

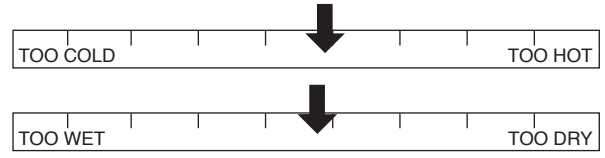


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red w/tops
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Leeks	Yes	Plastic	
Onions	No	No	Yellow and red
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Green bell, carmen and hot serranos
Shell Beans	Yes	Yes	Dragon's tongue
Tomatoes	No	No	Reds and heirloom
Winter Squash	No	No	Acorn
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

## Farm Report 9/2/10

Rainfall . . . . . 1.57"  
 High Temperature . . . . . 88°  
 Low Temperature . . . . . 52°  
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



like to rest the knife on the squash and then hammer it home with a mallet, but I've never really found that necessary, preferring just to kind of see-saw the knife back and forth until I can finish it off. Acorns make a good stuffing squash, and I can envision a tasty stuffing made with leeks, shell beans and a little pork sausage. There's a starting point recipe at the end of the newsletter.

We managed to eek out one week of shell beans this week. I actually planted these as a green bean option, but they didn't set their pods very uniformly and there wasn't much there in the 'green' stage, so I waited and watched and voilà, shell beans. You can't get away with this with all beans but some varieties are delicious in all three stages, green, shell or dry. For the uninitiated, shell beans are fresh beans which are eaten like dried beans, they just cook much faster and taste delicious. In order to get to the shell stage some of the pods dry out and get nasty looking, don't be afraid, there are pretty striped beans inside, just shell them out and discard the pod. Boil them in water until tender, like you would dry beans, but they'll take just a fraction of the time. Season them and enjoy, or toss with garlic, parmesan and olive oil over pasta.

The first of the fall beets are in the box this week. These are nice and tender and so are the tops. The tops got pretty beat up in some of the storms a couple of weeks ago, but there's still plenty of usable greens there.

As predicted, the tomatoes are down in numbers from last week. This may be the last week on the heirlooms, they're looking pretty bad out in the field. One problem with heirlooms is they don't have nearly as much disease resistance as the hybrids.

## Squash

For farmers, gardeners and eaters there are two types of squash; summer squash, like zucchini and the yellow crook-necked squashes, and winter squash, which refers to all the hard-shelled squashes which we store for the winter like buttercup, butternut and acorn. I can't remember another year when we delivered winter squash and summer squash in the same box. The summer squashes are definitely on their way out and the winter on the way in. This is a little early for winter squash, but the hot weather has helped it to mature nicely. We've had mature butternuts in the field for weeks already, and some years they barely mature before the frost. With some cool fall-like weather on tap for this weekend it'll be nice to have an excuse to fire up the oven.

The squash looks like a good crop this year. The field is pretty well decimated with powdery mildew now, but most things have matured well already. We kept the cucumber beetles and squash bugs at bay very effectively this year so that they never became a factor. We'll start out with the acorns this week.

Acorns are the earliest maturing of the winter squashes. I've always maintained that they have sort of an insipid flavor because of it, but this new variety of acorn that I started growing last year has won me over with it's excellent flavor. Acorns can have very hard shells, so be careful cutting them open. Some people

The peppers continue to have a pretty decent year. The carmens are ripening at a slower but more consistent rate which is kind of nice. It seems like most years we don't get any until the third week of September and then we get tons of them. The small reds are the hot serranos.

My quest to have carrots for 14 weeks in a row continues unabated. You may get some of the fall storage variety now, they're smaller with huge tops. They'll continue to size up and their flavor improve over the coming weeks.

One more week of the early season leeks is in the box this week. We'll take a break from them and see some late leeks in a month or so.

The onions are starting to show some problems in storage, a rot that's starting around the neck of the onion and continuing inward. We try to sort out the bad ones, but if you get one like this just cut away the bad spot, the rest is fine.

This may be the last of the summer squashes, especially with the weather turning cooler.

### Farm News

Cleanup continues around the farm with the coming of September. We've gotten about half of this year's vegetable fields cleaned up and ready for seeding of a late season cover crop. Winter rye is our choice for a late season seeding that can germinate readily in cold soil and hold the ground in place over the winter. Not to mention that it makes a really nice straw that we can harvest next year. We can keep seeding rye into October and still get it to germinate as long as it has some moisture.

The vegetable crop seeding is winding down, with more arugula, baby lettuces and spinach getting seeded each week. We could really use an end to hammering thunderstorms to help these late-season crops grow nicely. We've started pulling out the row covers and covering some of the seedings to get them growing a little faster as the weather cools down and the hours of daylight decrease. We've already lost over two hours of daylight since the summer solstice. Another week or two of seedings and it will be too late in the season to get any more to mature before winter.

We continue to prep things for next year's fields to get them in top shape for 2011. Cultivating weeds out of them and getting cover crops planted on them are top priorities right now. No rye here, however. Rye overwinters and grows aggressively in the spring before

it sets it's seed. What we use for next year's fields is a mix of oats and peas, which will come up and grow nicely for a month or so this fall and then be killed by the deep freeze during the winter months.

Wednesday of this week marked Iris's first day of 4th grade. It seems like just a year or two ago that she was starting kindergarten. She's taken on two stressful jumps this year by moving from the Catholic school to the public school in Plum City, and by skipping 3rd grade. I think it's actually been more stressful on her parents than her. The school choices available in rural areas like ours are very limited. Many of the schools are struggling just to survive, faced with declining enrollment and funding that's strictly based on it. Just because there's 10 fewer kids in the school doesn't mean it costs any less to heat the building in the winter. Baker's excited for the start of his two-day all-day 4K program next week.

**Coming next week:** Carrots, potatoes, chard, tomatoes, peppers, garlic, squash.

### Sausage-Stuffed Acorn Squash with Molasses Glaze

*Bon Appétit | November 1996*

- 4 small acorn squash
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 2 large green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 pound bulk breakfast sausage
- 1 cup fresh white breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup canned beef broth
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cup mild-flavored (light) molasses

Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut two 3/4-inch-thick slices from center of each acorn squash for a total of 8 slices (reserve ends of squash for another use). Scoop out seeds and fibers from center slices and discard. Arrange squash rings in single layer in 15x10x2-inch baking dish.

Melt butter in heavy medium nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add bell pepper and green onions; sauté until tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer to large bowl; cool. Mix in sausage, breadcrumbs, broth, pepper and salt. Mound sausage mixture in center of squash rings, using about 1/3 cup for each. (Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)

Brush sausage and squash with half of molasses. Bake 15 minutes. Brush with remaining molasses and bake until squash are tender and sausage is cooked through, about 25 minutes.