

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for August 2nd & 3rd

1 bunch red beets
1 bunch lacinato kale
2-3 Walla Walla onions
1 bunch baby turnips
1 bunch kohlrabi
1 head Romaine lettuce
1# assorted cucumbers
2-3 zucchini
1 small bunch dill
2 small stalks green garlic

Large box additions

1 tomato
1 head Flashy Trout lettuce
extra 1# cucumbers

Local Roots Farm News

Well, here it is Tuesday night at 5:30 and I'm just beginning to write this newsletter. I've been on baby duty most of the day so Jason could get some very important seeding done – fall cilantro crop is now in the ground. Farming with a baby has been much easier than we expected, but still definitely not the same as farming without a baby. We have lots of help from willing friends and family who come out to the farm for a day of Felix time, but most days it's just me, Jason, and Felix, trying to figure out how to get the most work done and still keep a baby fed, changed, and happy.

On harvest mornings, Jason often starts out harvesting lettuce with Felix in the backpack. I'll head out to pick something else (kale today), and by the time Felix is ready for his mid-morning snack we're usually done picking the first round of items. Once the rest of the crew starts rolling in with totes full of root veggies and salad greens, someone needs to stay in the wash station to rinse and pack the produce. At this point, Felix is often pretty happy to hang out in his playpen and watch the action in the wash station... for a little while.

When he starts to get tired and fussy, sometimes we go for a walk. We have an awesome hand-me-down Baby Jogger that will go off-road with ease, so Jason or I can walk around the field, checking up the progress of crops (and weeds), while Felix nods off. He also is pretty content to play on a quilt in the field while we work on transplanting, seeding, or moving irrigation. He loves to pull up grass... he must have learned that by watching us. He also loves to watch birds, flowers, and tractors.

I feel like we've been very lucky to get to spend so much time with our baby in his first year. He's forced us to slow our pace of work down a little, and to get creative about more efficient ways to get work done. He's accompanied us working outside in all kinds of weather, from building our first greenhouse in February to harvesting peas in the sun (with his sun hat on, don't worry). He ate his first sweet cherry tomato basking in the warm greenhouse, and loves to eat all kinds of farm veggies. Thanks, little Felix, for being such a good farm baby. Next year, it'll be time to learn how to drive a tractor.

Ideas and info for this week's produce

Cucumbers – This week we are giving an assortment of cucumbers: Miniature White, Little Leaf pickling cucumbers, and a few of the lovely Diva, a large slicing cuke. The differentiation between slicing and pickling seems to be mostly about the thickness of skin, with pickling cucumbers featuring a thinner skin (which also makes them the fastest to turn flabby when left unrefrigerated). Cukes should be stored in a sealed container the fridge, and will keep at least a week if uncut. All of these cucumbers will work for the refrigerator pickle recipe. One large or two medium cucumbers will probably fill a quart jar.

Recipe – Refrigerator Pickles

Slice cucumbers into 1/4" thick rounds. Slice half an onion and a sweet pepper into strips. Pack vegetables into a quart jar. Roughly chop dill and add to jar. In a saucepan, bring to a boil 3/4 cup apple cider vinegar, 1/2 cup water, 1/2 cup sugar (or honey), 1 teaspoon peppercorns, 1 1/2 teaspoons mustard seed and pour over cucumbers to fill jar. Leave uncovered and chill for 24 hours. Cover, and keep in fridge. Pickles will keep in the fridge for several weeks. (You can also make a half recipe.)

Turnips – Yes, they are back. If you are in the mood for pickling, I'm including a recipe for Japanese pickled turnips. We have many Japanese customers who buy a bunch or two of turnips every week. Every time I ask one of them what they will do with their turnips, they say "pickle!"

The recipe I have included in the email calls for using the roots and the leaves. These turnips have very nice leaves and you should definitely use them, cooked, pickled, or otherwise.

Beets – Hooray for beets! We have been waiting a long time for these darn beets to get large enough to put in the CSA. This is one of the few crops that has underperformed this season (along with broccoli, sigh), but now we should have sufficient quantities to start giving beets more consistently. The simplest way to prepare beets is to boil them whole (no need to peel) until they are easily pierced with a fork. Drain, and run under cold water. The skin will easily slip off. Then you can slice or cube and add to salad, dress with a little vinegar and oil for simple side dish, or feed to your baby. Our nine month old loves beets.

Green garlic – This garlic has progressed a little further toward maturity since we last gave it in the CSA, but is still at the stage when you can use the whole head and part of the stalk. Just chop finely and use as you would regular cured garlic. Like add it to some sautéed kale and kohlrabi leaves.