

# Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

## Box Contents for September 6<sup>th</sup>

1.5# 'Red Gold' potatoes  
Spicy salad greens  
1# green beans  
1 head savoy cabbage  
1 smallish leek  
1 bunch sage  
1 zucchini  
1 bunch purslane  
2 ears sweet corn  
1 bunch turnips

## Large box additions

Eggplant  
Extra 2 ears corn

Next week's produce (we think): tomatoes return – carrots – beets – onions  
– tomatillos – bok choy – kale – cucumbers – green beans

## Local Roots Farm News

Hooray for rain! We were delighted to receive 1.25" of rain over the weekend, which is enough to give us a little break from irrigation, and will definitely allow us to start seeding the first of our cover crops. We use a pretty minimalist approach to irrigation, at least as far as vegetable farms go, and stick primarily with drip irrigation (perforated tube/hose that delivers water straight to the root zone of our crops). However, when it comes to getting an entire acre of cover crop seed to germinate, drip just isn't going to work... but our systems only enable us to water about 1/6 of an acre a day with our small-scale sprinklers, so we really rely on late summer/early fall rains to come before we can start planting our winter cover crops.

What are cover crops? These are thickly sown stands of grains or legumes (usually) that protect the soil over the rainy (and floody) time of year. Their root systems hold the soil in place, and they (we hope) shade out and suppress weeds from growing. Most cover crops also have many other benefits: some produce deep taproots that mine the minerals and other nutrients that get "washed" down by winter rains and irrigation. Deep rooted plants reach those nutrients, use them to build their leaves and stems, and then they are re-placed in the upper zone of our soil when we mow or disk the crop in the spring. Leguminous cover crops (peas, vetch, and clover) are one of the few plants that can capture atmospheric nitrogen and convert it to a more stable, plant-available form. We often sow a mix of legumes and rye: the rye grows fast and has a strong root system, while the clover or vetch will grow more slowly, but, protected by the rye over the rainy months, it will survive to put on vigorous growth in the early spring, and provide a nitrogen input for future vegetable crops.

We used to consider October to be our cover-cropping time of year, but after several tough winters that damaged our young cover crop seedlings, we now try to take advantage of these first late-summer rains to get as much of our open ground cover-cropped as possible. We still have LOTS of vegetables growing in the field, but we had about ten acres of fallow land this year that we will start cover-cropping first. Over the next seven weeks the farm will have a major transformation as we move into serious harvest time, and by November 1<sup>st</sup> we plan to have all but a few acres safely sown in a protective green blanket... until spring!

## Ideas and info for this week's produce

We are in a short tomato hiatus this week. The rain, for which we are very thankful, came along with some very chilly temperatures, and our plants are simply not ripening very much fruit over the last few days. We have LOTS of full-size tomatoes still on the plants, and the weather is forecast to return to summer-like conditions later this week. We usually have the supply to continue tomatoes in the CSA through late September, and we expect the same this year.

But we do have **Corn!** – We just can't help but plant a little bit of corn every year, even though it really doesn't earn its keep, income-wise, for the space it takes up. But. It's so good! This is all you'll be getting this year, as our first planting suffered from the cold weather in June and made lots of weird misshapen ears.

**Sage and Savoy Cabbage** – I've been waiting for a few weeks now to give these two items together, along with potatoes, so you can make one of my all-time favorite dishes, *pizzocheri*. Those of you who've been in the CSA for a few years have seen this before, and it's really worth trying. Sometimes we make an official version with special buckwheat noodles and fontina from Pacific Food Importers (a wonderland of food in SODO/International District area) and other times we just use whole wheat noodles, cheddar or jack cheese, and whatever greens we have around. It's basically a glorified casserole, made extra good by a sage-infused butter topping. More info in email.

**Purslane** - I'm hoping this will generate some good discussion and recipe sharing on our Facebook group. I am also including lots of links to recipes and ideas for using purslane in the email.

**Turnips** – We don't have a bunched green item in the CSA this week, but turnip greens are a great "bonus" item, and can be used like kale, chard, or mustard greens. To store without the tops getting all wilted, cut the turnips off, and store the roots and greens separately in a sealed bag or container in your fridge.

## **Order of eating:**

Eat ASAP: corn!, green beans

Will store for 3-4 days: Salad, purslane, turnip greens

Will store for a week: zucchini, sage, potatoes, leek, cabbage, turnips