



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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	First of the year
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	Last of the spring
Cabbage	Yes	Plastic	Pointy
Celery	Yes	Plastic	
Chard	Yes	Plastic	Rainbow
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic Scapes	Yes	Plastic	Last of them
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	First of these
Lettuce	Yes	Plastic	Red leaf and green leaf
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Turnips	Yes	Plastic	Hakurei
Yellow Squash	Yes	Plastic	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	Maybe

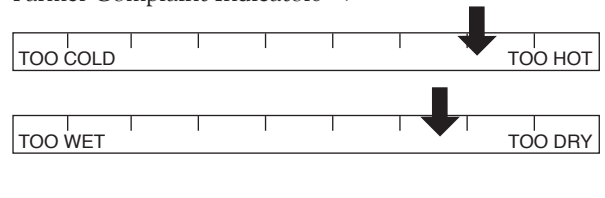
Celery

We started growing celery a couple of years ago and I think we're still trying to get it down to a science. Celery requires large amounts of water, which this spring was easily had, now not so much. The first thing you'll notice about our celery is that it's smaller and darker green than the stuff in the store. You'll also notice that it still has its leaves attached. Commercial celery is grown primarily in California in valleys that maintain an even, cool temperature. They grow the plants for about 3 months to marketable size. Unfortunately celery production requires a lot of pesticides which is why it is the commercial vegetable with the highest level of pesticide residue, some of which are carcinogens. The USDA has detected up to 60 different pesticide residues on celery.

You won't find any pesticides on our celery, but you will find it smaller and more intense in flavor. The heat and lack of constant water on our farm make it somewhat less useful for eating like ants on a log, but excellent for adding to other dishes, whether it's a bloody mary or chicken salad. We do just eat it like sticks in our household, but we like the flavor of celery and don't mind if it's a little stringy.

Farm Report 7/18/13

Rainfall0.37"
 High Temperature 92°
 Low Temperature 64°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



Also new to the box this week are the first of the green beans. We grow a smaller green bean that we like better than the larger ones typically in the stores. Because it's a smaller bean, we don't have tons of them. I also had some seed problems with green beans this year, so they're not going to be a bumper crop, but we should have some in the box for the next several weeks.

The last new addition to the box this week is a small pointy cabbage. These are early cabbages, also sometimes known as sweetheart cabbages. They have a mild cabbage flavor and make a great thinly sliced cabbage salad or cole slaw. They also cook up just fine as well.

The arugula and radishes are done for the early summer. We'll have arugula back in September.

This will be the last bunch of turnips for the season. As it stays hotter, they lose some of their sweet tenderness. We also have more problems with bugs attacking the roots as things heat up as well. The tops also look pretty ragged in this heat, and are not very usable for cooking.

The chard is lovely again this week. We'll take a break from the summer heat with this one as well, and will have more of it in September.

Speaking of pesticide residues on conventional produce, when I looked up celery I was surprised to find that cucumbers are also very high on the list of vegetables with the most residues. A few more delicious non-toxic ones are in your box again this week. We're starting to get a few in the field, which is good since the high tunnel is an unpleasant place to be working this week.

More nice summer lettuce is in the box this week. I

think we can pull off a week or two more of lettuce if it doesn't stay hot the whole time. It would also help if we could get it irrigated, but it's in kind of an out of the way part of the field.

Oh, I almost forgot one last new to the box item, basil. Most of you who have a basil plant at home know it goes crazy in this heat. I didn't think it was quite ready to pick last week, and this week it's starting to flower. There should be a nice bag for everyone, though. A nice summer pasta with roasted summer squash and scape and basil pesto is perfect for a hot evening, except the roasting and boiling part.

The summer squash has been slow to pick up steam, even in the hot weather last week. It just wasn't getting pollinated. We had a lot of things flowering on the farm and around the vegetable fields, now that the potatoes are done flowering we seem to be getting a lot more pollinators in the vine crops. So I think we should have a good supply of summer squash and zucchini from here on out. Just another reminder of how important our native pollinators are.

This will also be the last of the broccoli for the early season. The first of the fall broccoli transplants went in this week and they are not very happy in the hot dry field. This last round of early broccoli is looking a little sad from the heat as well.

Farm News

It was a hot one yesterday getting things harvested for the shares. In fact it's been pretty hot all week at the farm, as you can probably imagine. We started harvesting at 6am to try and get some things out of the field as early as possible. We had the lettuce and chard out by 8, and kept going from there. Once something is harvested it can't sit very long in the field without wilting, so we have to make several trips back and forth to the packing shed to get things out of the sun. It also gets very hard for our walk-in cooler to keep up with the hot produce coming in from the field. We cool most things in tubs of cold water before they go in the cooler, but on a 90° day it still means the cooler has to work overtime.

The other thing we're having trouble keeping up with is irrigating. The residual effects of our wet spring have now completely disappeared and things are dry. We had a nice little shower Saturday morning, but only about a third of an inch of rain. As it continues to be dry we have to be irrigating almost constantly, as the different plants reach their mature size they can evapotranspire a lot of water on a day like yesterday.

Evapotranspiration is the fancy word for what plants do when they take in water through their roots, transport it up the plant and evaporate back into the atmosphere as water vapor through their leaf area. Other \$10 farming words, allelopathic and parthenocarpic, you can look them up if you're bored. The cucumbers we grow in the high tunnel are parthenocarpic.

I started out the day Monday morning with our annual organic inspection. If you're a certified organic farm you have an annual inspection by a third-party inspector who comes to your farm and checks things out. It's actually fairly involved, I think he and I spent at least 3 hours touring the fields, going over our records, looking through receipts and talking about various aspects of the farm. It's also always interesting to talk to the inspectors, they get to see more farms than I do and it's a great way to get a sense of how you stack up to other operations. I really liked the inspector I had this time around because he was a retired soil scientist, and I don't get many opportunities to talk to soil scientists. He was also pleasantly surprised that I liked talking about soils. Remarkably, there are quite a few farmers who actually don't know very much about soil science.

Being certified organic is quite a bit of extra work and cost for our farm, but I think it is important to have some certification. I think that the natural foods world is really getting co-opted by the same giant food companies that ruined food in the first place. Markets are muddying the waters with meaningless adjectives and filling their packages with the same old stuff. The USDA organic label may not be perfect, but right now it is the best way to assure that you're not eating GMOs that are loaded with toxic residues.

Coming next week: Cukes, zukes, yellow squash, lettuce, basil, potatoes, carrots, beans, scallions, celery.

Basil Pesto

- 1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted (or substitute almonds or walnuts)
- 3 medium cloves garlic, threaded on a skewer
- 2 cups packed basil or cilantro leaves, rinsed thoroughly
- 7 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Pinch table salt
- 1/4 cup finely grated Parmesan cheese

Toast nuts in small heavy skillet over medium heat, stirring frequently, until just golden and fragrant, 4 to 5 minutes. Place all ingredients except cheese(s) in bowl of food processor fitted with steel blade; process until smooth, stopping as necessary to scrape down bowl with flexible spatula. Transfer mixture to small bowl, stir in cheese(s), adjust salt, and serve over 1 pound of cooked and drained pasta.