

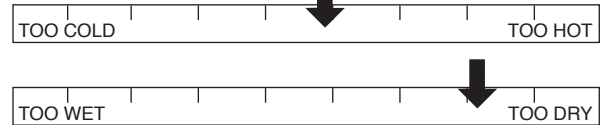


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Cantaloupe	Yes	No	Maverick and/or Sarah's Choice
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Eggplant	Yes	Plastic	Not in all boxes
Garlic	No	No	
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	Awesome!
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Green bells and serranos
Potatoes	No	Paper	Go for the (Yukon) Gold medley
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	Last week
Tomatoes	No	No	Reds plus a few small heirlooms

Farm Report 8/9/12

Rainfall0.64"
 High Temperature 90°
 Low Temperature 54°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



We're getting two week's worth of melons at once this week because we ended up with two varieties maturing at the same time. Maverick is the more ribbed variety and Sarah's Choice is smooth. We've grown Maverick for several years and it has become our go-to early melon. Unfortunately it has been dropped from our seed supplier so this will be it's last appearance. This is our first time with Sarah's Choice, and I think from here on out it will also be David's Choice. It's been very consistent with excellent flavor.

Our kids love cantaloupe and can eat a pile of it. At lunch time every day this week I brought in one with a bad spot that needs to be eaten up right away and cut it in half, scoop out the seeds than cut each half into four pieces. Then I make perpendicular cuts down the melon slice to the rind. And lastly I slice along the rind so that all the melon comes away in nice bite-sized chunks. Here's my bad illustration of how to cut up the 1/8th melon slices:



Then it's really easy to just keep in the fridge in a container for easy self-serve snacks. Although it sometimes has trouble making it to the fridge before it disappears.

The other shining star in the box this week is the green beans. The hot weather kind of paused the beans in neutral and they just sat there waiting for better conditions. Now they're coming on strong. Everyone should get a nice bag of our gourmet beans. Melinda made some the other night that were dynamite. I can't really duplicate what she did here, but the classic way to cook little babies like these is to put them in boiling water until not quite tender, less than 5 minutes and

Melon Mania

I think we set some sort of cantaloupe picking record here at the farm this week. By Wednesday afternoon we'd picked and washed 466 of the buggers, or pretty close to 2,000 pounds, so it is not an exaggeration to say that we picked a ton of cantaloupe this week. Thankfully the weather finally broke so that they didn't all come in a few days. Last Friday and Saturday we were picking 100 each day, but by Monday they had slowed down.

When cantaloupe are ripening they must be picked every day, skip a day and you may have 40 that are too ripe and need to be left in the field. And since we don't deliver shares every day we can't pick them so ripe that they rot in the cooler until share delivery day. There are two main things that tell you if a cantaloupe is ripe. First, the background color turns from a greenish-blue to a pale yellow. Secondly, they slip from the vine with just a slight tug. I tend to rotate them 180° from where they sit and give a bit of pressure rather than a tug. If they don't slip from the vine they stay there until the next day. Contrary to popular opinion, cantaloupe do not continue to ripen off of the vine. They may seem to get sweeter, but that's merely because they are beginning to rot. Many things get sweeter as they rot, but that doesn't necessarily mean you want to eat them.

then shock them in cool water to stop them cooking. Then finish them in a dry skillet to take away any excess moisture, adding a knob of butter and some minced garlic or shallot after the moisture has burned off.

In a full-on display of how much of a vegetable dork I am I decided it would be fun to honor Team USA this week with a red, white and blue Olympic potato medley. We've been enjoying watching the Olympics for the past week, actually it seems more like we've been watching a show that's all commercials with a little bit of olympics in-between. It's also sad how focused it is on things that Americans win, rather than a balanced overview of all the sports. It always makes me think of an old Monty Python sketch where they're anchoring the news at a TV station owned by gibbons by saying that there was a bad traffic accident but, thankfully, no gibbons were involved. You probably have no idea what I'm talking about. This is why it's important to stay hydrated when working in the heat.

Anyway, the potatoes are the standard Yukons and red norlands along with a new one we're trying called purple majesty. It's a purple-skinned, purple-fleshed variety that's really purple. It's almost like cutting into a beet. It's a new variety released from Colorado State a few years ago that has four times the amount of antioxidants that a white potato has and has also been shown to inhibit the growth of colon cancer cells in research that Colorado State is conducting. It's shaping up to be one of the new colorful superfoods and I expect you'll be seeing more of them.

This will be the last week of sweet corn. I usually only do 4 weeks of it, but since I thought the first week's ears were a little wimpy we added a bonus week.

The tomato pile will be a little smaller this week as we wait for the field tomatoes to really take up the slack that's come from the high tunnel ones winding down.

Another green pepper and a couple serranos, and some folks will get an eggplant but with the cooler weather there really weren't very many of them this week and may not be for a couple of weeks.

Carrots, cukes and garlic round out the box.

Farm News

It continues to be fairly dry at the farm but we've been very grateful for some moderation of the temperatures. It was such a treat to put on a long-sleeved shirt over the weekend. As Jesse pointed out on Wednesday while we were harvesting, it's only six weeks until frost.

We've begun seeding fall spinach, arugula and other greens for harvest in September and October. Some of these smaller crops only take 30 days or so to mature, as long as they have enough daylight. Daylight starts to be a challenge going forward, we've already lost over an hour of daylight since the solstice.

The storage onion harvest is complete for the year and it's a bountiful one. The onions sized up nicely this year and there should be plenty for the boxes in the weeks ahead. For those of you new to the farm, we generally alternate onions with potatoes in the boxes, potatoes this week, onions next, etc. We do this so that we aren't constantly digging potatoes or cleaning onions.

A shout out to the crew this week who have been doing a great job on all the yucky weeding projects I've thrown at them in the past several weeks. We were really getting behind there for a while as the heat went on, but now we are back on top. We added a new member to the crew in the past couple of weeks too, Heather is from Menomonie, WI and joins Jesse, Cody and I on the full-time crew.

Coming next week: Cilantro, cukes, tomatoes, peppers, cantaloupe, onions, garlic, basil and maybe either chard, collards or kale.

Roasted Green Beans with Garlic

- 1 pound green beans, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced

Preheat oven to 450°F. Toss green beans with olive oil on large rimmed baking sheet. Roast until browned and almost tender, stirring occasionally, about 10 minutes. Sprinkle beans with garlic, salt, and pepper; toss to combine. Continue roasting until beans are tender, about 2 minutes longer. Transfer to bowl.

Green Bean Succotash

- 8 ounces green beans, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup frozen lima beans, thawed
- 1 cup fresh corn kernels (cut from 2 medium ears)
- 3/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) butter
- 1/2 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning

Blanch green beans until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Transfer to bowl of ice water to cool; drain.

Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. Add green beans and sauté 1 minute. Add lima beans, corn, and bell pepper. Sauté until vegetables are crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Mix in butter and Old Bay; season to taste with salt and pepper.