

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for October 9th & 10th

1/2# tomatoes
1 bunch Nelson carrots
1 bunch Rainbow chard
2 “Little Gem” lettuce
1 head cauliflower
1 head ‘Music’ garlic
1.5# parsnips
1 Delicata squash

Large box additions

extra head of garlic
¼# arugula
1# cucumbers

Next week’s produce (we think): potatoes – carrots – lettuce – broccoli – leeks – sweet peppers – bok choy – cabbage

Local Roots Farm News

We had several frosty mornings on the farm last week, putting an end to our cucumber and zucchini plants, as well as some other “minor” crops like escarole and purslane. The frosty mornings were followed by some of the most beautiful fall days I’ve ever seen, with temperatures in the low seventies and sunny skies. It’s a bit of a relief to take some items off the pick list for our market and restaurant harvests, as our crew is gradually shrinking and the sun is setting earlier. It’s been a record-setting season for us at our two Seattle farmers markets (Queen Anne and Broadway), and it seems like the harvests keep getting bigger every week. So, we were both happy and sad to have our bumper cucumber year come to a sudden stop. We can use those hours to harvest the gorgeous cauliflower and other fall crops that are now coming into full production.

Another consequence of the frosts is that we hustled to get our winter squash out of the field. After a couple days of frost, we saw some indications of minor damage to the skin of some squash varieties, so we decided to just get it all picked and brought into our greenhouse. Normally, we pick our squash a little at a time, selling and putting some in the CSA as we go, so we never have a huge quantity to deal with all at once. We had done a fair amount of squash picking already this year, but a LOT more remained in the field. Over a few days last week we brought in approximately 4,000 pounds of squash. We spread them all out in our greenhouse to allow their skins to dry and harden in the warm air. We are growing larger quantities than ever before of some storage crops (carrots, beets, parsnips, squash, potatoes) and figuring out how we can store these crops for a longer term winter CSA in future seasons. The squash are great, since they don’t require refrigeration, but they do need to be protected from freezing, so we are now storing about 100 boxes of Delicata squash in a big extra room in our house. You can look forward to at least three more lovely winter squash in your CSA box before the season is over.

Ideas and info for this week’s produce

Delicata Squash - The king of squash! We love this variety, and it seems as though we can’t grow enough of it. Whatever we bring to market in the fall always completely sells out, and we find ourselves wishing we had saved more for our own winter eating. This year we have produced a lot more than ever before... we’ll see how long it lasts.

Delicata has a thin, edible skin, making it very easy to prepare and enjoy. Cut the squash the long way into two little boats. Scoop out the seeds (save them for roasting if you like), and then cut the boats into “C” shapes. You can slice them thinly and sauté, or cut them into thicker pieces, arrange on an oiled baking sheet, and roast at 375 until soft inside and browned on the outside (turn over once). You can also keep the squash boats whole and bake either alone or stuffed with some delicious filling. Delicata is remarkably sweet and free from stringy bits. It is the best.

Parsnips – Parsnips are somewhere between a potato and a carrot in terms of texture, and have a flavor that is mildly sweet and somewhat herbaceous. They are very versatile – last night we combined them with Yellow Finn potatoes and mashed them with milk and butter. You can also steam, sauté, bake, or roast. I like to cut them coin shapes and bake, along with beets and/or carrots, for a colorful mixed root dish. You don’t need to peel them, especially when they are freshly dug (like these are) rather than coming out of winter storage. Just give them a good scrub and leave the skin on.

Cauliflower – This is the second week we’ve managed to put cauliflower in the CSA this year. Crops like cauliflower and romanesco pose a problem for farms like ours because they don’t ripen all at once. So we have taken to planting way more than we need for the CSA in the hope that enough will be ready at the same time to put in the CSA. I am quite pleased to have had two plantings work out so well this year.

Little Gem Baby Lettuce – These baby romaines are one of this year’s big hits for us. They are dense, sweet, and wonderful. They are not, though, especially frost tolerant. Use them soon!

Recipe - salad with cauliflower and delicata chunks

- On separate cookie sheets, roast similarly sized cauliflower and delicata chunks. Set them aside when done.
- Top a salad with the roasted goodies and dress with a simple vinaigrette.