

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for August 12th

1 bunch golden beets
1 bunch carrots
2 zucchini
Mixed cucumbers
1/2# green beans
1# tomatoes
1 bunch purslane
1 bunch parsley
1 bunch White Russian kale
Dill heads

Next week's produce (we think): blue potatoes – carrots – tomatoes – celery – cabbage – zucchini – cucumbers – chard – garlic

Large box additions

Red leaf lettuce
Basil
Extra tomatoes

Local Roots Farm News

Potluck fun! About twenty people braved some aberrant Saturday traffic to join us for a beautiful evening on the farm. Mark your calendar for our next potluck on Saturday September 20th.

Flower U-Pick Sam, our field manager, has been working hard on a flower side project for the last two years, and has a beautiful patch of flowers growing next to our farmstand. For the next few weeks we are offering u-pick flowers as part of our honor system farmstand. If you are looking for a fun day trip before summer is over, come on out to the valley for a u-pick adventure. In addition to our flower patch, there are several u-pick berry farms in the neighborhood. Blueberries are in season right now. You are welcome to come on down our bumpy driveway and have a picnic in the shade of our giant maple trees.

We are looking forward to adding more new crops to our farm offerings over the coming years. We are settling in to a comfortable size for our vegetable production, and can turn our attention to adding new crops and learning how to grow, harvest, and market them. Flowers are a great addition – many are annuals that have a similar season to our vegetable crops, so we can use our same flats and seed starting space to grow the transplants, and the same bed preparation and planting technique as well.

Other crops we are dabbling in this year are perennials like strawberries, artichokes, and certain herbs. Perennials, especially those that take more than a year to produce a good crop, are more challenging for us. Weed control is almost impossible over the long wet winter, and our early attempts at herbs and artichokes resulted in spring weeds that towered above our crops. This year we planted two beds of strawberries into beds where we laid black landscape fabric to block weeds from growing. We still have some things to learn, but with some luck, we'll have strawberries to share next summer!

Ideas and info for this week's produce

Cucumbers and Dill – Here's a perennial favorite recipe that I always get CSA member requests for. One medium cuke will make a half recipe (use a pint jar).

Recipe – Refrigerator Pickles

Slice **cucumbers** into 1/4" thick rounds. Optional: Slice half an onion and a sweet pepper into strips. Pack vegetables into a quart jar, along with a whole head of **dill**. 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.)

Purslane – Purslane is the succulent-like bunch (I think it looks like a jade plant). All the parts of purslane are edible, including the thick main stems. Purslane's main claim to fame is its off-the-charts amount of Omega-3 fatty acid, which is as high per-serving as salmon. Omega-3s are the ones most of us are not getting enough of, and are important for heart and brain health. It's these fatty acids in purslane that make it somewhat (there's no nice way to say this) slimy in texture.

I like to eat purslane as a raw ingredient in grain and bean salads, where its lemony flavor and slight crunch mix well, similar to adding diced cucumber or bell peppers. Chop small pieces of stem and add to a black bean/couscous salad along with leaf sprigs. It would also be great in a mixed cucumber and tomato salad. You can also cook purslane, but I recommend doing it quickly, just to heat through. We sometimes grilled whole stems of purslane that had been marinated in a simple olive oil and vinegar dressing.

Parsley - Today's parsley was specially selected to go with your purslane in a great salad recipe that I will include in today's email, but it's also a natural partner to many of this week's other vegetables:

- Make a simple and quick Greek salad with your cukes, tomatoes and parsley
- Add some to cooked and chilled beets and dress with a little sherry vinegar and oil
- Toss blanched green beans with a splash of olive oil and minced parsley
- Saute or grill zucchini and top with parsley and dill flowers.

White Russian Kale – Super tender and great for salad... or cook like any other kale.