

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for June 28th

1 head green cabbage
1 bunch dill
1 head lettuce (assorted varieties)
1/2# shelling peas
1 bunch radishes
1 bunch carrots
1 bunch green curly kale
1 bunch green onions

Large box additions

2 baby lettuce
extra 1/2# shelling peas
fresh garlic

Next week's produce (we think): more carrots! – chard – lettuce – other lettuce – fennel – escarole – garlic – some other greens ☺

Local Roots Farm News

Siri's semi-regular writer's block has set in this week, so I (Jason) will be writing the newsletter today. Lucky you! The days between the Summer Solstice and Independence Day are an amazingly important and consequential time on the farm. It's the time period when we are putting the most plants in the ground, it's when we have our last, biggest seeding week, the days are the longest, soil moisture (typically) is now so dry that we have to irrigate everything we seed and transplant, weeds are growing prodigiously, and the quantities and variety of what we harvest ramps up dramatically. Phew. It makes me tired simply writing it down.

Despite the workload increasing so much (or maybe because it it...) I don't think we fully understood the importance of this period of time in years past. But this year feels different. By removing the mid-week craziness that went with our Thursday market harvest, we suddenly have a much clearer understanding of how what we do in these two weeks can impact the whole rest of the year for us. Three years ago, July 4th fell on a Thursday, and they cancelled our farmers market. We all worked a half-day just hoeing and cultivating and killing weeds. A recurring topic for the rest of that season was how much better the year went because we had invested those hours killing weeds.

For us, one of the hardest parts about running this farm is managing our time such that we can invest the hours up front taking care of our crops at the best, most appropriate time rather than triaging things once they are out of control. The difficulty is that we know that plants can grow, mostly, just fine among a forest of weeds. So prioritizing killing weeds over seemingly more pressing things like irrigation, harvesting, taking time off, and such can be difficult. It's easy to put it off, because there isn't any definite time pressure to do so. But this year, we have Wednesday and Thursday freed up so we can spend the time taking care of our crops. And this week, we will be spending killing a lot of weeds.

~ Jason, Siri, Felix, Beatrice, and the Local Roots Farm Crew

Ideas and info for this week's produce

Shelling Peas – Sugar Snap peas get all the press these days, but I am a sucker for Shelling Peas (English Peas). You can't eat the pods (as the name suggests) but the peas are sweeter, maybe because of the work you put in to extract them from their pod, who can say? That you can simply snack on them, sitting in the shade of your back porch, lazily tossing the pods into the bushes while you watch your kids run through a sprinkler, goes without saying.

Carrots – We love carrots! This variety is Nelson, our go-to variety for main-season bunching carrots. They love our soil and we believe them to be the sweetest, crunchiest variety we grow. But this past winter, we received some bad news about our favorite variety. The seed company that breeds these carrots will no longer be carrying them! Eek. We bought a heap of seeds, enough to carry us through next year too. In the mean time, I've been seeding a bunch of new varieties to try and find a good replacement. One of the most enjoyable parts about small-scale agriculture is that we can introduce people not just to unusual vegetables (e.g. kohlrabi, Treviso radicchio, piricicaba) but also to the difference between different varieties of the same vegetable. You know about it with wine grapes, but it's the same for every thing we grow. There are dozens of varieties of carrots (and everything else we grow) out there, and each has its own region, climate, and conditions where it does best. Like the peas, these carrots lend themselves to snacking. However, they also cook up quite well. Try cutting them into long-ish strips and sautéing in butter.

Cabbage – Testament to what a few weeks' difference in planting date can do, the cabbages you are getting in your box this week are the same variety you got two weeks ago. Yet they are, on average 2-3x heavier! Longer warmer days make such a huge difference in how veggies grow.

Recipe - Cabbage Carrot Slaw

- Halve & core the cabbage and slice as thinly as you can
- Shred a few carrots on a cheese grater or using the finest setting on a mandolin
- (Shred radishes too if you wish)
- Add chopped dill
- Mix in olive oil, apple cider vinegar, sour cream or yogurt, and salt to taste

Order of eating:

Eat ASAP: peas (this is when they are most delicious)

Will store for 3-4 days: lettuces, dill

Will store for a week: radish, kale, green onions, carrots, cabbage