

# Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

## Box Contents for September 25<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>

1# tomatoes

2# cucumbers

1 bunch Nelson carrots

1 bunch white turnips

1 bunch arugula

~1# Savoy cabbage

1 medium or 2 small cauliflower

2 ears Tuxedo corn – last of the year...

1 acorn squash

### Large box additions

1 bunch red beets

1.5# pounds parsnips

Next week's produce (we think): more tomatoes – sweet peppers – beets – potatoes – baby leeks - radishes – Rainbow chard

## Local Roots Farm News

In late September, Jason and I start thinking a lot about the upcoming year. Although there's still a long way to go before the end of the 2012 season, there are important decisions to make now: where should we plant the garlic? Which types of cover crops should we plant in which fields? Different cover crops have different pros and cons. Rye and other cereal grains germinate quickly and establish a good ground cover early, which helps prevent soil erosion in the case of flooding. On the other hand, they are difficult to kill and work into the soil in the spring, so rye might not be the best choice to plant in a field where we want to sow our early salad greens. Vetch and clover are much easier to till into the soil in the spring, but they grow very slowly at this time of year, so we risk having exposed soil during flood season. Going through this process of figuring out how many pounds of this and that cover crop seed to buy leads us to think about how many acres we need to have available for our early plants, which leads us to think about what we want to grow more or less of next year. Suddenly 2013 seems like it's already begun!

In the even bigger picture, we are also asking questions about the future of our farm and how to make it more sustainable for our soil, our employees, and ourselves. We are in a phase of deliberate and careful growth, adding an acre or two each year, always in concert with a "marketing" plan for how we expect to sell the extra quantity of produce we will grow. The CSA – all of you, together with all of us – is the core of our farm. When we make plans for the upcoming season(s), the first things we always think about are ways to improve the CSA. This year, we've added two weeks to the season, and are experimenting with growing a much larger volume of storage crops than ever before, trying to get a system in place that will enable us to extend the season even further in future seasons. A bigger challenge for us is adding weeks to the CSA season in the spring. We're thinking about the tradeoffs between using our greenhouses for early spring crops versus heat-loving summer crops (tomatoes and peppers). If we want to harvest greens for the CSA in May that precludes us using that greenhouse space for tomatoes (which need to be transplanted in April). We're looking at some creative techniques for open-air tomato growing, and also planning to add more hoop-houses to our collection this winter.

Still, there are another SIX weeks remaining in this season's CSA. Lots of great stuff is still to come, including leeks, parsnips, radicchio, romanesco, celery root, more beautiful cabbage, and at least a few more tomatoes... Enjoy!

## Ideas and info for this week's produce

**Cauliflower** – Oh, beautiful cauliflower. Such a fussy crop to grow, but so good to eat. At our house, we can't get enough of roasted cauliflower. I cut the head into cross-sections about 1/4' thick, spread the pieces on an oiled baking sheet, sprinkle with a little salt, and roast at 400 until brown and crisp on the edges and meltingly soft on the inside. Turn the pieces at least once to achieve even browning. If you want to bulk out this dish for serving more than a couple people, add some thinly sliced carrots, turnips, and/or cabbage to the mix. The key to success is not to overcrowd the baking pan, so use two, or cook in batches.

I also really like a cauliflower salad that I will link to in today's email.

**Corn** – We've been very happy with our corn crop this summer. It's definitely not the most lucrative crop we grow, taking up a lot of space per plant just to get a single ear of corn, but it's so delicious and so fun to pick that we certainly continue to grow it. Today's corn is probably a little past it's point of perfection, and is extremely sweet and a bit starchy. I love to eat corn raw, but once it's hit this super-ripe stage, I prefer it boiled or grilled. Try cutting it off the ear (after cooking) and adding to a green salad or a mixed stir-fry.

**Acorn Squash** – This is the best squash variety for making a classic hippie stuffed squash recipe. I like a mix of cooked brown rice, sunflower seeds, and sautéed onion, stuffed in a halved acorn squash, topped with cheesy sauce, and baked until tender. Acorn squash is the best for long storage, so if you want to save a squash to eat in December or January, this is the one to save.

**Cucumbers** – I was really hoping to give some nice heads of dill this week, but they just aren't quite ready yet. If you want to do some pickling, your cukes will keep pretty well in a plastic bag in the fridge. I'm thinking the dill will be coming next week, or you can just use dried dill seed.