

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
Arugula	Yes	Plastic	
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	
Chard	Yes	Plastic	Rainbow
Garlic Scapes	Yes	Plastic	
Lettuce	Yes	Plastic	Butter
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Peas	Yes	Plastic	Sugar Snap
Spinach	Yes	Plastic	

Chard

A nice bunch of rainbow chard is the highlight of the box this week, and it comes in highlighter colors. Some people refer to this as Swiss chard, but I've consulted many publications and no one can seem to put forth any reason at all for having Swiss in front of chard.

After surviving some turbulent weather the chard finally started looking good enough to harvest. It was high time, since some of the leaves were getting rather large. Chard is a nice light cooking green, slightly more dense than spinach. In many cooking recipes chard and spinach are interchangeable. The main difference is that with chard the stems are eaten as well as the leaves. Although there are some recipes and cultures which only use the stems or only the leaves.

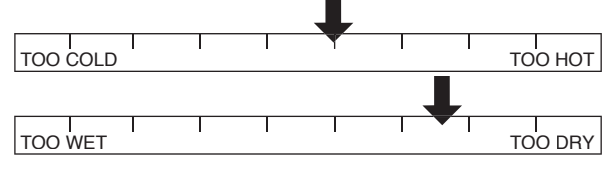
Chard has turned out to be a nice addition to the box. I think last year was a first year growing it. It has few pest problems, and is ready fairly early. It can also handle hot weather, which some of the other greens cannot.

Arugula is back in the box this week after last week's aphid party. This is from a new aphid-less planting, but does have a little bit of flea beetle damage. I still don't think I've actually had an arugula salad yet this year.

Farm Report

Rainfall0.75"
 High Temperature 91°
 Low Temperature 56°

Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



So many salads, so little time.

More broccoli is in the box. These heads have been maturing rapidly in the hot weather.

A few more garlic scapes are in the box this week. These were on the plants a little longer, so you may want to check any large ones for toughness, if your chef's knife doesn't slice through them easily move up the stem to where it's more tender.

A nice large head of butter lettuce in the box this week, and only one of them. This should give you a chance to catch up on the lettuce.

Another nice bunch of scallions is in the box. You may find that the scallion bunches always have a clump of dirt in the middle of the roots that didn't get washed off. This clump is some of the potting mix from the greenhouse which they were seeded in. We seed scallions as a bunch from the beginning, so 10-12 seeds go in every cel of the greenhouse tray. But since they spend their whole life growing together it's very hard to get the dirt out from the middle of all those roots.

More yummy peas. The heat has really accelerated them. It may be that they're all overmature by next week.

I know I said there wasn't any more spinach, but some of it which I had written off turned out to not be so bad.

There were supposed to be turnips in the box, but I had only looked at the end of the row to check on them earlier in the week. Once we started to pick them I realized that the aphids were so bad in them that they were hopeless. This was the row right next to last week's aphid-y arugula. Hopefully we've seen the end of the aphids for the season. On a bright note, I've never seen so many ladybug larva. Nature doesn't take long to kick into gear when something's out of whack.

Farm News

This week and next week will be a little lean in the boxes. The lettuces that didn't get transplanted because of the rainy weather four weeks ago would have been in the boxes this week and next. They should show up in two week's time, provided it doesn't get too hot for them. We'll see how heat resistant some of the varieties are.

What a change in the weather we had between Tuesday and Wednesday. We didn't get much of a storm out of it but it's nice to have a couple of cool days with highs only in the 70's. I don't mind working in the 90° heat but I do love it when the weather changes. The plants needed a break, too. It's been a warmer June than normal, which has gotten things off to a terrific start. We should be picking zucchini and cucumbers very soon. And it looks like we'll have a good year for melons, after last year's melon fiasco.

Sometimes when I sit down to write the newsletter it's hard to remember what I was doing five days ago. A large portion of last Friday was spent moving over 4,000 board feet of lumber into the barn so it can dry for the next year or so. We did some timber harvesting early this spring and had some of the wood sawed up for our barn. The hay mow in our barn has a rotten floor from too many years of a leaky roof. I'm hoping to replace it in late 2008.

Early this week the major project was moving the hundreds of tomato cages from the old farm to the new. I hired a 48-ft long flat-bed semi and they still didn't all fit on there. By the end of the day on Tuesday though we had all the 5-foot high cages moved to the new farm and put onto the tomatoes. It's a good thing too because this weather is making the tomatoes grow like crazy.

We also borrowed a walk-behind rototiller from a friend and tilled some weeds that were getting out of control in between rows of plastic mulch, and in between the potato rows. Generally I'm not a big fan of rototillers, but they do have their moments.

I also got some cultivating done early this week and got some more green beans planted. The hot weather dried things out quite a bit, so irrigation is going to be on the short list the rest of the week and into the weekend.

And lastly on Tuesday I picked up 30 day-old turkey poults from the hatchery. I decided I'm through eating

mediocre meat at holiday gatherings, and am going to be the one who brings the turkey. Turkeys are notoriously tricky to raise, but hopefully by starting with 30 I'll have a few to sell to folks who are interested. I'll keep you posted.

A reminder that next Saturday, July 7th is our next field day at the farm. We'll begin the day at about 10am with a farm project of some sort, and then have a tour of the farm and a pot-luck lunch. Please let us know if you're coming so we know how many folks to expect.

Coming next week: cabbage, broccoli, peas, beets?, zucchini, fennel, and more.

Chard and Cheddar Omelet

- 2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) butter
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 ounces chard, stemmed, chopped (about 3 cups packed)
- 3/4 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- 5 large eggs
- 3/4 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

Melt 1 tablespoon butter in 8-inch-diameter nonstick skillet over medium-low heat. Add garlic; sauté until soft, about 2 minutes. Stir in chard, cover and cook until tender, about 4 minutes. Stir in hot sauce. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to small bowl. Wipe skillet clean.

Whisk eggs, 1/4 cup cheese, salt and pepper in medium bowl to blend. Melt 1/2 tablespoon butter in same skillet over medium-high heat. Add half of egg mixture and cook until eggs are just set in center, tilting pan and lifting edge of omelet with spatula to let uncooked portion flow underneath, about 2 minutes. Scatter half of chard mixture over half of omelet. Sprinkle 1/4 cup cheese over chard. Fold omelet over cheese; slide out onto plate. Repeat with remaining butter, egg mixture, chard and cheese.

Sugar Snap Peas with Toasted Sesame Seeds

- 1 pound sugar snap peas, stringed
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame seeds
- 1 teaspoon oriental sesame oil

Toast sesame seeds over a medium-hot dry skillet, stirring them often so they don't burn. Remove from heat when they are a golden and aromatic. Steam sugar snap peas until crisp-tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer to bowl. Toss with seeds and oil. Season with salt.