

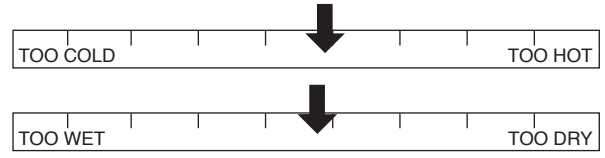


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red w/ rough tops
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Chard	Yes	Plastic	Rainbow
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Dill	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Onions	Yes	Plastic	Walla walla
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	
Tomatoes	No	No	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	and Pattypan

Farm Report 7/28/11

Rainfall 1.41"
 High Temperature 89°
 Low Temperature 58°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



A nice bag of basil is in the box this week, it should be enough to make a batch of pesto. We had quite a bit of rain right before harvesting, so be sure and wash the basil—and everything else—well. Nothing ruins pesto more than the crunch of dirt.

More red beets this week with some rough-looking tops. The humidity we've had encourages some of the fungi on the leaves and really breaks them down, think of the leaves this week as just a root delivery system.

Since most of the beet leaves are rough we've included some more rainbow chard to satisfy your green cravings. Their colors are not quite as intense in the hot weather, but they're still beauties.

The carrots this week are younger and from a new planting. We got enough rain on Wednesday morning that we could pull the carrots right out of the ground instead of using a pitchfork to dig them all. That was a treat that only seems to happen once a year. Of course the downside is that you have to slog around in the mud.

The cukes are kicking into gear and everyone should get 3 or 4 in their box. In our household we generally don't peel cukes unless they're large. Cukes are 96% water which is why we seem to eat so many of them this time of year. Our family eats a cucumber or two every night with supper. Usually we just slice it into 1/4" slices and sprinkle it with a little salt. A little minced dill and a splash of vinegar are also a nice addition.

The tomatoes are picking up steam in the high tunnel. The plants are holding up well and not showing any significant signs of disease. It'll still be a few weeks before we see any ripen out in the field. The field

Corn!

Ah, what would summer in the Midwest be without a little king corn. What is it with sweet corn anyway? Even out here, where we're surrounded by corn, if you drive by a garden, invariably half of it is dedicated to sweet corn. I buck that trend by not growing any sweet corn here on our farm. As most of you know, we purchase sweet corn for the shares from the only other produce farm in Arkansaw, WI, Sam's Produce. Dan and Tammy Sam grow a lot of sweet corn and strawberries as well as tomatoes and melons that they sell up at the Eau Claire farmer's market and from a little roadside stand in front of their house. They are not organic, so neither is their corn, but we make sure that we never purchase any genetically-modified corn from them.

The reason I don't grow sweet corn is that it just takes up too much space. It's also one of those crops that, to ensure adequate pollination, you need to really grow a lot of it. Dan and Tammy pick it for us on Thursday mornings so that you all get it the same day it was picked which is ideal.

Some of the newer sweet corn varieties are very sweet and hold up well after being refrigerated, but I always recommend that you eat it up the day it was picked. We'll have it in the box for the next several weeks.

plants are looking dynamite this year and have already topped out their 5-foot tall cages. Let's hope we don't get any strong winds.

Another small bag of fancy green beans is in the box. I love these small beans but they do take so much time to pick that it's hard to even get everyone a half-pound.

The onions this week are more of the sweet Walla Walla type. Try them on the grill by slicing them in 1/4-inch thick rings, brushing a little olive oil on them, and grilling until they're soft, yummy.

The zucchini have been kind of puttering along, which is unusual with all of the warm weather. During the very hot weather last week we actually had many of the plants develop a bacterial infection in their stems. Many seem to have recovered now that the weather has moderated, but they're still not producing at the rate they should. The pattypan, however, are doing better and everyone will get one this week.

More garlic, the last scallions and dill round out the box this week.

Farm News

It sure was nice to have a break in the hot weather for the last week or so. The longer I do this the more I come to the realization that the plants are smarter than I am. Last week I mentioned the explosive growth on the winter squash, but they weren't setting any fruit. Even without brains they knew that the weather conditions lent themselves to extensive growth but that it was too hot for reproduction. This week you can look at the same plants and they're full of female blossoms, which are the ones that set the fruit. They were just biding their time until the weather conditions improved. I wish I had their sense.

With the talk of rain imminent last weekend we shifted gears and got all the garlic crop harvested on Friday. We came in a little north of 4,000 bulbs. We are seeing some effects from the fusarium, but hopefully we'll be able to easily identify it and keep it out of the boxes. I had a nice chat with the plant pathologist at the U of M who had analyzed our samples last week. Apart from wishing his garlic in his garden looked like ours, he had some interesting things to say. He actually only isolated fusarium on one of the four samples I sent him, so maybe we can use some of the crop for seed for next year. He also said he's seen a lot of bizarre environmental symptoms from the wacky weather this year.

With the garlic all hanging up in the greenhouse we had time to get back at the weeds and made a lot of headway. For the time being, we're looking pretty great out there as far as the weeds are concerned.

Most of Tuesday was spent harvesting things ahead of the rainy weather that was forecast for Wednesday morning. I'm sure glad we did because Wednesday morning was a mess. We had about 2.25" of rain between 4am and 10am.

While the rest of the crew was harvesting on Tuesday I was mowing some of our fallow fields to get them ready to plow and prep for next year's crops. Now is the time to get it done, as soon as it dries out a bit.

Coming next week: Cukes, zukes, carrots, corn, potatoes, tomatoes, fennel, kale, garlic, and maybe a pepper.

Cucumber Yogurt Salad

- 1-2 cucumbers, peeled, quartered and sliced in chunks
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- salt to taste
- 1 tablespoon fresh 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.

Pesto *Jamie's Dinners by Jamie Oliver*

- 1/2 clove of garlic, chopped sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 good handfuls of fresh basil, leaves picked and chopped
- a handful of pinenuts, very lightly toasted
- a good handful of freshly grated parmesan
- extra virgin olive oil

Pound the garlic with a little pinch of salt and the basil leaves in a pestle and mortar, or pulse in a food processor. Add a bit more garlic if you like. Add the pinenuts to the mixture and pound again. Turn out into a bowl and add half the parmesan. Stir gently and add olive oil – you need just enough to bind the sauce and get it to an oozy consistency. Season to taste, then add most of the remaining cheese. Keep adding more oil and cheese until you are happy.