

Great-grandfather's barn at Spring Brook Farm, circa 1901

What's in the box and where do I keep it?

Crop	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	German Extra-Hardy
Leeks	Yes	Plastic	
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Cherry Bomb
Onions	No	No	Yellow, White and Red
Tomatoes	No	No	All kinds
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

Tomatoes, Tomatoes, Tomatoes

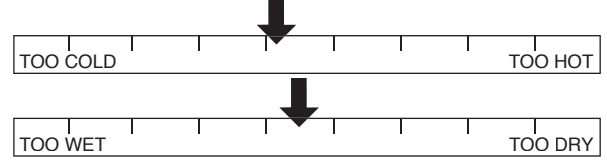
This is really the time of year when I should just have the newsletter go on vacation since nobody seems to ever need much advice about how to use up a big pile of tomatoes.

Last week we had about 15 tomatoes in each box and this week should be similar. If you do the math that's about 1300 tomatoes delivered last week. I had a special patch planted for the tomato canning day so it wouldn't cause a tomato shortage. When you're getting that many tomatoes it can be difficult to decide which ones to use up first. The regular red ones will keep the best, up to a week usually. You may get some of the heirloom types that will keep longer and may actually see a little green on the top to indicate this. Short of that, a gentle squeeze is always the best indicator of tomato ripeness. The different heirloom types are soft, fragile, and, at times, ugly. You can bruise them with too hard of a squeeze, especially on a hot day.

If you get behind on tomatoes or have some that are going to leave a puddle if you don't attend to them there are a couple of easy options. Tomatoes freeze quite well. Typically I'll just core, blanch, peel and

Farm Report

Rainfall0.55"
 High Temperature 84°
 Low Temperature 53°
 Coming next week Winter Squash
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™ :



quarter into a freezer bag. Put as many in as you would use at a time when you get them out. If you have a food dehydrator you can make your own dried tomatoes which are delicious in all sorts of dishes. The regular red tomatoes will work the best since they are fleshier than some of the heirlooms. You can also throw washed, quartered tomatoes into a stock pot and cook them down into sauce to freeze. You may want to strain out the seeds and skins before freezing it, alternately you can just put it all in a blender and puree it.

It's nice that the tomatoes have really come into full production as we've had a little 'dog days' of summer lull in some other crops. We'll begin to see a smattering of the fall crops start to show up next week, but still have plenty of tomatoes. The tomato plants look healthier than usual for this time of year with just a little early blight starting to show up here and there.

The rest of the items in your box should look familiar this week. We're taking a week off of sweet red peppers to allow more to ripen up. So the only peppers in your box this week are the semi-hot cherry bombs. This will be the last of the zucchini and cucumbers, I promise. They have been disturbingly productive this year. This should bode well for the quality and quantity of the winter squash crop.

Farm News

It seems like we're a bit behind schedule at the farm right now. Picking and sorting tomatoes takes up an inordinate amount of time. Cover crops need to be getting planted for next year. Hopefully some of that will happen this week if the weather cooperates.

First frost is just a few weeks away and it's time to start thinking about it. I need to put some new beams and repair some of the flooring on the hay wagon. It's got to get done before I try piling 3,000 pounds of squash

onto it. Last year we had to make an emergency field repair of it so that we could get it out of the field once it was already loaded down with squash.

Lastly we had a good turnout for the tomato canning on Labor Day. Folks picked about 300 pounds of tomatoes and we managed to cook down at least half of them to end up with 79 pints of tomato sauce. Most importantly we had some great food and decent weather. Thanks go out to my wife for putting the spaghetti together. No one went away hungry. Here's a few pictures from it in lieu of recipes this week.



Fiona and Jasper ready for some cultivating



Iris and Ella singing to-ma-to, to-mah-to



Melinda and Nina managing the wash-and-cut line