

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

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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red
Brussels Sprouts	Yes	Plastic	
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Celeriac	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Herbs	Yes	Plastic	Sage and Thyme
Kale	Yes	Plastic	Lacinato
Leeks	Yes	Plastic	
Onions, Dry	No	No	Yellow
Potatoes	No	Paper	Russet and Purple
Shallots	No	No	
Winter Squash	No	No	Buttercup and Heart of Gold

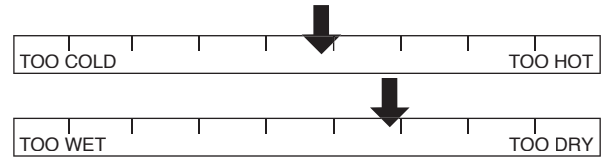
Buttercup Squash

I'm amazed I've been growing vegetables commercially for almost ten years and there are still vegetables which I'm just not intimate with. Buttercup squash is a case in point. Last year I grew my first batch of it so that we had some in the winter share. This year I grew quite a bit more of it but it fared poorly with the heavy insect populations. It seems like the preferred squash of the cucumber beetle.

It is also now the preferred squash of me. Despite poor yields and insect damage, I will continue to grow more and more of it. Butternut has always been the gold standard that all other squashes were judged against. Buttercup simply blows it out of the water. The deep burnt orange color is the first indicator of a superior squash. I usually break off the stem first, exposing the interior color set against the leathery greenish brown of the skin. Then from the button end I carefully but firmly slice it in half. No other storage vegetable

Farm Report

Snowfall. 7"
 High Temperature 46°
 Low Temperature 18°
 Next and last share delivery . Thursday, December 7
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™ :



IMPORTANT!
**The next winter share delivery
 on Thursday, December 7th is
 the last share of the season!**

retains so much of the smell of summer inside. It's the smell of fresh mown grass, dirt and honey. I remove the seeds and roast it cut side down in the oven at 400° for an hour or until well tender. Buttercup is a drier squash than most so I usually have some water on the cookie sheet to add a little steam and keep it moist. I've never cubed and steamed it but I imagine that would be excellent.

When it comes out of the oven I either cut the halves in half and serve with a pad of butter floating in the cavity with a little sage on top, or remove it from the halves and puree it with a good quantity of butter. We also puree it with some added water and freeze it for baby food.

My other strong suggestion for folks this week is brussels sprouts with thyme braised in cream. I recommend this only if you're having a small gathering for Thanksgiving. They need to be served piping hot and they won't survive a long trip getting passed around the table. If you are having a larger gathering save them for yourselves at a later date. Always wash the thyme while still on the stem under running water, nothing ruins a great dish like grit.

The brussels sprouts went through some pretty cold weather and you may get a couple which have started to break down. Bad ones should be thrown out but most will just need a light trimming of the heavier base and a couple of outer leaves to be ready to go. A recipe follows.

We did manage to eek out one more round of kale this week. It's a little small but it's better than most of what you'll find in the store.

The rest of the box should be quite familiar by now and shouldn't require much explanation. It's amazing how many people will comment when you put out an appetizer platter with real carrots on it. Good flavor still lingers in the collective memory.

Farm News

We got whacked pretty good by the snow week before last. Somewhere between 6 and 8 inches fell and blew around. It lingered in the yard until it finally warmed up this week. Gears at the farm shifted to more indoor activities while we waited for the snow to go away. This means that I had time to get the year's bank statements entered on the computer and see how the financial winds blew at the farm this year. Usually I keep a pretty good eye on the numbers over the course of the year but this year with the new baby and the move I had put the bank balance on the back burner. Thankfully there were no real unpleasant surprises lurking when I finally sat down at my desk.

I also upgraded my accounting program (quickbooks) so that I can track all of you folks right in quickbooks without having to track all of the shares in excel. Trying to figure out how to export everyone's name and address info from excel into quickbooks was a fun exercise that I hope to not have to repeat anytime soon. This means that come next spring we'll have fancy schmancy invoices to print out for everyone, and that I should have a little bit more accuracy in the numbers.

The deer hunters have been out in force this week with the opening of gun deer season out here. I'm a big fan of reducing the deer population but prefer to eat the meat that's already in our freezer. We do let some folks hunt on our land and they seem to do pretty well, we just keep the kids inside and wear an orange hat when we go out. The only safe time of day to go for a walk this time of year is when the Packers are on.

We also found a little time last week to start moving the farm stuff to the new farm. It's a great feeling to begin to have everything in one place. It's also a good feeling to put some farm equipment back into these old farm buildings which just seem to ache when empty.

Lastly I'd like to take this opportunity to express our family's thanks that you have entrusted us to grow

your food. It is an undertaking which we do not esteem lightly. It can be very challenging at times, but our greatest reward is knowing that our efforts are being shared and enjoyed this week on tables across the area, passed from hand to hand, as families sit down to share an all-too-rare meal together. Happy Thanksgiving from our family to yours.

Braised Brussels Sprouts with Thyme

- 1 pound brussels sprouts, halved with stem end trimmed with a knife and discolored leaves removed by hand
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1/3 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves, minced
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil

Heat the oil in a large heavy skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Toss in the brussels and saute, stirring until some are beginning to turn brown and feel slightly tender, about 10 minutes. Reduce the heat and add the cream, salt and thyme. Bring the cream to a simmer and cook until the sprouts are tender when pierced with the tip of a sharp knife and cream is reduced by half, about 10 minutes. Add black pepper to taste and serve immediately.

Well, I was going to put in a recipe for chicken pot pie since I've been making it weekly lately but there just isn't room. Pot pies are a great way to use up a bunch of root vegetables, and to use up more thyme. Here's a favorite of ours during peak carrot time:

Caramelized carrot and garlic puree

- 3 cups carrots, peeled, halved and cut into 1/2 inch chunks
- 4-6 cloves of garlic, peeled
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- Salt to taste

Preheat the oven to 375. Spread the carrots onto a cookie sheet that has an edge around it. Drizzle the olive oil over the carrots evenly, stirring with your hand or a wooden spoon to make sure that they are coated in oil. Roast the carrots in the oven for 15-20 minutes and then add the garlic cloves. Give the whole thing a stir and put it back in the oven for another 15-20 minutes until the carrots are well cooked and beginning to brown, but not burn. They should be a step or two beyond tender. When done transfer to a food processor and puree, add salt to taste and additional olive oil if needed to make a smooth puree.

This is a rich, delicious spread for bread and crackers, a dip for other vegetables, or added to other recipes to add sweetness and flavor. I use it in place of mayonnaise on a sandwich and it is excellent.