

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	
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	Grenoble
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Green Bell
Potatoes	No	Paper	Red
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	Temptation or Ambrosia
Tomatoes	No	No	Maybe one or two
Yellow Squash	Yes	Plastic	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

Tomatoes

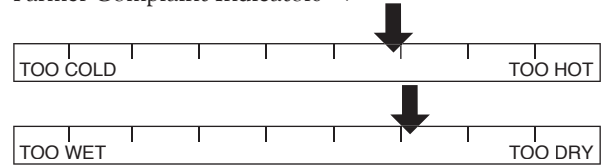
The long anticipated arrival of the tomato season is finally upon us. There may just be one tomato in your box this week but it's a sign of things to come. It's also the opportunity to go over some tomato basics with everyone to prepare for the harvest.

First and foremost is just a reminder that tomatoes should never go in the refrigerator. Temperatures below 50° ruin their flavor. We work hard to provide the members with vine-ripened, full flavored tomatoes so please don't keep them in the fridge. If your house is air conditioned then a bowl on the counter is an ideal place. If it's above 80° in your kitchen regularly then you may have better luck keeping them in a cool cupboard. The only exception is if you have a bunch of really ripe tomatoes that you can't get to right away, stick them in the fridge until you can deal with them.

Tomatoes store best with the calyx removed and them placed upside-down on their shoulder on a flat surface. Nice ripe tomatoes will bruise under their own weight if you store them blossom end down. They will also do pretty well piled in a bowl, although make sure the calyxes are removed or they will puncture each other.

Farm Report

Rainfall0.90"
 High Temperature 88°
 Low Temperature 52°
 Coming next weekCantaloupe
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™ :

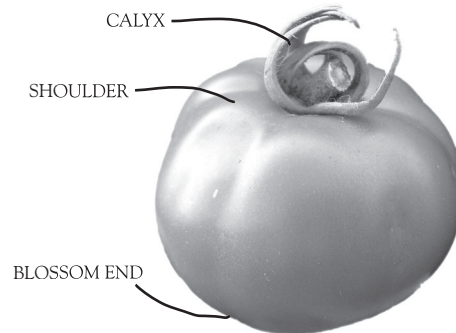


Typically we remove the calyx when we harvest them to avoid puncturing others, but on some heirlooms or very ripe tomatoes you do more harm than good trying to remove it.

During tomato season you will see a few new varieties this year. Our standard red tomato hasn't changed, it is Big Beef which is a standard indeterminate F1 hybrid. An indeterminate variety is one which continues to grow and set fruit all season long. Determinates have a short, concentrated fruit set. I did some research on a couple of nice open pollinated yellow/orange varieties for this year, one is called Persimmon and the other Golden Jubilee. I think we will see the former first and get into the latter later. Other heirlooms this year are Rose de Berne, a small, soft, pink tomato with very good flavor, and Cherokee Purple, a large dark, smoky flavored brandywine type and a personal favorite of mine. You may see one of each of these varieties in your box very soon. We will round out the red tomato season with a vigorous determinate called Paragon. It's not a real exciting tomato but I'm trialing it this year for the tomato canning and some late season picking.

Over the course of the next eight weeks I would expect that we'll be picking around 2,500 pounds of tomatoes, please enjoy them. This is a favorite time of the year for us and we hope for you too. Use up your heirloom tomatoes first, the standard red tomatoes

Parts of the Tomato



are more forgiving if not used right away. If you get a tomato which seems firm or underripe, merely leave it on the counter to ripen fully. We try not to deluge you with too many overripe tomatoes which must be eaten immediately, so sometimes you will get one or two that will be best eaten in a few days time.

Enough about tomatoes. Other new items in the box this week are peppers. We'll have some green bell peppers early on and then hopefully some red ones later. It also looks like we'll have a good supply of hot peppers for those of you who like them.

The green beans are particularly nice this week. It looks like we may have a week off of them next week, but maybe not.

Cucumbers, zucchini and yellow squash all are hanging in there, although the cukes seem to have slowed down a bit this week. I know it's hard to keep up with these. I noticed that there are a couple of new zucchini recipes on the forum part of the website, check them out and add your own.

More corn this week. Temptation or Ambrosia, a couple of very good varieties. Some more new red potatoes round out the box this week.

Farm News

Last week's weather sure was a welcome break. It makes this new period of warmer weather a lot easier to deal with. The fields have dried out rapidly with the strong breeze and the last few days in the mid-80's.

The big project last week was the onion harvest. It was a little early for them, but strong winds had already knocked over the tops of many of them and some of the others were becoming lost in the weeds, so I decided it was time to harvest them. It only took five of us two hours to get them all out of the ground and on the hay wagon. It looks like a good harvest of most of the varieties. They're all in the shed in crates now curing for a few weeks, then we'll cut the tops off of them and put them in the cooler for storage. Properly cured and stored, some of them should keep for six months.

I do have some sad news to report to those of you who keep looking in your box for carrots every week. This year we have had a complete failure of the carrot crop. A combination of deer pressure and heat has led to this. Late last year is when the deer began to show a liking for carrot tops, and this year they have mowed them down at whatever stage of growth they were at. I

was not really prepared for this and don't have enough electric fence to cover multiple plantings all over the field. The main carrot planting that went in about 3 weeks ago unfortunately never germinated. We start all carrots out under floating row cover to aid germination, but the heat wave must have pushed soil temperatures under the cover to over 100° and cooked the seed. So it is that after what was just a massive bumper crop of carrots last year we are left with virtually none. I will be seeding some more this week in case we have a nice warm September, but it's really pushing it at this point.

Lastly, if you get up at 5am as I do you've already started to notice how much later the sun is coming up. We're losing about 20 minutes of daylight a week right now, which means that we're moving quickly towards late summer. Enjoy the long days and warm weather while they last.

-David Van Eeckhout

Savory Zucchini Bread

- 3 cups grated zucchini
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 cup all-purpose baking mix
- 3 large eggs
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 1/2 cup grated cheese
- 2 T. chopped fresh basil
- Freshly ground black pepper

Optional: Other herbs such as parsley or marjoram

Mix all the above ingredients and place in an 8x8 square greased baking pan and bake at 350° for 30 to 45 minutes, or until top is golden brown. Do not overcook!

Green Bean Salad

- 1 pound green beans
- 1 cup diced red onion
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 cup toasted walnut pieces

Dressing:

- 3/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup finely chopped basil
- 1 t. salt
- 1/2 t. diced fresh garlic

Freshly ground black pepper

Snap beans into pieces, boil for 4 minutes, drain and plunge into cold water. Drain and set aside.

In a jar, combine oil, vinegar, basil, salt, garlic and pepper. Shake and refrigerate. Just prior to serving combine ingredients with dressing.