delicious vegetable goodness! Oven-roasted beets are amazing addition to a salad. Put the roasted beets on a bed of greens, add in some toasted nuts, chunks of your favorite cheese, your favorite dressing and you have a great lunch. Or roast the beets, peel, and puree for your beet chocolate cake.

### Roasted Beets

Preheat oven to 450°. Drizzle a large piece of aluminum foil with one tablespoon oil, and season with salt and pepper. Fold aluminum foil up to enclose beets. Place on a small baking sheet and roast until tender when pierced with the tip of a knife, about 1 hour. After beets are cooked and cooled, you can usually peel off the skins easily with your hands.

We have a beet chocolate cake recipe on our website, but this recipe calls for pureed beets and it also includes a milk chocolate ganache frosting. Yum! We've made beet chocolate cake many times without anyone knowing the secret beet ingredient! The cooked, pureed beets make for a very moist cake. Recipes adapted from NaturallyElla.com and Tiger in a Jar.

### Beet Chocolate Cake with Milk Chocolate Ganache Frosting

1 c butter, softened, divided	1 ½ cups packed dark brown sugar
3 eggs	1 oz semisweet chocolate
2 cups pureed cooked beets	1 tsp vanilla extract
2 c. all-purpose flour	2 tsp baking soda
¼ tsp salt	

For ganache frosting:

2 cups heavy cream	3 ½ cups milk chocolate, cut into even pieces
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In a mixing bowl, cream ¾ cup butter and brown sugar. Add eggs; mix well. Melt chocolate with remaining butter; stir until smooth. Cool slightly. Blend chocolate mixture, beets and vanilla into the creamed mixture (mixture will appear separated). Sift together the flour, baking soda and salt; add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Pour into a 9-inch cake pan. Bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pan before removing to wire rack. Cool completely and then frost with ganache.

To make ganache, place chocolate chunks in a large bowl. Bring the heavy cream almost to a boil (when the bubbles form around the edge of the pan), pull from heat and pour over the chocolate. Let sit for 2 minutes and then whisk the ganache smooth. Cover with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator until chilled and set (2-3 hours.) Once ganache is chilled, taking a hand mixer (or a spoon), whip ganache so that it becomes slightly fluffy (only 1-2 minutes with a hand mixer.)

Another favorite fall recipe at Casa Loon. We love this soup so much I think we include it in the newsletter every year. A great way to use up end-of-the-season tomatoes that need some sweetening up. This is best with a grilled cheese sandwich.

### Zuppa per Settembre (September Soup)

1 ½ lbs tomatoes cored, quartered (about 3 large slicing tomatoes, 6 small, or 9 roma tomatoes) Seed tomatoes if desired.

1 lb colored sweet peppers (2 small Ital. peppers) trimmed, quartered, seeded	
1 jalapeno pepper or sprinkling of red pepper flakes	
2 red or yellow onions cut into wedges	2 cloves garlic quartered lengthwise
1 tsp kosher or sea salt	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
1/4 cup heavy cream –room temperature	sourdough croutons (optional)

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. Have a great week. Your farmers. Laura. Adam and Eli