

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for June 21st

1 kohlrabi (the purple thing)
1 bunch dill
1 head red oakleaf lettuce
1 head baby Romaine
3/4# Sugarsnap peas
~3/4# 'Hakurei' turnips
1 bunch green chard
1 bunch red Russian kale
1 bunch arugula

Large box additions

First carrots!
Green curly kale
Extra head of lettuce

Next week's produce (we think): carrots! – cabbage – kale – lettuce – green onions – dill – shelling peas (probably!) – radishes – bok choy

Local Roots Farm News

Rain in June – For the last few weeks we've been watching with envy as our farming friends to both the north and south of us have received several bouts of good soaking rains. This weekend (and yesterday) we finally got our fair share. What a delight! After the intense drought of last year, I think I had resigned myself to the idea that hot dry weather is now the norm for us from April to October, and, to be honest, that perspective has been pretty discouraging. We are lucky to have good access to water for irrigation, but the daily grind of keeping everything watered is really exhausting. April and May were so dry this year it seemed certain we were in for a repeat of 2015, but now our familiar June-uary weather has finally returned. We are still amply prepared for our typical dry summer, and now we are heading into that season with a lot more moisture reserve in the soil. Good news for all!

Solstice week crop updates – The period around the summer solstice is a time of great change for most of the crops we grow. The fruiting crops of summer and fall are established and starting to set baby fruits, and we are beginning to plant our large stands of fall and winter storage crops.

We espied our first ripe cherry tomato sometime last week, a solid 10 days earlier than every before, most likely thanks to the very warm and sunny weather we had in May. *Full-size tomatoes* take a bit longer to ripen, but we are seeing good fruit set on our main-season plants, and usually expect enough to start giving in the CSA by late July.

Carrots are just starting up, and our first two planting dates seem set up to provide a steady supply for the next several weeks of the CSA.

Potatoes are just beginning to flower and we have been enjoying that special farmer/gardener treat of "new" potatoes, dug before the plants die back, so the skins are thin and tender and the potatoes are so sweet! We expect to have some true new potatoes for your boxes in a couple weeks.

Zucchini and cucumber plants are doing their amazing trick where they seem to double in size every day, and you should be seeing zucchini in your boxes by early to mid July

Brussels sprouts are going into the field tomorrow, followed in a week or two by our first plantings of fall *cauliflower, cabbage, romanesco and kale*.

We continue to plant lettuce, salad greens, and other quick crops like radishes and turnips all summer long, but these leafy crops will take up less of your box to make room for the heavy vegetables of summer.

Happy Summer Solstice! ~ Farmer Siri

Ideas and info for this week's produce

Arugula – By now, most everyone knows what arugula is. It's a member of the brassica family, along with many of the items in the box today (turnips, kale and kohlrabi – how's that for a diverse plant family!). It's somewhat peppery, possibly more so than what you will find at the grocery store. Partly that's because it's so fresh that the compounds that give it flavor have not degraded, and partly its because the arugula from California that fills grocery store shelves from coast to coast is heavily irrigated, which literally waters down the flavor of food. We give our produce more of a "tough love" approach, watering once at the time of seeding, and then that's it. The result is more flavor, and probably more nutrients. So, if you are little intimidated by spicy arugula, you can try lightly wilting it into pasta or warm beans, or mixing it together with the sweet lettuce in your box for more of an accent flavor. Best way to prepare this bunch is to just cut the leaves off right above the twist tie. We intentionally cut these bunches with long stems so you can do this.

Kohlrabi – Finally a little touch of color in what has been a very green start to the CSA season! Kohlrabi is a hidden gem of juicy sweetness hidden within a somewhat tough, but pretty, exterior. Peel the purple skin, then your options abound: slice or cut into sticks for snacking with just a sprinkle of salt. Shred on a box grater for slaw and season with today's dill. Cube, oil and salt, and bake on a cookie sheet until golden brown on the outside.

Dill – Store your dill in a glass of water on your countertop and it will last a week or more. Fresh dill is a great complement for cabbage, kohlrabi, potatoes, white beans, eggs, or green salad.

Green chard aka Bietole – Those of you who've been in the CSA for a few years may remember my story about our discovery of this variety of chard while traveling in Rome. It's much more tender than the flashy but thicker-leaved rainbow chard, almost like spinach. Try it sautéed with olive oil and salt until soft and melty. Dill goes great with chard too, perhaps as an omelet filling or quiche!

Order of eating:

Eat ASAP: arugula, peas

Will store for 3-4 days: lettuces, dill

Will store for a week: chard, kale, turnips, kohlrabi