

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for July 5th & 6th

1 bunch Shunkyo radishes
1 bunch collard greens
1 bunch turnips
1 bunch bok choy
1 bunch green onions
½# salad greens
¾# broccoli

Large box additions

extra broccoli
1 lovely zucchini
½# snow peas

Local Roots Farm News

Kale goes mainstream?

For the first few years of the CSA, I surveyed our membership at the end of each season and asked what people's most and least favorite vegetables were. Inevitably, kale was at the top of the list of most disliked, and we cut way back on the number of times it appears in the CSA now. For me, it's kind of hard to figure out how much is too much of certain vegetables, because I could happily eat kale (and turnips, lettuce, beets, broccoli, etc) every day, and twice on Sundays. But, the people had spoken, so we scaled back on kale.

People's suspicion of kale extends to the farmers market too. For the first three years we attended farmers markets, we rarely sold more than 20 or 30 bunched of kale. Sometimes, in the fall, when the tomatoes, peaches, corn, and tomatoes are all gone, we could sell 50 bunches, but that was an impressive exception. Now it's all different. We sold 170 bunches of assorted types of kale at the Broadway farmers market a couple weeks ago. Some CSA members (you know who you are), stopped by the market this past Sunday to pick up some extra bunches of kale – apparently the huge bunch in the box last week was not enough.

So, what's the difference? Has your outlook on kale changed? Can we achieve the same thing with radishes? I hope so, because here they are again this week!

Summer crops update

This week is still very heavy on the leaves and quick-growing roots of spring, but new and exciting vegetables of summer are progressing very well. We've given some extra water to our first plantings of beets and carrots, and hope to be picking those for next week. We will probably begin picking sugar snap peas next week too, and may have enough zucchini to start giving one per box. Tomatoes, potatoes, onions, cucumbers and green beans are all looking very strong and healthy this year, so by the end of July the deluge of salad and turnips should be only a memory... Enjoy them while they last!

Farm Visits & Work Parties

Now that the summer weather is finally here, some of you have inquired about visiting/working on the farm. You are all welcome any time, but Saturday afternoons are the best time for us to give tours or show you where to pull weeds. Just send me an email to let me know you are coming, and I'll send directions to the farm.

Ideas and info for this week's produce

Broccoli – We are very happy to finally be harvesting large heads of broccoli. All of our early plantings were a variety called Green King, which performed admirably for us last year, but this year have been disappointing. Rather than making big, beautiful crowns, they instead made small, ping-pong ball size heads. With only about 250 plants per bed, each planting was not producing enough to give more than a small handful of broccoli to each CSA box. Now, we are harvesting the superb Arcadia broccoli. These are some proper heads of broccoli!

We've been eating little roasted heads of broccoli almost every night. Although the weather is now a bit warm for roasting, you might want to try it anyway. Cut your broccoli into spears, about the thickness of a fat thumb. Arrange on a cookie sheet, and sprinkle with a high-heat oil like canola or grape seed and a generous pinch of salt. Shake the pan a little to distribute the oil and try to arrange the broccoli in a single layer. Roast at about 400° for 10 minutes, then check their progress. With a spatula, flip them over, and continue to cook until done to your liking. If you leave them in a long time, they will get very crispy and potato-chip-like in their salty goodness. Splash with a little balsamic vinegar before eating.

Turnips – We weren't planning on doubling up on turnips again this week, but we have a prodigious quantity of them in the field. Some of these are pretty big, which makes them good for soup, puree, or a great gratin recipe that I linked to in the email today. With the green onions and bok choy, you could also revisit the Asian-esque stir-fry recipe from Week One. I have copied and pasted that recipe in the text of the email as well.

Collard Greens - No kale this week, but instead you are receiving some big and beautiful collard greens. If you've got some leftover barbecue and baked beans from a Fourth of July meal, these would be a great accompaniment. We usually cook them like kale, braised/sautéed until medium soft, but long-cooked Southern style collards are also delicious. Chop somewhat finely, then cook with some extra liquid for 30 minutes or more. I use rich chicken stock when we have it, and you can also add ham, bacon, or just a splash of apple cider vinegar. Cook until the collards are pretty soft, continuing to add liquid to keep the pot from drying out. The rich green broth at the bottom of the pan is called pot liquor, and it is awesome.