

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for August 21st & 22nd

1 bunch red beets
2 heads broccoli
1 small red cabbage
2/3# tomatoes
2 ears sweet corn
½# salad greens
½# green beans
2# All-Blue potatoes
1 zucchini
1 or 2 cucumbers

Large box additions

1 head red butter lettuce
1 bunch green curly kale
1 pint cherry tomatoes

Next week's produce (we think): more tomatoes – more corn – carrots – chard – purslane – parsley – eggplant

Local Roots Farm News

Every year, we hire a crew of people to work and live on the farm for the season. As our farm has grown, so has the size of our crew. We began with just a couple extra hands, and now at the height of the season we can have as many as nine people working on the farm on any given day. Now, some of our crew includes a mix of “senior” and experienced farm workers who we pay an hourly wage, and a group of apprentice farmers who live on the farm and receive a monthly stipend. Over the years, many of our apprentices have “graduated” onto starting or managing their own farms.

As we've grown, we've found it more and more important to have a core group of returning and experienced farm workers who can help us keep the whole complicated operation running smoothly every day. As much as we love the large (and growing) group of Local Roots alumni apprentices, it is hard to start afresh with a new group of workers each year. Jason and I are intentionally growing our farm to a size that will make it possible for us to hire more people at a wage that will enable them to stay with us for a few years at a stretch. At the same time, we plan to always keep some space in our crew for the enthusiastic, but inexperienced would-be farmers. After all, that's how Jason and I got our start in farming. The type of farming that we do is very complex, and it's no exaggeration to say that many aspects of it are similar to an artisan craft, only learned by practicing alongside an experienced craftsman.

On our farm, crew members do a little of everything: drive tractors, sow trays of seeds, deliver CSA boxes, stock the farm stand, work the farmers market, feed the chickens, weed the crops, move irrigation, transplant seedlings, and harvest, harvest, harvest and harvest. We are moving into the time of year when the volume and weight of our harvests get larger each week. Our farm crew is out there right now, picking corn, bagging up potatoes, folding boxes, and getting this week's veggies ready to head to your table. So, thank you to Rawley, Brady, Leah, Cara, Sam, Kyli, Annie, Sophia, Nick, Katherine, and our awesome workshare members, Tom (Local Roots alum, class of '09) and Angela, back for a second year!
~Siri, Jason, and baby farmhand Felix

Ideas and info for this week's produce

Sweet Sweet Corn – I ran out of room to sing the praises of sweet corn last week, but I assume you all know what to do when you get a couple ears of fresh picked corn. We take a lot of care with our sweet corn, growing it from transplants rather than direct seeding. This takes a little more time in the beginning, but results in very uniform ripening, which is essential for us to be able to include in the CSA. If you want to do something different with your corn than the traditional boiled ears, you can try grilling. Soak whole ears, un-shucked in water, then cook on the grill for about 10 minutes. You can also put shucked corn directly on the grill. Drizzle some olive oil over the raw ears, rolling them around to coat, then grill until the kernels begin to brown, turning frequently. You'll end up with corn that is almost caramelized and a little more starchy in texture. Different, but good.

Recipe – Summer Succotash

- Cut zucchini, onion, and green beans into small uniform pieces – cubed is nice. Cut corn off the cob.
- Saute onion, zucchini, and green beans, along with a crushed clove or garlic, in olive oil over medium heat. You want the veggies to soften but not brown. Once the zucchini and green beans are tender, add the corn. Continue cooking until the corn is heated through and tender.
- This dish would also be nice with some chopped tomato added about halfway through.

I'll include a link to a similar recipe that serves as a good basis for my version.

Blue potatoes – After a little break from potatoes, they are back this week. Today's variety is All-Blue, a blue skinned, blue flesh variety that is great for frying or roasting. These make great breakfast potatoes, as they crisp up nicely and look cool. We are not washing our potatoes at this point, since the soil is dry and mostly not sticking to the potatoes. They are a little dusty, but they will store better than those that have been washed. Keep potatoes in their paper bag in a dark cabinet. If you begin to feel overwhelmed by potatoes in your CSA, don't worry: these potatoes will keep for many months.

Red cabbage – This petite little cabbage would be perfect for a coleslaw, or you could make a fun blue/purple version of *colcannon* an Irish dish of mashed potatoes and cabbage or kale. I'll include some links in the email today.

Tomatoes – This week's tomatoes may be less ripe than last week's. If your tomato is a little firm, just leave it out on the counter to ripen until soft. The cooler weather, while welcome, has caused tomatoes to ripen more slowly on the vine.