

# Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

## Box Contents for August 23rd & 124th

1 bunch beets  
1 bunch Lacinato kale  
1 head green butter lettuce  
1 ½# Desiree potatoes  
1# mixed tomatoes  
1 small bunch basil  
½# green beans  
1 bunch green onions  
zucchini  
1-2 heads broccoli

## Large box additions

2-3 tender leeks  
1 eggplant  
extra broccoli

## Local Roots Farm News

Here we are at the first week of the second half of our CSA season. This seems like a good time to update you all on farm news and the progress of our late summer and fall crops.

The weather this year has been much cooler than normal, but it has produced some amazing vegetables. We've never had such outstanding production from our kale, chard, and lettuce at this point in the season. Usually, August is a time when many of our leafy crops like kale and salad greens succumb to pests like the flea beetle and the disgusting aphid. Who knows what is making the difference this year – it could be the weather, but it could also be our new location. To be sure, we have an enormous reserve of organic matter in our soil here at the new farm, which can make up for many other deficiencies. We also are more isolated from other vegetable farms. At the old location, we were in the middle of a dense neighborhood of small to medium size vegetable farms, while here we are at least a mile from the next closest vegetable field, and separated by lots of trees and hedges. Anecdotal evidence indicates that pests like the flea beetle proliferate in monoculture-ish environments, where they have a ready supply of food all season long. Although all the vegetable farmers in our valley grow a wide variety of different crops, we all grow a lot of cabbage and mustard family vegetables – the mainstay of the flea beetle's diet. Perhaps our newfound isolation will give us some protection against these pests. Or perhaps this year is just a fluke. You just never know with farming, because causality is infinitely complex.

Anyway, back to the farm news. Although the weather has been cool, we have still managed to grow some of our favorite summer crops. As you know, we've had plenty of zucchini and cucumbers. Tomatoes are doing just fine, and our basil is finally doing something besides sitting in the ground not growing. In the next couple weeks we may even have some sweet corn for the CSA. The winter squash is always hard to judge. Once the plants begin to sprawl all over the place it's difficult to discern how many baby squash have been set on the vines. We know the Delicata have made lots of fruits, and it will just depend on the September weather as to how many of them fully ripen.

Our other important fall crops are cover crops. We planted three roughly plowed acres to a summer buckwheat crop, which we'll be mowing and disking in this week, to be followed soon by a planting of hardy winter rye. As we finish up harvesting beds of quick crops like lettuce, turnips, salad, and mustard greens, more and more of our field will be sown to over-wintering cover crops to protect against erosion and build fertility. OK – looks like I'm out of room. Time to get back to work! Enjoy your veggies – Siri, Jason, Felix, and crew.

## Ideas and info for this week's produce

**Tomatoes!** – This week we are happy to be giving each of you a full pound of assorted heirloom tomatoes. Jason tells me that some of these beauties are very ripe and should be eaten ASAP. The varieties in today's harvest include: Black Trifele, Brandywine, Paul Robeson, Black Prince, Green Zebra, Cosmonaut Volkov, and Pink Beauty.

**Desiree potatoes** – The purple potatoes are done for the year, and we've moved on to the very lovely Desiree, a dense, fine-grained potato that is great for potato salad. Desiree also makes fine mashed potatoes, as we learned a couple nights ago. Today's box includes the makings for a nice salad of steamed or boiled potatoes, cooked green beans, slices of tomato and a fresh basil dressing. Add some hard-boiled egg or tuna to make a simple summer evening supper.

### *Recipe – Mashed potatoes with kale*

- Strip kale leaves from central stems and roughly chop. Place in pan along with butter or olive oil, sauté for 5-10 minutes, then add ¼ cup water, cover and cook until quite soft – about 15 minutes.
- Scrub potatoes and cut into chunks. Place in saucepan, add water to completely cover, bring to boil, and cook until potatoes can be easily pierced with a paring knife, 15-20 minutes, depending on size of potato chunks.
- Drain potatoes, add some milk, butter, and/or salt according to taste, mash with hand masher. When well mashed, add kale and any final seasoning, mix well. I think it would be tasty to add some chopped green onions too.

**Basil** – To store, please do not refrigerate. You can keep your basil in a jar of water on the counter, or in a plastic bag filled with air like a balloon. For real.