

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for September 27th & 28th

1 bunch carrots
1 huge or two medium broccoli
1 head Romanesco cauliflower
1 large head Savoy cabbage
1 head Samantha red oakleaf lettuce
3/4# mixed tomatoes
1 1/2# Yellow Finn potatoes
1 bunch basil
shallots

Large box additions

Red Kuri winter squash
extra lettuce

Local Roots Farm News

Welcome New Members!

We have eight new members joining us for the last 5 weeks of the season. Thanks to all of you who did a little recruiting for us. At this time of year, we always consider expanding our CSA for the upcoming season. We're awash in beautiful fall produce, and it's easy to harvest, since many of the items are single cut (broccoli, lettuce, cabbage) rather than bunches that take more time or beans and peas that take forever. We love the CSA harvest, because we can give you whatever is the absolute best this week on the farm, and because there's no waste in the harvest. When we harvest for our two farmers markets, we always end up picking more food than we actually sell. We do have some good outlets for our market leftovers, including Patty Pan Grill, who turns it veggie quesadillas you can buy at the market, and the food bank gets anything that is highly perishable. But still, it's a joy on CSA days to see all the boxes of food disappear into the van and know that it's all going to a good home.

Over the years, we've slowly expanded our CSA membership, from 50 our first season to more than 130 now. The CSA is truly the foundation of our farm business. You put your trust in us by paying us up front every spring, and we make all of our important decisions about what and how much to grow with the CSA members in mind. Here, on our new farm, we feel that this season has gone very smoothly. There's been much less stress than usual about whether we'll have enough of certain crops to include in the CSA each week, and most weeks we have been able to choose from a larger list of available items to create a mix of produce that we hope will feel abundant and varied, but not too daunting in its volume. We're also pleased that we've been able to give tomatoes in the CSA eight times (so far) this season. That's a new record!

Anyway, enough with the self-congratulation. There are, of course, challenges to running the CSA successfully, and we (specifically, I, Siri) experience no small amount of anxiety each May as the first week of CSA approaches and the crops in the field appear to be few and far between. There are also small hiccups almost every week, like a missing item here or there, or a misplaced Large box. We appreciate your tolerance of these occasional problems, and do our best to prevent (or fix) them.

In early fall, we always start to look forward to the next growing season. We say things like "we have to grow more corn next year!" and "we should plant more of those purple potatoes." If there's something you particularly loved (or didn't love) this year, please let us know. We're ready to make plans for the future!

Ideas and info for this week's produce

It's a brassica extravaganza this week, with big heads of cabbage, Romanesco, and broccoli straining the seams of the CSA boxes. What to do with all this bounty? Here are some ideas:

Romanesco cauliflower – This crazy looking vegetable is a wonderful fall treat. Its flavor is like a sweet and nutty cauliflower, and you can do anything with Romanesco that you would do with cauliflower. My favorite thing to do is roast. Break/cut into florets and chunks. The inner heart/stem part is very sweet and roasts up very well. Cut it into cubes or slices and include in the mix. Spread on a cookie sheet in a single layer, toss with some light cooking oil and a generous inch of salt, and roast at about 400°, occasionally shaking the pan or flipping the pieces so they brown evenly. In somewhere between 20-40 minutes the chunks will be brown on the outside and tender on the inside. You can do the same with the broccoli. **Storage note – Romanesco keeps very well. Store it in a sealed container in the fridge and cut off sections as needed. With care, it can keep up to two weeks. **Broccoli**, on the other hand, may begin to turn yellow after more than four or five days in the fridge. I recommend you use your broccoli first.

Another of our all time favorite recipes is a Sicilian pasta dish with Romanesco, anchovy, onion, raisins, and saffron. We ate it at a restaurant in Palermo and got the list of ingredients from the owner, and then found a Sicilian cookbook by author Azzolina Pupella that includes an actual recipe. I'll include the recipe in today's email

Savoy cabbage - This cabbage is also a pretty good keeper, so if you are daunted by the amount of produce this week, you can save a section of your cabbage for a couple weeks. You might just have to trim off the cut surfaces if they've begun to dry out. I love long-cooked cabbage, braised in the stovetop or in the oven. You could also use the cabbage, potatoes, and carrots as the base for a lovely fall soup. Combined with some cooked beans, noodles, and crushed tomatoes, you'll have a hearty minestrone-esqe soup that would be great with a dollop of pesto mixed in at the end.