



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 9/4:

Muskmelons (on side): last wk

Sweet Peppers: Includes Red Jimmy Nardello Sweet Peppers, Italian Orange and Sweet Peppers with tapered ends, and some boxes have an orange bell pepper. All peppers are SWEET! Not hot. Orange peppers are like a bell pepper, but sweeter! Use in any recipe calling for sweet peppers.

Celery: Strong, celery flavor makes it great for cooking or chop finely to add to salads. Lots of celery flavor!

Green Beans: A great last batch of beans. Saute up or steam for a green bean salad.

Salad Mix: Tender mix of baby lettuces makes a great salad.

Beets: Mix of red, gold, and candy-striped beets in your bag. Around 2 pounds of beets/bag.

Cherry Tomatoes: Mixed rainbow colors and varieties. Put in a bowl on your table to snack on all week.

Beefsteak and Heirloom

Tomatoes: All types are great for fresh eating. The heirlooms are all different colors. Most are ripe and ready to eat. Take all tomatoes out of the bag when you get home.

Broccoli: sweet stem

Cucumbers: Still great-tasting! We like them in a salad with thinly sliced celery.

Fresh Onions: Walla Walla Sweet onions. Last week of these. Try grilling onion rings on the grill for your next burger.

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

On most Sunday evenings, Adam and I will do a farm tour to check on all the crops, plan the week's CSA box out, and write the farm's to-do list. As we went out this Sunday, the first day of September, we saw two owls fly across the back fields from the giant Cottonwood and soar through a stunning sunset sky of vivid pink and orange. The breeze was cool, even chilly. The fall squash vines were dying back to reveal some beautiful butternuts turning from green to tan, ripening and getting sweeter by the day. The staghorn sumac bushes were just starting to bloom, and I was happy to think about the honeybees and other pollinators enjoying sumac's sweet nectar and pollen this week. With cooler weather and the calendar moving to September, we let out a big sigh of relief to have made it through "summer" with good crops, great staff, no hail or other major catastrophes.

That being said, the season is far from over and we still have a lot ahead of us this fall. We triumphantly mowed down the zucchini plants last week since they were done for, feeling like we would all have hours of our lives freed up each week from picking and washing, and then the tomatoes decided to take over the farm. One can try to run and hide from tomatoes, but even in my dreams at night I am sorting tomatoes into categories of ripe, less ripe, canner-grades, and chicken-grade, mimicking the hours I spend in the afternoons at the tomato sorting table. We have so many tomatoes that even the chickens are getting tired of eating them at this point, so we send the way-past-gone tomatoes to the compost pile. We, on the other hand, are still not anywhere close to being sick of eating fresh tomatoes yet. I hope you all aren't sick of them either 'cause we still have loads of tomatoes for the next couple weeks, as the heirlooms have really started to pop. One of the few bright spots of the dry weather we have had the past few weeks, is that it really helps to cut down on the tomato disease in the field and the plants look remarkably healthy. They usually start to go down hill in mid-September, and by then we are usually expecting a first frost sometime soon.

We did get a "dust settler" of just over a tenth of an inch of rain on Saturday night. More would have been appreciated, but we will take anything now. No rain is in the forecast this week. Once we get this dry, it seems hard for any storms that go through to conjure up much moisture. Our irrigation well is making all the difference this year and is ensuring that we will have decent yields of fall crops. Adam will be busy watering one or two fields every day this week, and then gets to take a well-deserved weekend trip up to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area with a couple friends.

Watermelons are done for the season, and we had just enough muskmelons for the box today. This will be the last week of muskmelons. We are taking a week's break from sweet corn and perhaps that will return next week as well. The first cauliflowers are sizing up, so those will appear soon in the box. The sweet peppers are coloring up and coming in strong, and the fall carrots and potatoes will be back in the box next week again. We are picking our last planting of green beans, so last week or two of those. Fall is in the air and crops are a changing! **Next week's box:** tomatoes, peppers, cauliflower?, cucumbers, onions, celery, eggplant?, corn?, beans?, carrots, potatoes, garlic, leeks?

Produce Storage: Tomatoes and basil should not be refrigerated. Take the tomatoes out of the plastic bag they came in, and leave on your counter out of the sun—some may need a few days to ripen to perfection. All other produce, including onions, should be stored in the fridge in plastic bags, if it isn't packed in one already.

Preserving Tips: Steam or boil green beans, celery, and broccoli for 5 minutes or so until just tender, cool, then put in freezer bags. The beets will keep for months in your fridge. 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 pickles with your cucumbers. Recipes on website.

Celery: Homegrown celery is quite different than the pale, mild stuff at the grocery store from California. Our celery is robust and assertive, with a celery flavor 10x bigger than its conventional counterpart. The celery crop this year is quite tasty and more tender than last year. Celery likes a lot of water, so we have been doing our best to keep up with celery irrigation. The outer stalks of the plant, which are very green and sometimes bigger can be a little tough so you may want to reserve those stalks for light cooking or stocks. The lighter colored, smaller stalks will be more tender for raw eating. We like to finely chop the stalks and add to salads raw. The leaves are a great seasoning. See last year's [Week 9](#) newsletter for a homemade celery salt recipe using the celery leaves.

Other Recipe Ideas from our Website:

- [September Soup](#)
- [Summer Pasta](#)
- [Freezer Cucumber Pickles](#)
- [Refrigerator Pickles](#)
- [Mediterranean Salad](#)
- [Jimmy Nardello Stuffed Peppers](#)

Contact us:

Laura and Adam
h: 320.587.0140/ c:763.464.4714
loonorganics@hotmail.com
www.loonorganics.com

Recipe Corner

We went from cold gazpacho last week to a hankering for a bowl of hot tomato basil soup on a chilly Monday. That's Minnesota weather, you betcha! Homemade tomato soup with fresh tomatoes is hard to beat, and nothing out of the can will ever quite compare again. It's a super easy way to use lots of tomatoes as well! From *Farmer John's Cookbook: The Real Dirt on Vegetables*. Serves 6.

Creamy Tomato Soup

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| 3 Tablespoons butter | 1 medium onion, coarsely chopped |
| 2 Tablespoons flour | 2 cups water or vegetable or chicken stock |
| 4 pounds tomatoes (the bag of beefsteak slicers is around 4 pounds—mix and match your varieties. The heirlooms and cherries would be a delicious addition too!) | |
| 2 Tablespoons light brown sugar | 6 whole cloves |
| 1 cup half-and-half, cream or non-dairy milk | |
| ½ teaspoon salt | freshly ground black pepper |
| 1/3 cup sliced basil (optional) | |

Melt the butter in a large stainless steel or enamelware pot over medium high heat. Add the onion; cook, stirring constantly, until tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Reduce the heat to medium. Sprinkle the flour over the onions and cook, stirring constantly, until the mixture foams. Pour the water or stock into the mixture and bring to a boil. Peel the tomatoes if desired (a quick tip is below this recipe) and remove the stem core. Cut them in half, and chop. Set aside ¾ cup of the chopped tomatoes. Add remaining tomatoes, brown sugar, and cloves to the pot. Leave uncovered and reduce the heat so that the mixture continues at a gentle simmer. Cook, uncovered, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes. Remove the pot from the heat and set it aside to cool slightly. Remove and discard the cloves. Transfer the soup to a blender or food processor or use an immersion blender and process to a smooth puree. Return soup to pot, place over low heat, and add the reserved chopped tomato. Stir in the half-and-half or cream and add salt and pepper to taste. Heat the soup, stirring constantly, until very warm (but avoid boiling it, as this will curdle the cream). Turn off the heat; stir in the basil if desired.

To make your tomatoes virtually peel themselves, score a very shallow X on the bottom of each one, put them in a heatproof bowl or measuring cup, and pour boiling water over them. Leave them in the boiling water for a minute or so if necessary; the peel will loosen completely.

Eat Organic Celery: Conventionally grown celery is near the top of the list of vegetables that carry a high level of pesticides residue. Some studies have found traces of more than 60 pesticides on celery samples. The Environmental Working Group has a "Shopper's Guide to Pesticides" which lists the top 12 fruits and vegetables most contaminated with pesticides. This list is called the "[Dirty Dozen](#)" and celery is number two on that list! Apples, sweet bell peppers, cucumbers, cherry tomatoes, potatoes, and kale are also in the top 12. You can read the full list at the EWG [website: www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org).

A tasty, easy recipe passed along to us from a CSA member. Originally from: [NYT Recipes for Health](#).

Green Beans with Potatoes and Garlic

- 3/4 pound green beans, trimmed and broken in half (The CSA bag of beans is 1 lb)
 - 1 pound waxy potatoes, scrubbed and cut in 2-inch wedges
 - 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 - 2 to 3 large garlic cloves (to taste), minced
 - Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
 - 2 hardboiled eggs, diced (optional)
1. Steam the green beans above 1 inch of boiling water for four to five minutes until tender. Remove from the steamer, and rinse with cold water. Set aside. Add the potatoes, and steam for 10 to 15 minutes until tender.
 2. Heat the oil over medium heat in a large, nonstick skillet. Add the garlic, and cook for a minute or so until the garlic is fragrant. Stir in the beans and cook, stirring, for three minutes until quite tender and coated with oil (but still bright green). and pepper. Cook, stirring, until they begin to color lightly. Scatter the diced hard-
 3. Gently stir in the potatoes, and add salt boiled eggs over the top, cover and turn heat to low. Cook another three minutes. Serve hot or warm.