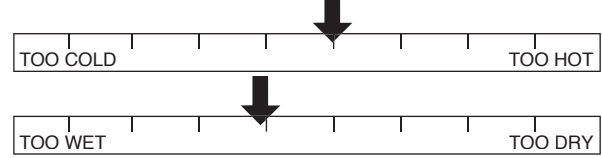


Great-grandfather's barn at Spring Brook Farm, circa 1901

**Farm Report**

Rainfall . . . . .0.45"
High Temperature . . . . . 83°
Low Temperature . . . . . 37°
Coming next week . . . . First winter share delivery
Farmer Complaint Indicators™ :



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

Table with 4 columns: Crop, Fridge?, Bag?, Notes & Varieties. Rows include Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Carrots, Eggplant, Onions, Dry, Peppers, Potatoes, Salad Mix, Shallots, Spinach, Tomatoes, and Winter Squash.

**Bursting with Brussels**

The contents of the last box of the year are always difficult to fit into the confines of the yellow box. The Brussels sprouts are the worst offender, especially when delivered on the stalk. A warm September helped some things to reach maturity like the Brussels sprouts. I like to deliver the sprouts after a good hard frost but this year it was not to be. We'll have to settle for the 35° or so that we had last week.

Most of the sprouts on the stalk should be usable although they vary in size. Snap them off the stem by quickly snapping them to the side. The bigger ones may need to have the base trimmed so they're more compact. If you're going to cook large ones and small ones together you may want to slice the large ones in half so that they take the same amount of time to cook. Brussels can be quartered and sauteed on the stovetop, braised in a small amount of liquid or roasted in the oven. Don't try to keep the sprouts for more

**THIS IS THE LAST WEEK**
It's hard to believe but this is the last week of the regular season. Each season on the farm seems to go by faster and faster. Wasn't it just August last week? Please leave the yellow boxes at the pickup sites. If you have yellow boxes at home please let me know and we can schedule a time to get them. It's really important that we get the yellow boxes back! If you have purchased a winter share they will begin next Tuesday, winter share deliveries are only on Tuesdays. We don't have an official survey this year but if you'd like to send us your comments and suggestions we always appreciate them. Thanks for another great season, we couldn't do any of this without the support of members like you! Have a great fall and winter from all of us here at the farm.

than 5 days or so, they tend to get bitter in storage. Once off the stem keep them in a plastic bag in the crisper. A recipe follows.

The beets in the box this week are the lovely Chioggia beets. The flesh inside these consists of alternating rings of red and white. They're a bit more tender than regular red beets and the green tops are tops for eating. Use them as you would any beet.

Enjoy the carrots in the box this week. They are a little immature but they have that great fresh carrot flavor. Speaking of immature there may also be a small eggplant or two in your box this week. The tarnished plant bugs stopped feeding on them a while ago and there are lots of little ones on the plants and the warm weather last weekend was enough to get them big enough to pick. If you don't find eggplant in your box it's because we ran out of time or space.

The other new item to the box is the shallots. These did fairly well and dried up nicely. There were enough to put a couple in the box this week. They may be something I try and do more of in the future, let me know what you think. Don't confuse them with the small yellow onions in the box this week, the shallots are shaped more like a garlic clove than a round onion.

A large assortment of other items fills out the box, most of which are familiar by now. There's a nice medley of squash featuring butternut, delicata, heart of gold and two newcomers; pie pumpkin and sunshine. Sunshine is the red squash. It is a kabocha or Japanese type squash that is a new variety. I tried one a few weeks ago and found it to be sweet, dry and fine-textured. The butternut and sunshine will keep the best so use up the others first. It's also a good combination of colors to put in a bowl in the middle of the table.

## Farm News

We had a pretty good turnout for pumpkin day, but I didn't take any pictures this time. It was a lovely day and we forced pumpkins on everyone who came.

I do have some bad news that came out of pumpkin day. Standing in the pumpkin patch I noticed that all was not well at the beehive across the field. When you keep bees and notice that the hive has been disassembled there is really only one conclusion: a bear found the hive. You can't believe all the stuff in cartoons but it is true that bears love honey and can smell it a long way off. I knew I was pushing my luck, but other folks with hives around don't have them fenced. Anyway my luck ran out and the bear trashed my one remaining hive which means this year's beekeeping effort has been wasted. Hopefully the equipment isn't too badly damaged to re-use. How much electric fence does one farm really need? Let me know if you're looking for a place to hunt this fall in Western Wisconsin—seriously.

Other big news at the farm last week was the acquisition of our potato digger. Over the last few years we've dug about 5,000 pounds of potatoes by hand but no more. I finally found a decent old potato digger, probably 60 or 70 years old. It's rusty but trusty. I haven't had time to really put it through it's paces but I'm hopeful it's going to revolutionize that unpleasant job.

Monday we got the rest of the winter squash in from the field. It was nice to be able to do this rather large project at a reasonable pace instead of racing the frost. The new beams on the hay wagon were a success and

we didn't have any problems bringing in the couple tons of squash. Here's a couple quick recipes.

## Basic Roasted Beets

When you have a squash in the oven it's easy to cook some beets, too.

- 4 medium beets
- 2 T. extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and ground black pepper

Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 400°. Trim all but about 1 inch of the stems from the beets. Wash well. Wrap the beets in aluminum foil and place the wrapped beets on a shallow roasting pan or rimmed baking sheet. Roast until a skewer inserted in a beet comes out easily, 45 minutes to 1 hour.

Remove the beets from the oven and carefully open the foil packet, keeping your hands away from the steam. When the beets are cool enough to handle, carefully peel the skins from the beets either with your hand or by holding the beet in a paper towel and rubbing the skin off. Slice the beets 1/4 inch thick and place in a bowl. Add the oil and salt and pepper to taste and toss together. I like to crumble some blue cheese and pecans on them.

## Braised Brussels Sprouts

This is a great, easy way to cook sprouts.

- 1 pound Brussels Sprouts, stem end trimmed with a knife and any bad leaves removed by hand
- 1/2 t. salt

Bring the sprouts, 1/2 cup of water, and salt to a boil in a 2-quart saucepan over medium-high heat. Cover and simmer (shaking the pan once or twice to redistribute the sprouts) until a knife tip inserted in the center of a sprout meets little or no resistance, 8 to 10 minutes. Drain well and season. Suggested seasonings would be butter, shallots and butter, a splash of cider vinegar or even some nice bacon.