

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for August 11th

Lots of cucumbers

1# tomatoes

1 head red oakleaf lettuce

1 heads dill flowers

1 bunch carrots

1 bunch curly kale

½# sweet onions

1 bunch cilantro

1 bunch turnips

1 head “cooking” celery

Next week’s produce (we think): radishes – beets – kale – cabbage (maybe) – tomatoes – basil – carrots – onions – salad – zucchini

Large box additions

Broccoli

Extra 1# tomatoes

Local Roots Farm News

Here we are, at week 10 of the CSA season. In the “old” days (our first three years farming) this would be the mid-point of our CSA season. As we got better at growing for the fall season, we gradually added some extra weeks to get to our current 25-week schedule. The key to the extra long season is increased storage facilities, both in the form of extra refrigeration for stuff like root crops and cabbages, and our awesome insulated shipping container, which keeps our winter squash safe from freezing (and rodents). We now dedicate a big portion of our acreage to our fall storage crops, like beets, carrots, parsnips, potatoes, and squash, and then tuck them safely away before the twin threats of flood and freeze arrive in November.

For now, we are definitely in the heart of summer. Tomatoes are looking good and plentiful, corn just might make an appearance eventually, and our sweet pepper crop is already starting to show some color. I’ve been hinting at potatoes for a few weeks now, but that’s one of the crops that has been hit the hardest by our drought. We’ve never irrigated potatoes before, but this year we saw how small and slow-growing the plants were back in June and gave the whole field a dose of water. Despite that, we are looking at very low yields on potatoes. We will most likely hold off on giving as many potatoes as usual for the summer weeks of the CSA and save them for your fall boxes.

This week we will be returning to our two Thursday farmers markets, Queen Anne and Duvall. We’ve been on a break from those mid-week markets since mid-July, due to a combination of low yields from some key crops and too much work to do on the farm. It’s meant a bit of a financial loss, at least in terms of cash flow, but we believe that the time we re-allocated to planting and maintaining our fall crops will be worth the tradeoff.

The Queen Anne and Duvall markets both continue through October 15th. Come on out and support our fellow farmers! It’s been a tough year for all Washington growers, and now is the peak season for some of the best food in the world (Peaches! Melons! Peppers! Blackberries!) Drop some cash at a market and make a farmer smile.

Thanks for all your support of our farm! Siri, and the LRF crew

Ideas and info for this week’s produce

Celery – Let’s start with the most unusual thing. This celery is not your standard supermarket style. Celery is one of the most water-demanding crops around. I love celery, and have tried to grow it for years. This spring, when we decided to buy extra water to supplement our well water, we planned to use that “extra” for our water-loving crops like celery, chard, and fennel. As it turned out, we needed every last drop just to keep our crops going through the drought, so the celery has not gotten the extra gallons of water we had planned... all that to say that it’s not fat and juicy. I call it “cooking” celery, because it’s dense and strong in flavor. It’s probably better to think of it as an herb, not as a vegetable, and use accordingly. It will go splendidly with today’s carrots and onions to make a nice flavor base for beans or sautéed kale.

Kale – We are now picking the first of our “fall” kale, which we plant in mid-summer. The spring planted kale is pretty tired by now, and it’s always nice to get to move on to a fresh planting. Roast up some kale chips on one of these cool evenings. The sweet onions would go very nicely in there too.

Tomatoes – Just a reminder not to refrigerate your tomatoes. Their flavor will be best if you keep them on the counter. Most of today’s tomatoes are ready to eat now or over the next few days. In case you need any help figuring out to do with these lovely tomatoes, consider:

- Tomato sandwiches with butter or olive oil and salt
- Tomato and cucumber salad with mint and/or oregano
- Quick barely-cooked tomato sauce with noodles
- Blender gazpacho: tomato, cucumber, onion, parsley, olive oil, sherry vinegar, blended until smooth and chilled in the fridge. I would eat this every day.

Dill flowers – Use these to make some refrigerator pickles, or just roughly chop the flowers and sprinkle over a simple cucumber salad. You can store them in a jar of water on your counter for at least a week.

Order of eating:

Eat ASAP: nothing is urgent!

Will store for 3-4 days: lettuces, cilantro, tomatoes (depending on degree of ripeness)

Will store for a week: cucumbers, dill flowers, carrots, kale, onions, celery