



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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Beets	Yes	Plastic	
Cabbage	Yes	Plastic	Savoy
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Celeriac	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Onions	No	No	Yellow
Potatoes	No	Paper	Violetta Rose or Kennebec
Radishes	Yes	Plastic	Black
Shallots	No	No	
Turnips	Yes	Plastic	Hakurei
Winter Squash	No	No	Buttercup and/or Sunshine

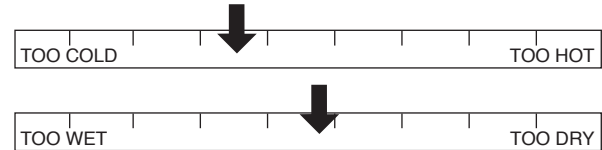
The end of the line for 2008

This week marks the last share of the 2008 season. It seems like just a few weeks ago we were struggling to get a first share of the year out amid cold weather and slow growing. Now, looking back over the year, it was a good indicator of the weather to come. It was, in all respects, a cool year on the farm. I'll remember it as a year where we never hit 90°. The crops which prefer cooler weather were the stars this year, from the carrots to the lettuces and spinach. I've always kind of assumed that green beans preferred hotter weather but they proved me wrong this year by being very productive and nice. The Carmen red peppers also were amazing considering how cool it was. The real heat loving crops were the duds this year, whether it was cantaloupe or sweet potatoes. Thankfully the frost held off long enough in the fall for some long season crops to ripen up well, like the squash. It does seem unusual that we had such a cool year and yet had the latest freeze we've had in years.

The box this week won't hold any real surprises, unless you're surprised by how many black radishes I grew. Next year I think we'll just opt for two rows of these instead of four. We've been enjoying them but their uses are somewhat limited. I think I have to keep growing, though, because there just aren't any other black vegetables on the farmer's palette.

Farm Report 12/11/08

Snowfall. 7"
 High Temperature. 24°
 Low Temperature -1°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



The crops stored in the cold cooler have been holding up better than the ones in the warm cooler. As I said in the last newsletter we've been having humidity troubles in the warm cooler which has led to some mildew on the garlic and onions. It hasn't helped that we're getting quite a bit of condensation on the inside of the warm cooler since it's been 45° in there and 15° outside in the barn. I really need to more seriously address humidity when it comes to storage crops on the farm, temperature being the easy factor to control. We're going to have to expand our coolers for next year so hopefully I can address humidity at the same time.

It's an either/or deal on the potatoes this week, with Kennebec being the white ones and the others being red. Skin color aside they are quite similar in the kitchen.

The same can be said of the winter squash as they start to break down from storage, you may get a large buttercup or sunshine, or two smaller ones. The buttercup are always my favorite for using instead of the canned pumpkin in a pumpkin pie.

The only newcomer this week is the savoy cabbage. These got transplanted very late and barely sized up before the winter set in for good. They're a nice manageable size and can provide you with a hint of a green vegetable this time of year.

We've been enjoying the beets, carrots, radishes and celeriac in raw, shredded salads this year. Usually with some sort of sesame miso dressing. It's such a nice winter complement to a hearty stew or other heavy meal.

Farm News

I hope everyone had a bountiful Thanksgiving. We made our annual pilgrimage to Iowa to spend it with Mel's family. It's always nice to get off the farm for a few days and Jesse was kind enough to keep the home fires burning and the chickens and dog fed while we were gone.

This share always catches me off guard. The problem being that it's been 16 days since the Thanksgiving delivery and by now I've switched gears and moved on to 2009. My gut feeling is that next year we will end the winter share with the Thanksgiving delivery, it seems like the logical place. The further we get into winter the more costly it gets to keep everything stored too.

It's been cold and snowy around the farm, with the winter shaping up much like last year. We had a decent storm go through Monday night and I think we've got enough snow now to dust off the cross-country skis and start working on a trail, but that'll have to wait until the shares are out this week.

I've been logging a lot of time at my desk putting orders for supplies together for next year. It's typically cheaper to get many things right now before the end of the year than it will be to get them in the spring, after they've gone up in price yet again. I've also been starting to cruise the seed catalogs, start my paperwork for the organic certification, and had a few people out to interview for working on the farm next year. It looks like we're going to have to switch our health insurance provider for next year so I've been trying to get some quotes on that, what fun. Health insurance for farmers is not a pretty sight.

One interesting distraction I did accomplish is to actually get a bid on what it would cost to put up a wind turbine on the farm. This is something I've been thinking about for several years. Those of you who've been out here a few times may recall that we are fortunate to have a good wind resource on the farm. In my long term plan I'd love for the farm to be a net producer of electricity and be more or less carbon-neutral. The bottom line is that it would cost about \$95K to do it, with about \$50K in rebates and incentives available, so about \$45K net out of pocket, or around \$300 per share. Heading into an economic downturn is probably not the time to propose this to the membership but it's something I'm thinking about so I thought I'd put it out there if any of you have any thoughts.

Look for the 2009 invoice and information in your mailbox about the second week of January. This just goes out to the primary contact on your share, so if you split a share only one of you will get it. There's always lots of important info in that mailing so remember to share it with folks you split with. We do make the newsletter part of it available on the website as well. As always, let us know if your address (real or email) is changing so that we can keep you up to date.

Thanks again to everyone for supporting this farming endeavor for another year. We couldn't do it without you. Your encouraging words and enthusiasm always seem to come at a time when we can use it. Your feedback is always welcome and helpful. Our family would like to wish you all a very happy holiday season and we'll be in touch in 2009. -David Van Eeckhout

Radish Slaw

- 1-2 black Spanish radishes, scrubbed and grated
- 3 cups finely shredded cabbage
- 1 cup coarsely grated carrots
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced green or red onion
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh parsley, cilantro, or mint leaves

In a bowl toss together the radishes, the cabbage, the carrots, the onion, the lemon juice, the sugar, the oil, the herb, and salt and pepper to taste.

Carrot and Beet Salad with Ginger Vinaigrette

- 1/4 cup minced shallot
- 2 tablespoons minced peeled fresh ginger
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/4 cup rice vinegar (available at Asian markets and some supermarkets)
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon Asian (toasted) sesame oil
- Tabasco to taste
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 4 cups finely shredded carrots
- 4 cups finely shredded peeled raw beets (about 3/4 pound)

In a blender purée shallot, ginger, and garlic with rice vinegar, soy sauce, sesame oil, and Tabasco. With motor running add olive oil in a stream and blend until smooth.

In separate bowls toss carrots with half of the dressing and beets with remaining half. Serve.