

# Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

## Box Contents for October 3<sup>rd</sup>

Broccoli  
Cauliflower  
Sweet peppers  
1 bunch collards  
1 bunch golden beets  
¾# tomatoes  
cucumber  
1 head assorted lettuce  
1 head escarole  
Fennel flowers

### Large box additions

1 bunch kale  
2 zucchini  
extra broccoli

Next week's produce (we think): carrots – potatoes – chard – turnips – winter squash - lettuce – peppers – maybe tomatoes?

## Local Roots Farm News

The CSA is truly the heart of our farm business, and most of our decisions about what to grow and how to grow it center around making sure we have a diverse selection of high-quality produce for the CSA boxes each week from June through November. This week I thought I'd write a little about another very important aspect of our farm: selling direct to restaurants. We have always done a little bit of business with restaurants, starting our very first year. We had a couple chef friends who were kind enough to buy our early attempts at growing, even though we had no idea how to bunch or package things for delivery – Jason made our first restaurant delivery on his bike, dropping off a plastic shopping bag full of radishes to Sitka & Spruce on his way to his “real” job at a law firm (a short-lived career, as it turned out).

Other restaurant owners found us at the farmers market. Café Flora's produce buyer liked our pea vines, and that began our more official efforts to sell to chefs, which meant sending a fresh sheet out several days in advance, taking orders, picking and packing, and delivering (ideally before the start of service!) For a few years, Jason or I would work on the farm all day, pick and pack restaurant orders at the last minute, and run back into Seattle to deliver on our way home. Eventually, the volume of sales to restaurants grew so much that we needed a dedicated delivery route. These days, we deliver to more than thirty restaurants each week, with both Wednesday and Saturday deliveries during most of the year. We feel very lucky to farm in an area where restaurant chefs and diners are so supportive of local farming. And it's not just the super high-end places that buy from us. You can find our produce at neighborhood spots like Café Lago, Juice Box, Brunswick and Hunt, Coyle's Bakeshop, Ciudad, and Vif, to name just a few. Restaurants also help us maintain crop diversity on the farm. Some of our most popular crops for restaurants are things that we don't include very often in the CSA: fennel (and fennel flowers!), radicchio, mustard greens, radishes, celeriac. Having a good market for these crops helps maintain a good balance and makes crop rotation easier. Here's to diversity of crops and diversity in our business – it's what keeps us resilient and well fed!  
~Siri, Jason, and the LRF crew

## Ideas and info for this week's produce

**Golden Beets** – The mildest flavored type of beet – at the market I always tell the beet-fearful that this would be the best choice for a beginner. The greens are edible and tasty. I recommend cutting the beets themselves off the greens, and storing the two components separately. Use the greens within a few days, and take a moment to pick out the yellow-y or wilted ones. You can use them alone, or mix with today's collards for a more substantial serving size.

As for the beets themselves, I encourage you to use them with the **fennel flowers** you are receiving. Either roast or boil your beets (whole is the easiest, because the beet skin will slip right off after cooking), then cool and slice into chunks or wedges, dress simply with oil and vinegar, and liberally sprinkle the fennel flowers atop. This concoction would also be a lovely addition to an escarole or lettuce salad. I'm also including a link to a recipe that uses fennel flowers on a tomato and cucumber salad. Fun and pretty!

**Tomatoes** – We are so glad to have a decent amount of tomatoes for this week's box! Please use today's tomatoes soon-ish. The storage life of late season tomatoes is much shorter than summer tomatoes, for reasons I don't completely understand.

**Escarole** – As always, please don't be fooled into thinking this is lettuce. The red-leafed head in your box is lettuce (either oakleaf or butter) but the green-leafed head is escarole – good for salad, but not the same as lettuce!

**Cauliflower** – This is definitely one of my favorite things to grow and to eat. It feels like such an accomplishment to pick a beautiful head of cauliflower! It's a finicky crop, and this year we had pretty good success with one of the two varieties we grow and pretty terrible results from the other, alas. I'm including several cauliflower recipes in the email. Our favorite is just chopped up and roasted on a cookie sheet. Our kids love cauliflower!

### **Order of eating:**

**Eat ASAP:** broccoli, tomatoes

**Will store for 3-4 days:** collards, beet greens, cauliflower, lettuce, escarole, peppers

**Will store for a week:** cucumbers, fennel flowers, beets