

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
Basil	No	Plastic	
Muskmelon	Yes	No	Athena
Cilantro	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Eggplant	Yes	Plastic	globe, not in every share
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	
Onions	No	No	red, white and yellow
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	green bell, serrano
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	local, conventional
Tomatoes	No	No	early reds
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

Melons

The melons have begun to ripen at the farm. The muskmelons will be followed by more of the same, and we'll have a watermelon next week.

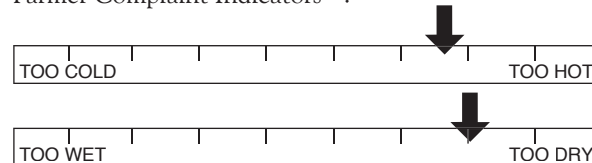
Melons love hot weather and they've been growing like crazy this year. I've got a couple of new varieties planted and we'll see how they do. The first muskmelons will be Athena which are a medium sized sweet muskmelon. Technically they are not cantaloupes which is a name reserved for the sweet, French charnais type melons, we should have a few of these in a couple weeks.

We try and pick only perfectly ripe melons, but sometimes we do get a clunker. If you get a clunker let me know, it helps me know when to pick them. The other difficult thing about when to pick melons is people have different tastes about how they like them. I had a melon cut open on the counter in the kitchen the

Farm Report

Rainfall 0.6"
 High Temperature 92°
 Low Temperature 61°

Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



other day that I considered to be the perfect melon only to find out that Melinda had come along a few minutes later and thrown it into the compost because she thought it was overripe.

A variety of herbs in the box this week, basil, cilantro and thyme

The cukes are slowing down considerably now, with only three or four of them in the box this week. Next week may be the last of them. The zucchini are still managing to keep their steady pace.

A first wave of eggplant needed to be picked. We may never have enough to have one in every box, but hopefully we'll spread them around from week to week so that everyone gets one or two.

Green beans are making their debut this week. We picked 124 pounds of them on Wednesday so there should be a nice bag in the box. They are nice young beans with excellent fresh flavor. A recipe follows, and barring catastrophe, we should have these for the next 3 or 4 weeks.

The onions have all been harvested now so it's time to start moving them out. A variety of colors are in the box this week. They haven't been fully cured yet so they should stay out loosely in a bowl on the counter.

A couple of hot serranos joins the large green pepper in the box this week. Make a little salsa out of the serranos, white or red onion, a tomato and cilantro.

The tomatoes are slowly picking up steam, these are still mostly from the hoop houses but the field ones are going to be dominating very soon.

This is the last week on the sweet corn. It sure has been nice to have around. Hard to believe it's nearly the 10th of August, but we have to make room for the watermelon next week.

Farm News

Where do the days go this time of year? The long days of transplanting and weeding are past and we transition to long days harvesting things from the field. The cucumbers and zucchini still need to be picked every other day and now the melons need to be checked daily. Picking tomatoes starts to go from taking one person half an hour to taking 3 people most of the day. As green beans join the shares for a few weeks we really become a week-long harvest crew, and it gets hard to find the time to get much else done.

The crickets are everywhere around the farm and even in the house this time of year. The sun is back to rising after I get up in the morning and we've already lost an hour and fifteen minutes of daylight since June. The first frost cannot be that far away.

The onion harvest continued in earnest this week with the yellow onions. We grow more yellow onions than anything else. We harvested about 3000 of them with a total weight right around a ton. They look nice and are curing in the shed and drying out. Next up was the shallots, we got them in on Tuesday and ended up with about 2500 of them. The shallots get hung up to cure in the machine shed just like the garlic. It's very beautiful to see them all hanging there. Needless to say we should be all set on alliums for the foreseeable future.

It was also time to start seeding some of the fall greens this week, starting with spinach and salad mix. Next week will bring more fall greens and the fall turnips.

We did have a little over half an inch of rain last weekend so that meant holding off on the irrigation a little bit. We also had some nice cloudy, cool humid weather which lent itself to setting alight the two burn piles I've had accumulating stuff at different corners of the farm. No matter how sternly I talked to Iris about the large burning pile, she still thought it was 'cool'.

The cool weather also made it more pleasant to cook up a nice roast chicken on Sunday. Everyone enjoyed it, I think Iris ate the most. Even Martha and Geoffrey (both vegetarians) joined us to try the fruits of their chicken labors.

Lastly, we had some sad news on the farm this week. Sally, our 7-month old border collie, died suddenly on Tuesday from a seizure. We were all a little shocked. She was a good dog and will be missed by everyone at the farm.

Roasted Green Beans with Red Onion and Walnuts

- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme leaves
- 2 medium cloves garlic, thin sliced
- 1 pound green beans, stem ends snapped off
- 1/2 medium red onion, cut into 1/2-inch-thick wedges
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Table salt and ground black pepper
- 1/3 cup chopped walnuts (toasted)

Combine vinegar, honey, thyme, and garlic in small bowl; set aside. Adjust oven rack to middle position; heat oven to 450 degrees. Line rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil; spread beans and onion wedges on baking sheet. Drizzle with oil; using hands, toss to coat evenly. Sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon salt, toss to coat, and distribute in even layer. Roast 10 minutes. Remove baking sheet from oven. Using tongs, coat beans and onion evenly with vinegar/honey mixture; redistribute in even layer. Continue roasting until onions and beans are dark golden brown in spots and beans have started to shrivel, 10 to 12 minutes longer. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper and toss well to combine. Transfer to serving dish, sprinkle with walnuts, and serve.

Stir-Fried Szechuan Green Beans

- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon dry sherry
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon cornstarch
- 1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon dry mustard
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 pound green beans, ends trimmed, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 1/4 pound ground pork
- 3 medium cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh ginger
- 3 scallions, white and light green parts sliced thin
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil

In small bowl, stir together soy sauce, sherry, sugar, cornstarch, white pepper, pepper flakes, mustard, and water until sugar dissolves; set aside. Heat oil in 12-inch nonstick skillet over high heat until just smoking. Add beans and cook, stirring frequently, until crisp-tender and skins are shriveled and blackened in spots, 5 to 8 minutes (reduce heat to medium-high if beans darken too quickly). Transfer beans to large plate.

Reduce heat to medium-high and add pork to now-empty skillet. Cook, breaking pork into small pieces, until no pink remains, about 2 minutes. Add garlic and ginger; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, 15 to 20 seconds. Stir sauce to recombine and return beans to pan with sauce. Toss and cook until sauce is thickened, 5 to 10 seconds. Remove pan from heat and stir in scallions and sesame oil. Serve immediately.