



LOON ORGANICS

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What's in the box 8/20:

Red and Orange Sweet

Peppers: Red, long peppers are SWEET! Not hot. These are red and look like a cayenne, but are sweet. Some boxes also got an orange pepper which is also a sweet Italian pepper. Use both raw or sauté up for a fruity flavor.

Bi-color Sweet corn: from Nistler Farms. Delicious!

Salad Mix: Mix of baby lettuces and mesclun (baby kale, tatsoi, arugula, and mizuna). Tender!

Watermelon (on the side): We grow red, orange, and yellow varieties and there are a mix in the boxes on the side. The rinds all look similar so it will be a surprise when you cut it open! Check out the watermelon salsa recipe on page 2

Muskmelon: Most are ready to eat or very soon. Yellow color to the rind and fragrant smell means ready to eat.

Purple Carrots: A favorite Loon variety. Purple on the outside and orange inside. They are great raw or cooked.

Cherry Tomatoes: Perfect for a salad.

Beefsteak and Heirloom

Tomatoes: All types are great for fresh eating. The heirlooms are all different colors. When slightly soft to touch, they are ready to eat.

Broccoli: Bumper crop.

Cucumbers: Great salad topper

Jalapeño: Medium heat

Fresh Garlic: is pretty spicy raw. Cook for a mellower flavor.

CSA: Week Ten (*Half Share Blue Week*)

Feels like the dog days of summer again on the farm with the blast of heat and humidity this week. We can usually rely on State Fair time to get a last shot of 90 degree temps. We're trying to relish this weather as we know that cooler weather will beckon again. And we know the heat units are good to help push summer crops into peak production, catch the fall crops up like squash, and to mature the corn and beans before frost comes. Rain would be much appreciated, but looks like there's no chance for the next couple weeks, so the irrigation continues on.

The heat is pushing some of our crops to ripen up very quickly, and we have several plantings of broccoli all ready now. Some of the heads are 2+ pounds each and it's a stretch to fit them into a CSA box, especially with the melons and corn. We are prioritizing getting tomatoes, melons, and corn out to everyone as they have a limited season and are favorites of many. Beets, kale, onions, eggplant, herbs, celery, and more sweet peppers will make an appearance again in the box soon when we have more room. We were very happy to have some very nice salad mixes for the box this week, and it's such a treat to have a fresh salad in August. Not sure if we will have salad mix again next week, but we have lots more coming in the boxes for September and October. If anyone is interested in extra broccoli for freezing for this winter, let us know and we can send some for you next week. We will sell it to you for our wholesale price: \$1.50/lb. A minimum order of 10 pounds is helpful. The broccoli has been so good right now and the stem is actually sweeter than the florets, so peel the skin off and use the stem in your stir-fry or juice it up.

This week we're also looking forward to celebrating Loon's littlest farmer, Eli, turning two years old! We can't quite believe that two years have passed already, and that he can now go out to the hoop house and pick his own ripe cherry tomatoes to eat. Sungolds are his favorite. It wasn't that long ago that he was taking naps in the pack shed while we sorted tomatoes and cleaned garlic. It's such a joy to have him in our lives, and introduce new aspects of the farm to him, like picking kale and identifying the line-up of tractor implements on machinery hill. If his tractor obsession keeps up, he may definitely be a farmer when he grows up (or at least a really good teenage farm employee). Or even better, maybe he can be our tractor mechanic! No pressure though, kid. As good vegetable farmer parents, we are of course planning on making birthday cupcakes with veggies in them—carrot and chocolate chip zucchini. With a side of melon. Yum!

As we mentioned in last week's newsletter, we are getting our sweet corn this year from Nistler Farms in Delano. It's really great eating this year. While not organic, the corn is non-GMO, not sprayed with chemical pesticides (so watch out for the worm here and there), and is picked fresh for you. It keeps well in your fridge, but always tastes better eaten within a few days. Enjoy!

Next week's box: sweet corn, tomatoes, cucumbers, watermelon and/or muskmelon, last summer squash?, broccoli, yellow carrots, more sweet peppers, celery?, eggplant?, onions, parsley.

Have a good week. Your farmers, Laura, Adam, + Eli

Produce Storage: Tomatoes should NOT be refrigerated. Leave on your counter out of the sun—some may need a few days to ripen to perfection. Garlic can go in or out of fridge. Watermelons can either go in fridge or stay on counter. Muskmelons should go in fridge if very ripe, otherwise on the counter. All other produce should be stored in the fridge in plastic bags, if it isn't packed in one already.

Preserving Tips: Steam or boil carrots, sweet corn, and broccoli for 5 minutes or so until just tender, cool, then put in freezer bags. Tomatoes can be de-cored, quartered, and frozen raw for use this winter in soups, chilis, and sauces. Peppers also can be chopped raw and frozen for winter use. Make refrigerator or freezer pickles with your cucumbers. Recipes on our website.

Purple Carrots—what's the deal?

Although we know carrots as orange, like many other vegetables as well, they come in a variety of colors. Early cultivated carrots were actually purple, however the variety we grow is much more recently bred and is called "Purple Haze". There are also reddish, white, and yellow carrots too. You'll see the yellow carrots in your box next week.

Carrots have a lot of beta-carotene (which is converted into Vitamin A), and are good source of potassium, calcium, phosphorus, and more. Purple carrots contain anti-oxidant rich lycopene which gives them their purple color. Another good reason not to peel the purple skin off!

Other Recipe Ideas from our Website:

- [Summer Pasta](#)
- [Freezer Cucumber Pickles](#)
- [Refrigerator Pickles](#)
- [Zucchini Carrot Bread with Ginger](#)

Elsewhere:

- [Watermelon Lemonade](#) on www.smittenkitchen.com

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Recipe Corner

I tried this watermelon salsa at our friend Irene's last week, and it was quite refreshing with tortilla chips. The recipe is originally from *The Best American Cookbooks*. It serves 4-6, and stays good for several days in the fridge.

Watermelon Salsa

4 c seeded and diced watermelon (any variety or color)
1/3 c minced onion 1/2 c minced fresh cilantro
1 Tbsp. minced jalapeno pepper 1/2 tsp. salt
1-2 garlic cloves, minced 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice (we used bottled)
Toss all the ingredients together in a medium nonreactive bowl. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes, and then serve immediately. Tips: Don't be tempted to skip the mellowing time of 30 minutes – that's really important for flavors to blossom.

We made this curry last week when the temps were a bit cooler, but I still wanted to include it as it is a delicious way to use up a ton of different vegetables. Plus it makes enough for multiple meals, which is always a plus at our house. Substitute out whatever veggies you have on hand. Adapted from the *Spoonriver Cookbook*.

East Indian Curry with Red Lentils

1/2 cup red lentils 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 Tbsp. olive oil 1 (14-oz) can coconut milk (light or regular)
1 large onion, cut into large pieces 1 cup red/orange sweet pepper, diced
2-3 Tablespoons red curry paste (we use Thai Kitchen brand found at many stores)
3 cups broccoli florets (1-inch pieces)
4 cups diced carrots
2 1/2 cups green beans or peeled broccoli stem, cut into 2-inch pieces
1 1/2 cups diced fresh tomato 2 cups basmati rice (we used brown rice)
3 cups vegetable stock Fresh cilantro (optional—we didn't use)

If using brown rice, start now so that it will be done by the time the vegetables are finished cooking. If using basmati, directions are below. Sort through the lentils to make sure there are no stones. Place the lentils in a bowl and rinse them several times with water. Put the lentils and 3 cups of water in a small saucepan. Bring the water to a boil; then turn down the heat and simmer, uncovered, until the lentils are soft, about 15 minutes. Heat the oil in a large soup pot. Saute the onion over medium heat until it is soft. Add the peppers, carrots, tomatoes, stock, and salt and stir. Simmer until the carrots are tender, approximately 10-12 minutes. Place a few tablespoons of coconut milk in a small bowl and stir in the red curry paste. Add this mixture to the stew. Add the rest of the coconut milk along with the cauliflower and green beans. Bring the stew to a low boil; then turn down the heat, stir in the lentils, and simmer for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, prepare the basmati rice according to package directions. Serve the stew with rice, and garnish with cilantro.

This is a fun twist on eating corn that is refreshing on these hot days.

Sweet Corn Kernels with Lime

4-6 ears of sweet corn
A few large pats of butter, the more the better I think
Fresh grated lime zest from one lime
Sea salt
Cut kernels off cob, and sauté in butter for just a minute or two. Mix lime zest and salt together, add to corn and stir for another minute or two. Serve immediately. The flavors seem to pop in your mouth!

Another simple unstoppable recipe from *Chez Panisse Vegetables*. We eat a variation of this salad nearly every week, usually subbing out the oregano for basil or parsley. Would also be great on top of your salad greens this week!

Greek Salad

Combine sliced cucumbers, red onions, tomatoes, crumbled feta cheese, and black olives, and dress with fruity olive oil, roughly chopped oregano (or basil), and black pepper.