

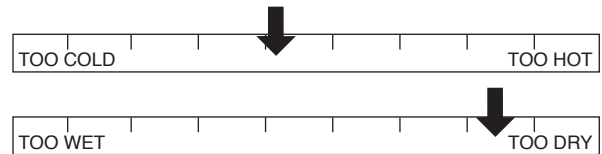


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red with tops
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Lettuce	Yes	Plastic	Red leaf, green leaf and romaine
Onions	Yes	Plastic	Fresh sweet onions
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Peas	Yes	Plastic	Sugar snap
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

### Farm Report 7/16/09

Rainfall . . . . . 0.00"  
 High Temperature . . . . . 85°  
 Low Temperature . . . . . 56°  
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



we'd wait until later in the day. On Sunday I couldn't find a single one. So we find ourselves in the unprecedented position of actually having fewer zucchini this week than last week.

### Cukes and Zukes

Ever since honey bees started suffering from what came to be known as Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) a couple of years ago there has been a heightened interest in bees and other pollinators and how they're doing in our modern world. More and more it seems that they're not doing too well. Lately there have been some interesting articles and shows about our native pollinators, such as bumble bees, and how we can provide more habitat to encourage them. People have started to plant flowers friendly to bees, not just butterflies. Here on the farm we have a lot of native pollinator habitat, with brushy field edges full of flowering plants as well as 60 acres of hay which we let flower before cutting so that they can have plenty of food.

The problem comes when we have so many flowering plants for the pollinators to choose from that we end up not getting good pollination in the vegetable crops. Theoretically bumble bees are such efficient pollinators that this shouldn't even happen, but it does. We arrived back from Iowa on Saturday and I walked the fields early on Sunday morning. We have the nicest planting of cukes, zukes and melons that we've had in a few years, but when I went to pick zucchini I only picked about 40, when I should've found easily over 100. It was then that I noticed how quiet it was in the field. I'm starting to sound like an old man, but I can remember having difficulty picking cucumbers in the morning because there were so many bees in them that

All the vine crops, or cucurbits as we call them, require pollination from the male flowers to the female flowers in order for the fruit to continue growing. The zucchini and melons are losing a lot of their fruit because it's not getting pollinated. Out of desperation I called up a local beekeeper to see if I could get one of his hives. He couldn't get me a hive but had just hived a swarm on Friday that he would sell me. So at 10pm Monday night I brought over the hive and put it near the veggie fields. I've done a little beekeeping in past years but it's not really my cup of tea and I don't really need a hobby. When there's so many other projects on the to-do list it's hard to do the one that might involve getting stung. So between Tricia and I, we'll try and keep them alive. If any of you members have a strong interest in beekeeping let me know, it's such a great place for bees and we can always use the honey.

The good news is that they've already found the cucurbits and are busy at work. It should be an interesting test to see how this week's harvest numbers on cukes and zukes compare with next week's. Cukes and zukes grow very fast, so the ones getting pollinated today will be getting picked in 3 to 5 days depending on the weather. With this long explanation you'll find just one cucumber and one zucchini in your box this week. We're trialing some new non-bitter type cukes this year, so if you get one that's smooth and shiny instead of spiny that's what it is. It's kind of like the greenhouse cucumbers but a regular cucumber size. No peeling necessary, but we never peel the other ones either.

Carrots in the box this week! Hooray for fresh carrots. This is a new variety I'm trying this year and so far I think it's pretty nice. Good flavor for an early carrot.

We also managed to find a few beets in the weedy abandoned first beet planting. We had kind of written off this planting because of some seed issues that would take another newsletter to explain. These aren't primo, but they should satisfy the beet lovers out there until some nicer ones are ready in a few weeks.

The first harvest from the onion field is in the box, some fresh walla walla-type onions. They're not as sweet as the real walla wallas because we can't over-winter them like they can in Washington. Because they're fresh you can keep them in the fridge or the counter, but the tops will wilt if left out.

Nothing says summer like the smell of basil. The first picking of it is always one of the nicest. As I sit here typing this my fingers are black from picking it. When you pick 20 pounds of basil it's enough to stain your hands for a couple days. This is another seed sourced from Italy, to see if the Italian basil is really better.

This will be the last of the peas for the year. I wish these had sized up a little better than they did, but it's nice to be done picking peas. Now we're all in-shape for the green beans.

One more big week of lettuce this week and then a few stragglers next week and we'll be done with the salad days.

### Farm News

We've had less than an inch of rain in the last 27 days so we're starting to get very dry on the farm. I started irrigating as soon as I got back from Iowa and we've been at it ever since. The only type of irrigation we can do when it's so windy is our drip irrigation, so the crops we use sprinklers on have to wait for a calm morning or evening.

The wind took the large row covers off of the winter squash for us last Thursday. We were planning to take them off on Monday so this wasn't too untimely. Monday then was our day to tackle the weeds that have been growing under the covers since the squash was transplanted four weeks ago. We had a four-pronged approach involving a mower, cultivator, rototiller and finally three hoes. After we'd completed our attack they looked fabulous and it came none too soon as some of the varieties are starting to send out their vines in every direction.

I had broken a part on my seeder that I use for all the small-seeded direct-seeded crops and it came on Monday, so I was able to get that fixed on Tuesday and get the main fall planting of beets in the ground. I was hoping for some rain that night but no such luck. The seeds are waiting patiently in the ground for some calm weather so that I can throw some water on them and get them growing.

We also had time on Tuesday for the main fall broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage transplanting. Just two more weeks of transplanting remain and then we're done with the transplanter for the year. This year we've transplanted just over 31,000 transplants.

A reminder that we've rescheduled the summer field day for Saturday, August 1st. Let us know if you can make it. It's a great time to come to the farm because you can see almost everything growing full-tilt. We'll do a project from 10 to 1 and have a pot-luck lunch. Come for the work or just for lunch.

**Coming next week:** Carrots, kale, new potatoes, dill, cukes, zukes, lettuce and scallions.

**Zucchini Frittata** A great Italian appetizer or brunch idea- this is as good cold as it is hot and very easy to prepare with any ingredients from the share.

- 2 Tbls olive oil
- 6-8 eggs- whisk with 1/4 c whole milk or half and half
- 1 med zucchini, sliced or jullienne (matchsticks)
- 2-3 small spring onions, sliced thin
- 1 med tomato, seeded and chopped- placed in a strainer to drain
- 2-3 Tbls chopped black olives
- 3-4 leaves basil, rough chopped
- cheese- use goat cheese, fontina or mozz- preferably chunks or thick slices
- other options (ham, bacon or salami)

Preheat oven to 375° or use broiler. Use an 8-10-inch nonstick or well seasoned cast iron pan as this will finish in the oven, preferably under the broiler. Heat pan on med high heat and add olive oil, add onions and zucchini, saute until soft. Add tomatoes and olives, cook 1 minute, season veg with salt and pepper, pour in eggs, add basil, and cook 2-3 minutes on med, scraping and tilting the pan with a heat resistant rubber spatula, allowing the egg to run underneath each time, top with cheese. When eggs are still creamy, shake the pan and place under the broiler for 2-3 minutes until set- (without a broiler it may take 4-6 minutes in oven) remove from oven.

Allow to rest 5 minutes, then gently slide onto a platter- slice. I like to serve this with a freshly made aioli, or garlic mayonnaise, which, made with Hogs Back eggs, is the best mayo you've ever had. A recipe for the aioli will be up on the blog in a day or two.