

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for September 27th

Broccoli
1 head frisee
¾# green beans
1 zucchini
1 cucumber
2 sweet peppers
1 kohlrabi
1 head fennel
1 bunch lacinato kale
1 bunch tat soi
1.5# purple potatoes

Large box additions

1 head cauliflower
1# beets

Next week's produce (we think): escarole – beets – kale – cauliflower – tomatoes – sweet peppers – lettuce (maybe) – turnips – fennel flower

Local Roots Farm News

It's just another beautiful fall day here in the Snoqualmie Valley and it's hard to believe that we are just a little over a month out from the date when we had our first big flood last year. There is such profound change in the weather and on the farm between October 1st and November 1st! We really have just one more month (more like five weeks) in what I consider our regular growing season. We will spend a lot of time in October doing the heavy lifting of fall harvest, bringing in several acres worth of storage crops. By the first of November – the official start of flood season – we hope to have many thousands of pounds of roots and squash stored away for late fall and winter CSA distribution and sales. We do leave lots of other crops growing out in the field (kale, chard, radicchio, parsley, leeks) and in a mild winter, we will be able to keep picking those crops fresh. However, in a year like last year, we were pretty much done with the crops in the field by mid November, thanks to a series of floods that covered the whole farm. Flooding doesn't actually cause damage to most of our crops, but it does bring a small chance of bacterial contamination, so we follow guidelines about the appropriate waiting period for different crops before going out to harvest them again. For our fall and winter crops, this means waiting until early spring to pick the new growth from the plants that have survived the winter.

But! Thanks to our growing fleet of walk-in coolers, we are able to store tons (literally) of hardy crops for the winter. Just for our two double-size November CSA boxes, we will be reserving about 10,000 pounds of assorted roots, cabbage, potatoes and squash, just in case we need to fill all those boxes from storage due to flooding. Most of what we grow for winter storage is sold to our restaurant accounts, and we have been able to sell year-round for the last couple years with the combination of storage, early spring greenhouse crops, and some scraps of overwintered kales and leeks. Planning for winter sales is one of the more fun, and also more stressful, parts of our farming operation. We love being able to sell year round, especially because it provides winter income to our employees, but when things go wrong in our big storage crop plantings, it can really be scary. We are just starting to pick our fall carrot beds, and while they are definitely lower-yielding than in past seasons, we should still have lots of carrots for the fall and winter. We'll really be swimming in beets, though, so get ready for that!
Happy Fall ~ Siri, Jason, and the LRF crew

Ideas and info for this week's produce

This week's box has some last bits of summer and previews of fall and winter. Tomatoes are ripening slower than we had hoped, so we don't have enough for this week. We are guarding the harvests carefully and hope to have more tomatoes for you next week

Kohlrabi – One of the classic “weird” vegetables that people think of when they think of CSA boxes. Kohlrabi is mild, juicy, and great for eating raw or cooked. These fall specimens are perfect, and their leaves can be cooked just like kale, so you get a little bonus item.

Peel the outer skin before preparing – it's similar to broccoli stalks, where the inner parts are tender, but the outer skin is tough. Cut into sticks or thin slices and sprinkle with a little salt for a quick snack. Cut into cubes or chunks and roast. Grate on the large holes of a box grater for a quick slaw/salad.

Tat Soi - The bunched green that looks like spinach with white stems is tat soi, which you might recognize as one of the staples in our spicy salad mix. This green makes a nice addition to any stir-fry or soup, and is sort of half way between bok choy and baby spinach as far as cooking uses. There is an ongoing debate between me and Jason about whether tat soi really does taste like spinach or not... you be the judge.

Green Beans – This is the last of the beans for this season. If you are feeling overwhelmed with produce, blanching and freezing green beans is an easy way to preserve something for the winter. Cut into pieces or leave whole; blanch in boiling water for about 2 minutes, then drain and place in a bowl of ice water. Allow to thoroughly cool, then drain well and freeze on a cookie sheet. Once frozen, place in a freezer bag or reusable container and stick in the freezer. You'll appreciate being able to pull them out and add to a stir fry in December!

Order of eating:

Eat ASAP: broccoli and green beans (for peak flavor),

Will store for 3-4 days: kale, frisee, peppers, tat soi, kohlrabi leaves, zucchini

Will store for a week: potatoes, kohlrabi, fennel, cucumber