

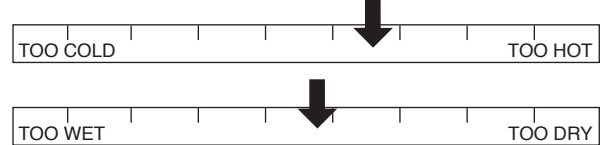


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red w/tops
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	First of 2010
Garlic	No	No	
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	Masai
Onions, Fresh	Yes	Plastic	Walla walla
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	First of 2010
Tomatoes	No	No	First of 2010
Yellow Squash	Yes	Plastic	Zephyr
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	Raven

Farm Report 7/22/10

Rainfall0.53"
 High Temperature 86°
 Low Temperature 61°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



The first beets are in the box this week. We had some problems with our first planting, but this second one has turned out nice. We'll have another bunch in a week or two, it also looks like we'll have a good stand of beets for the fall. The tops on these are in nice shape and are as tasty as chard.

Beans

It's the third week of July and that means it's time to start picking green beans. Last year we had trialed a smaller green bean and it was such a hit that it's pretty much all we planted this year. It's not quite small enough to qualify it as a French bean or Haricots verts, but it's pretty close. I really like this bean variety because it's productive, tender and very tasty. The only drawback of it is that it takes a lot longer to fill your box when picking it—it's not very big.

These are a bush type of green bean, meaning that they don't grow on a vine, but a short plant about 30" high that sets all it's beans at the top of the plant. We pick them by pulling the plants out of the ground and then picking the beans off. We don't come back and pick the same plants again, we just keep planting beans to pick for each week.

Green beans are also very nutritious, being excellent sources of Vitamin K, Vitamin C and manganese. They also have a fairly high amount of Omega-3 fatty acids for a vegetable, as much as kale.

In our household the kids eat green beans raw as finger food for the most part. I like them raw in the field, but in the house I prefer them blanched in a warm mustard-dressed salad. Enjoy a nice big bag of them this week. We should continue to have varying amounts of them over the next several weeks.

Cukes are new this week. We went from just a couple here and there last week, to picking about 500 of them this week. When cukes get going they really ramp it up. We've got a few different varieties of cukes and they're all kind of mixed together. We've got some regular slicing cukes, and then we also have some of the thin-skinned non-bitter cukes which really don't need to be peeled. You also may get a smaller pickling-type cucumber since we've got a few of those planted out there as well. We eat a lot of cukes in our house and they're one of our favorite veggies this time of year. Most of them get eaten just in plain slices with a little coarse salt, or dressed in salads.

The first of the onion crop is in the box this week. The onions have been looking very good, but the walla walla are succumbing to a fungus called purple blotch. Normally walla wallas are our largest early onion and a great yielder, but not with the fungal problems. All the wet weather in June and humidity in July has set us up for fighting fungus for the rest of 2010. This is the first time I've ever seen purple blotch and it's starting to spread to the other onions. We've started spraying an organic fungicide to slow it's spread, and we're also just a couple weeks away from harvest on most of them.

The other place where disease has hit hard is in the early tomatoes. They also are starting to ripen as they fight whichever of the 100s of tomato disorders they're

experiencing. There's one little taste of the tomato season in the box this week with more to come. You may get one that's a bit orange, if you do just set it on the counter or window sill for a few days to ripen up.

After the truck left the farm last week we started on the lengthy task of organizing the harvested garlic and getting it hung up in the greenhouse to cure. This is the nicest crop of garlic that we've ever had. In fact, when I went over the planting numbers from last year we actually harvested more garlic than we planted, or that I had estimated that we planted. Usually we don't start having it in the box until week 10, but this year we've got enough that we can start with it now. It's still very fresh and you can store it in your fridge or on the counter, just don't put it in plastic.

Dan Sam came through with the first of the sweet corn this week. We don't grow sweet corn here on our farm, but buy it from Dan who grows a lot of it down on the Arkansaw prairie, which is a big flat sandy piece of ancient river bottom south of the town of Arkansaw. He's also the big strawberry grower in the area as well as other veggies he sells from a stand on his farm and at a booth at the Eau Claire farmer's market. He is not organic and neither is the corn, but he's quite conscientious and he never sells me any genetically-modified corn which is usually planted for the late-August and September harvest window when the corn earworm is at its peak. His corn is picked the morning it's delivered so that it's at the peak of sweetness, I always recommend eating it Thursday night.

This will be the last of the scallions this week.

More carrots, zukes, yellow squash and basil this week. The carrots have sized up a little more and the zukes are reaching their peak output and should keep producing at this rate for several weeks. The basil is loving all this warm humid weather and continues to look very nice.

Farm News

We had a nice half inch of rain last Saturday which has kept me from having to run the irrigation much. Other than that it has felt like mid-July around the farm. The mosquitoes are out in full force and it's been humid and calm. Normally I can go the whole season without seeing more than ten mosquitoes, but with the lack of breeze and the presence of lots of moisture they're having a banner year.

The other bug having a banner year is the cabbage looper. We'd have had some collards or kale in the box

this week if they hadn't gone to town in the last two weeks. It got too chewed up to harvest so we've had to start offensive measures on that front this week as well. This is a common battle each year, it just doesn't usually start quite this early or with such vigor.

Speaking of the cabbage family we've also been busy getting the fall broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and kale in the ground the last couple of weeks. We've just got two more rounds of broccoli to go and we'll be done transplanting for the season. That's another reason we need to get in front of the cabbage looper now, so that we can look forward to nice brassica crops in September and October.

Coming next week: Carrots, cukes, zukes, yellow squash, potatoes, beans, garlic, tomatoes, corn, basil.

This is my favorite way to have green beans:

Good Old French Bean Salad

from Jamie's Dinners by Jamie Oliver

- 4 handfuls beans, stem ends removed
- 2 heaping teaspoons good French mustard
- 2 tablespoons good-quality white wine vinegar
- 5 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 medium shallot, finely chopped
- 1/2 clove garlic, finely chopped

Bring a pan of water to a fast boil, add beans and cook with lid on at least 4 to 5 minutes. Meanwhile put the mustard and vinegar into a bowl and, while stirring, drizzle in the olive oil to make the dressing. Season the dressing with salt and pepper and then add the shallot and garlic.

Remove one of the beans to check if it's cooked. If it holds its shape but is also soft to the bite, it's perfect. Drain the beans and transfer them to a bowl. Dress them while still piping hot, toss them well to coat and serve immediately.

Cucumber Yogurt Salad

- 1-2 cucumbers, peeled, quartered and sliced in chunks
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- salt to taste
- 1 tablespoons dried mint or dill
- 1/2 cup plain yogurt
- 1/2 tablespoon olive oil

Mix the cucumbers together with the garlic. Layer cucumber slices in a salad bowl, sprinkling each layer lightly with salt. Let stand for 30 minutes. Pour off the liquid that has formed, pressing cucumber firmly. Crumble herbs over cucumbers. Beat yogurt until smooth; blend in a drizzle of olive oil if desired. Pour over cucumbers. Refrigerate until thoroughly chilled.