

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for October 30th & 31st

1 bunch Nelson carrots
1 head Romaine lettuce
1 Winter Luxury pie pumpkin
2# Desiree potatoes
1 head celery root
1 bunch Rainbow chard
1 head 'Music' garlic
1 bunch cilantro

Large box additions

Fennel
Red cabbage

Next week's produce (we think): Delicata squash – carrots – parsnips – leek – cauliflower – kale – turnips

Local Roots Farm News

As we head toward November, we are delighted to be bringing you another week of fresh greens, sweet squash, and hearty roots. This has been a remarkable fall, and the breadth of produce still coming out of our fields is amazing. We did have a few casualties of the recent frost + heavy rain, namely broccoli, which we had hoped to include in the boxes this week. Instead it has melted into a squishy mess. Otherwise, we find ourselves in the happy position of having to choose between a number of different crops to include in the CSA, aiming to provide a good mix of different types of vegetables each week without overwhelming you with more than you can eat.

At this time of year, we keep a watchful eye on the weather and monitor the flood forecast on a daily basis. If we do get a big flood, we'll have just a few days to get all our storage crops out of the field. On the other hand, if we pick everything now, when there is no significant flood on the forecast, we don't really have the space to store everything that we have grown. We're splitting the difference on some crops, bringing in enough beets and carrots to fill our extended CSA season boxes, but leaving the rest in the field and continuing to harvest them to fill the weekly restaurant orders. As much as I find these little logic puzzles to be fun, it would be better if we had enough cold storage space that we didn't have to be so exacting about our root crop harvest strategy. We'll put that on the wish list for next year.

Our bountiful crop of winter squash presents a different storage conundrum. They don't need to be refrigerated, but they do need to be protected from rain, frost, and little critters. We completely filled our 30'x90' greenhouse during this year's squash harvest, and then picked more! To make room for the last big picking, we packed all the small squash in boxes and moved them into our house. For the last few weeks we've been housing thousands of pounds of Delicata, Butternut, and pie pumpkins in a big empty room adjacent to our kitchen, doling them out in your boxes and to our restaurant customers. Hundreds of big squash remain in our greenhouse, where they are, as yet, unscathed by mice. We're not going to press our luck though. We're holding on to enough squash to finish out our extended CSA, but the rest we are selling off as fast as we can.

Ideas and info for this week's produce

Cilantro – Despite its prevalence in the cuisines of warm places (Mexico, Vietnam), cilantro prefers the cool weather of late fall. All summer long, while the market is full of tomatoes and chili peppers, we get lots of customers asking for cilantro. “No,” we tell them, “it doesn't like the hot weather.” But now, cilantro is here in abundance! It will laugh off light and heavy frosts, soldiering on through the heart of winter. Time to make some pho! Or whip up this delicious sauce, which goes with many things and freezes perfectly.

Recipe – Garlic Cilantro Sauce

1 medium garlic clove
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup coarsely chopped fresh cilantro
1/4 cup olive oil
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1/8 teaspoon cayenne
Mince garlic and mash to a paste with salt. Transfer to a blender and add remaining sauce ingredients, then blend until smooth.

Winter Luxury pie pumpkin – This is, hands down, the best pie pumpkin on earth. The flesh is sweet and completely smooth. We bake the whole thing in the oven at about 350 (poke with a paring knife first), for an hour or so, or until the pumpkin is totally soft and beginning to slump. Allow to cool. The skin will readily separate from the flesh, and is easy to peel off. Spoon off enough flesh to reach the seed cavity, then scoop out the seeds and strings. From a smallish pumpkin, you'll get two to three cups of usable pumpkin. This variety is so sweet that we reduce the amount of sugar in any (other) pie filling recipe.

Recipe - Jason's Pumpkin Pie Filling

Mix together:
1.5 cups roasted winter luxury pumpkin
3/4 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup whipping cream
3 eggs, beaten
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
Thoroughly mix the ingredients with a whisk or a fork. Pour into a frozen 9" pie crust and bake for 15 minutes at 450. After 15 minutes, turn down the oven to 325 and bake another 30 minutes or until the pie is set.

Of course, you don't have to make pie. This pumpkin would be ideal for soup, baby food, or any really any squash recipe.

Other veggies – Oops! Out of room! See email for more ideas.