



What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red with tops
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	
Cabbage	Yes	Plastic	Small green
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Dill	Yes	Plastic	
Fennel	Yes	Plastic	
Lettuce	Yes	Plastic	Red leaf and green leaf
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Parsley	Yes	Plastic	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

Beets

The sister to last week's chard is in the box this week, a nice bunch of young beets. Beets have a history as long and varied as any vegetable, showing up in writings from Mesopotamia in the 8th Century BC. They've also found charred remains of beets at Neolithic sites in the Netherlands. Sometimes the ones in the store seem as though they may have been stored since Neolithic times, but not these beauties. These are nice and fresh with tops that can be enjoyed like chard.

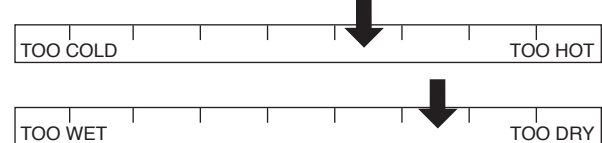
There are many varieties of beets, but we really just stick with the standard red types. We used to grow a few of the Chioggia striped beets, but they are somewhat less productive and folks didn't seem too excited about them so we've kept it simple the last couple of years.

No other crop has such an ability to create the intensity of color that a red beet does. It's always a little amazing to me that the seed can take it's instructions and whatever it needs from the soil and create something so striking that it will take over any dish you put it in.

There are lots of summer newcomers to the box this week. The zucchini is picking up steam and the cucumbers have begun. It looks like we should have an average run of both of these, maybe a little below average on the cuke front. These early cukes show a lot of damage from the ubiquitous cucumber beetle, but they

Farm Report 7/17/08

Rainfall0.4"
 High Temperature 88°
 Low Temperature 53°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



still taste delicious. There are few vegetables we look forward to as much as cucumbers. It's also nice to have a few while the lettuce is still holding out. This will be the only week, though, where there is both lettuce and cukes in the box.

Also new to the box are a few herbs, dill, basil and parsley. I plant this planting of dill to coincide with the first new potatoes, but the potatoes are still a couple of weeks out, so you can enjoy it with an early cucumber or with your beets. The parsley is a nice addition to many dishes, and since there isn't much basil you can scrape together a pesto using the parsley and the basil together. The first picking of basil is always a light one but it will recover quickly if the weather stays warm.

Fennel makes it's debut this week as well. The entire plant is edible, but most folks just eat the bulb. Fennel shaved thin in salads makes a nice cool summer addition. There will be more of it next week.

There's a little head of cabbage and a little head of broccoli in the box this week. The broccoli is ending as the weather has gotten too warm for it. The cabbage may have gotten larger if left another week or two but it was already harboring pests and was in an area of the field that needed to be cleaned up, so out it came.

Rounding out the box is the second-to-the-last bunch of scallions and the last of the lettuce. The heat of summer usually signals and end to the lettuce and this year it's no different, just a week or two later.

Farm News

We had beautiful weather for our field day last Saturday and a good turn out of enthusiastic potato weeders. It was nice to see some folks even happily squash-

ing potato bugs, though it was not required. Weeding and bug squashing was followed by a delicious lunch and then it was time to feed the chickens again. Our next field day is our annual Harvest Party on Saturday, September 27th.

Speaking of chickens, the first round of them went to the processor bright and early Monday morning. They take the journey to Decorah, Iowa, which has the nearest USDA-inspected processing plant. I haven't seen the numbers yet but after loading them into crates for the journey I would have to guess that they ended up a little heavier than I was trying for. I'm guessing they averaged 5.1 pounds. I took a survey of the chicken share customers last year and the ideal chicken size for folks was between 3 1/2 and 4 1/2 pounds, so these may be a little larger. The first chicken share deliveries will be with the regular share pickup on Thursday, August 7.

Anyone out there need about 100 tons of orchard grass/alfalfa hay? If you do let me know since ours is now available after the person who was supposed to buy it backed out.

This week in the field was spent weeding and cultivating and weeding. We cleaned up a lot of weeds in the tomatoes and peppers and rescued the celeriac from it's weedy beginning. The first large carrot planting also got hand weeded on Wednesday after harvesting was done. I managed to get the potatoes hilled finally after I had one of our members (thanks again, Dan) weld a piece on my cultivator for me. Just when you think you've gotten ahead of the weeds it warms up and they grow like mad. We also got the first of the fall broccoli and cauliflower in the ground as well as a few miscellaneous plants that have been tortured on the hay wagon while peacefully waiting their turn.

The local buzz this week is that there've been a few mountain lion sightings around here lately, as well as a bear. So far I haven't seen either stomping around the vegetable fields, although there was the case of the headless chickens...

We seem to be in a pattern of inclement weather on pickup days lately. This does happen. If you get to the pickup site and the newsletters are all sopping wet, either take one home and dry it out, or print one out from the website. A little rain shouldn't hurt anything in your boxes either, but when we get into dry crops like garlic and onions make sure to let them dry out when you get home.

Chilled Beet Soup with Dill Cream

4 cups (or more) canned low-salt chicken broth
1 pound beets, peeled, chopped
1 cup chopped onion
3/4 cup peeled chopped carrot
2 teaspoons chopped garlic
1 teaspoon sugar
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
2 tablespoons chopped fresh green onions
Sour cream

Combine 4 cups broth, beets, onions, carrot and garlic in medium saucepan. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and simmer until vegetables are very tender, about 35 minutes. Cool slightly. Puree in blender in batches until smooth. Transfer to bowl. Thin with additional broth if soup is too thick. Mix in sugar. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and chill until cold, at least 4 hours or overnight. (Can be prepared 2 days ahead. Keep refrigerated.)

Ladle soup into bowls. Sprinkle with dill and chives. Top with sour cream.

Apple-Beet Salad with Creamy Dill Dressing

3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
3 medium beets, steamed, peeled, and julienned
1/4 cup plain yogurt
1/4 cup mayonnaise
1 small clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon minced fresh dill
Table salt and ground black pepper
1/2 small lemon
2 tart apples, such as Granny Smith, halved, cored, and cut into 1/8-inch slices
1 1/2 quarts leaf lettuce
1/4 cup toasted pecans, chopped coarse

Drizzle vinegar over beets; refrigerate overnight.

Mix yogurt, mayonnaise, garlic, and dill in small bowl. Season to taste with salt, if necessary, and pepper to taste; set aside.

Squeeze lemon juice over apple slices. Place greens on platter or individual plates. Arrange apple slices and julienned beets over the greens; top with toasted pecans. Drizzle salad with dressing and serve. Or serve salad and pass dressing separately.

Coming next week: Cucumbers, fennel, zucchini, carrots, dill, scallions and some other stuff.