

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for July 10th & 11th

1 bunch Red Russian kale
1 bunch Pink Beauty radishes
1 head Flashy Trout's Back lettuce
1 bunch kohlrabi
1 head 'Samantha' red oakleaf lettuce
1 bunch baby bok choy
1 bunch 'Nelson' carrots

Large box additions

1 zucchini
1 bunch Rainbow chard
1 baby Romaine lettuce

Next week's produce (we think): zucchini – peas – arugula – turnips – broccoli – lettuce – Rainbow chard

Local Roots Farm News

Summer is here!

Right on cue, on or about the Fourth of July, our amazing Pacific Northwest summer begins. This year is no exception, and the contrast between this week and the weather during most of June is profound. Our first planting of sweet corn, which was indeed knee high by the Fourth of July, is waist high now, just a week later. All the moisture in the soil, plus long days of full sun, combine to make plants (and weeds) grow like crazy. It's the start of the fun time of year, when we get to stop worrying about whether we'll have enough produce to fill our CSA boxes each week, and start worrying about how we're going to pick and sell everything that's ready to harvest.

Preparing for fall

It happens every year. The hot, dry weather arrives just as we are preparing to transplant our big fall crops: broccoli, cauliflower, kale, chard, and about 4000 heads of radicchio. Although there's still plenty of residual moisture in the soil, we water all our transplants immediately upon planting to give them a good start in life. Their little roots take time to reach out into the surrounding soil, and the drip irrigation eases the transition. We have a limited amount of water from our well each day, so we have to plan out our transplanting schedule carefully. Yesterday we put in 400 Romanesco broccoli, 720 curly kale, and 1200 lettuce and watered them in. Today, we'll put in another 1200 lettuce, plus almost 1500 broccoli plants. By the middle of July, almost all our major fall crops will be in and growing. After that, we just plant a few beds of quick growing crops each week until late August, and then our planting is all done for the year.

Chickens!

We've been talking about getting laying hens for over a year, and last week we picked up about 40 Ameracauna pullets (hens that have just started laying). They are happily pecking and scratching outside our living room window, and laying about a dozen little tiny eggs a day. We'll be keeping most of our eggs for ourselves and our farm crew, but may occasionally have some for sale on the farm. Eventually we would like to raise enough eggs that we can include them in the CSA, but we're not ready to keep 400 hens yet... stay tuned.

Ideas and info for this week's produce

Lettuce – This week's lettuces are Samantha, a red leaf lettuce that is one of our staple varieties, and Flashy Trout's Back, a gorgeous, tender, Romaine-type lettuce that is my absolute favorite lettuce. Here are some summery ideas for using your lettuce bounty:

- Fill romaine leaf "boats" with hummus and top with sliced radish, carrots, and/or onion.
- Spread lettuce leaves on a platter and top with grilled meat or veggies, hot off the grill.
- Make lettuce soup! (Recipe in today's email)
- Salad for supper: chop lettuce, carrots, radishes, peeled kohlrabi, mix in a bowl with feta cheese, garbanzo beans, and your favorite dressing.

Kohlrabi – For those of you who are baffled by kohlrabi, some encouraging news: this is probably the last time you will see kohlrabi this season... it's a fast growing crop that helps us provide some variation to the leafy-ness that pervades the first few weeks of the CSA, but soon we will be flush with broccoli, cabbage, potatoes, and other more familiar veggies. So. Enjoy your kohlrabi while you have the chance.

Recipe – Kohlrabi and radish slaw

- Peel and shred kohlrabi (use the large holes on a box grater or Cuisinart). Use your hands to squeeze out some of the excess moisture.
- Shred or julienne radishes and add to the kohlrabi.
- Sprinkle on some salt and vinegar and mix well.
- At this point, you can add chopped or dried herbs (dill, cilantro and/or parsley) and a little yogurt or sour cream.

Red Russian kale – This is the best kale for eating raw in salad. I've also just started using a few leaves of this kale in my morning smoothie, and baby Felix likes it too! My smoothie recipe is yogurt, orange juice, banana, and any kind of frozen fruit. To add kale, I put a few leaves, along with some ice cubes, in the blender first. I blend until the kale is pulverized, then add the remaining ingredients. Fun!

Pink Beauty Radishes – In truth, radishes are not my favorite vegetable. I think they're too fiery to snack on, and just a little goes a long way in a salad or sandwich. But, I can eat a whole bunch if I slice them thin and mix them with a generous amount of salt. I let them sit in a bowl for about 10 minutes, then rinse and drain. These quick pickled radishes are mild and delicious! Try it!