



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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	First of it
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red w/tops
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	Mas y mas
Celery	Yes	Plastic	
Cilantro	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Dill	Yes	Plastic	
Fennel	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Potatoes	No	Paper	Red norland
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	Yes!
Tomatoes	No	No	Reds
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	Green or gold

August in July

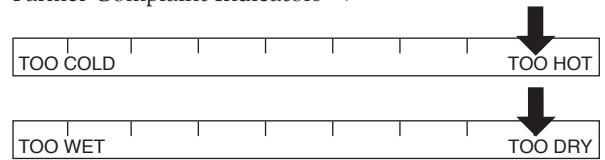
Even though it's only the second week of July, it seems like summer has given spring the boot. The box this week is overflowing with crops that are usually there in late July. There were more things we could've harvested but there just wasn't time or room so we left the carrots and onions to get a little larger for next week.

The first potatoes of the year are in the box this week. Dark red norlands are always the variety of choice to start out the season. The heat combined with gobs of potato leafhoppers have really beaten up on the potato crop. The fields were beautiful before the heat wave, which really stressed the plants and made them much more susceptible to insects. Leafhoppers are small piercing, sucking insects that fly and hop off of the plants when disturbed. We always have some leafhoppers, but this year we have 20X more than a normal year. There was a cloud of them around me while I was on the tractor digging the potatoes. I don't expect the potato plants to survive much more than a couple of weeks, but hopefully they can bulk up enough that we won't be too short on spuds.

The skins on these new potatoes are very fragile. We try and be as gentle as possible with them, but they do get a bit scraped up. They won't store well so plan on

Farm Report 7/12/12

Rainfall0.05"
 High Temperature 99°
 Low Temperature 62°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



using them over the weekend, and although they come in a plastic bag they'll keep better stored in paper or out of the bag. They make great potato salad, especially with some other veggies, like a cucumber, celery and scallions.

They're also delicious boiled just until tender and tossed with some butter and fresh dill, which is also in the box this week.

Other herbs this week are cilantro and basil. This first picking of basil is always a nice one. The cilantro has some bad leaves from the heat, but it's a nice big bunch so there's plenty to use.

Some nice beets are in the box. If you're wondering why we haven't seen any chard in the box so far this year you can see some of the answer on these beet tops. We've had various bugs eating the chard and the beet tops all year long. The chard has never gotten over the damage, every time I think it's about ready to harvest something else happens to it. We just put in a second planting of chard and hopefully between the two we'll have chard at least once this year.

The broccoli gusher continues. As I said last week the heat makes the heads mature too fast so that they don't look quite as nice. The broccoli head consists of tiny flower buds that usually size up simultaneously, but when you have hot conditions, some get ahead of the others and are therefore different sizes of little buds make for a less tight appearance. Nothing wrong with their eating properties though.

Celery is back for a second week, and a reminder that the centers of some of these plants have some brown areas from it being so hot.

Fennel is another thing that doubled in size in the last two weeks. We'll start with one and there should be a couple more on the way.

And corn! I was thinking last week that the corn would be early this year and that's turned out to be the case. I talked to Dan last week and he thought we'd have corn for Week 7, then he called yesterday and said he had corn. As always, this corn is from Dan Sam who grows veggies down south of the town of Arkansaw in the sand prairie there. He does farm conventionally, so the corn is NOT organic, but it is not GMO corn. It is just conventionally produced sweet corn. We've always been very happy with Dan's corn, he and his wife, Tammy, do a great job with it. They pick it for us on Thursday morning, so it comes to you fresh and sweet.

Twice as many tomatoes this week, o.k. that only means two, but it'll keep ramping up slowly until the field tomatoes are ready, and then we'll be swimming in them.

The cukes and zucchini continue at about the same pace, with more cukes coming from the field each week. A cucumber salad with yogurt, garlic and dill is a favorite around here on a hot day.

Garlic and some large scallions round out this week's box.

Farm News

Hot and dry, that's the news. Keeping things watered is a priority right now. The heat has a way of speeding things up which is not always a good thing. One way that we monitor pests on the farm is by looking at how many degree days we've had because pests and plants need a certain amount of time above a certain temperature to develop. A degree day is a complicated mathematical calculation that basically takes into account the amount of hours above a given average temperature, usually 50° when it comes to insect monitoring. Basically when the degree days are ahead of normal things are developing faster.

Thus it is this year that we're over 50% ahead of last year at this time in terms of degree days, and almost 20% ahead of average. So, that can mean that the tomatoes get ripe earlier, but it also means that the pests can reproduce faster, sometimes meaning that pests can produce another generation than they would be able to in a cooler year. This can lead to an exponential increase in pests. I feel like this is what we're seeing with leafhoppers and also what we'll be seeing

shortly from our rapidly increasing squash bug population this year. Honestly, I just find the weather this year unnerving. I kind of feel like one of these days I'm going to look up to see a cloud of locusts descending on the farm. We're so busy with irrigating and weeding that I feel like the acceleration of some pests in this heat is getting out of control.

Irrigating, harvesting and weeding is our lives right now, along with seeding and transplanting. We got half of the garlic harvested and hung up to cure in the greenhouse with the rest waiting until next week.

Coming next week: Corn, tomatoes, cukes, zucchini, green beans, dill, carrots, onions, celery, scallions, garlic, mangoes?

A member sent in her favorite broccoli salad recipe by way of the NYTimes:

Garlicky Sesame-Cured Broccoli Salad

Time: 10 minutes, plus 1 hour marinating
 1 1/2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
 1 teaspoon kosher salt, more to taste
 2 heads broccoli, 1 pound each, cut into bite-size florets
 3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
 4 fat garlic cloves, minced
 2 teaspoons cumin seeds
 2 teaspoons roasted (Asian) sesame oil
 Large pinch crushed red pepper flakes.

In a large bowl, stir together the vinegar and salt. Add broccoli and toss to combine.

In a large skillet, heat olive oil until hot, but not smoking. Add garlic and cumin and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in sesame oil and pepper flakes. Pour mixture over broccoli and toss well. Let sit for at least 1 hour at room temperature, and up to 48 (chill it if you want to keep it for more than 2 hours). Adjust seasonings (it may need more salt) and serve.

Here's a really basic cucumber salad, but you can get much more complicated. We make things like this almost daily. You can find recipes that are more like the true Greek tzatziki, but they're a little more involved and when we just want to have a veggie side dish at supper this is a favorite. A splash of a nice olive oil is also a nice addition.

Cucumber Yogurt Salad

2 cucumbers, peeled, quartered lengthwise, then sliced into 1/2-inch chunks
 1 cup plain yogurt or thick greek yogurt
 2 teaspoons fresh dill, chopped
 Salt and pepper to taste

To make the salad, simply gently mix together the ingredients. Salt and pepper to taste.