

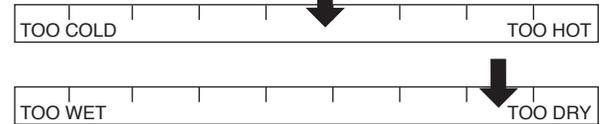


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Celery	Yes	Plastic	Last of it
Cilantro	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Eggplant	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	In salsa bag
Kale	Yes	Plastic	Lacinato
Onion	Yes	Plastic	In salsa bag
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Serrano, cayenne and Anaheim in salsa bag, green bell separate
Potatoes	No	Paper	Red Norland
Shell Beans	Yes	Yes	Taylor
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	
Tomatoes	No	No	Reds and one heirloom
Yellow Squash	Yes	Plastic	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

### Farm Report 8/22/13

Rainfall . . . . . 0.02"  
 High Temperature . . . . . 90°  
 Low Temperature . . . . . 56°  
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



to irrigate next can be daunting. By the time we get to August it's as though my mental transmission has a thick, viscous oil coating each fleshy gear.

So I found myself this week making the difficult decision to write-off about 500 of our cantaloupe. They should have been in the box this week, but they just weren't up to my standards.

Here's what happened: In January when I was ordering seeds for the year there was no seed available for my new favorite variety of cantaloupe called Sarah's Choice. A breeder had a crop failure or some b.s. Since I couldn't get what I wanted I opted for a variety called French Orange that I haven't grown for four or five years. It's a nice little melon and very sweet. The one drawback of FO is that it can be tricky to pick at the right stage.

The way the weather has been this year has made it impossible to judge ripeness on the French Orange melons. We noticed this first with the watermelon, that even though all external indicators pointed towards under ripeness, they were consistently ripe or even overripe. As we moved on to cantaloupe, 80% of the French Orange we've picked have been overripe. When we try to pick them greener they are hard and unsweet. So, instead of sending a bunch of overripe melons this week we have none. And you'll have to trust me, they were really too overripe to eat. The good news is that the later melon we grow, Tirenno, is starting to ripen and looks very good. Fingers crossed for next week.

Now that you know what's NOT in the box, and why, let's move on to what is. Even without cantaloupe it's a lovely August box.

### Decisions

I think when people think of our farm, they think that we must work very hard. And while it's true that we do work very hard some days, many days are reasonably paced. And when I have a stellar crew like I have this year I find that I don't have to work as physically hard, which is great. After doing this for 15 years, having started when I was 29, I find that not only do I not want to work as hard as I used to, but I also can't

But there's another part of running a farm like ours that I find more taxing than the work these days. That part is called making decisions. It may not seem like a big deal, but there are dozens of small decisions to be made around a diverse farm like ours every day. Sometimes my head is so wrapped up in one decision—what other types of organically-allowable readily-available phosphorus sources could I put in my custom blend for next year's fields—that even deciding which thing

Shell beans are back in the box this season. For the uninitiated shell beans are beans between the fresh and dry stage that need to be shelled from their pods and cooked over low heat until tender. They're a fleeting treat of late summer that we like to have for a week or two. They don't store long, so use them up in the next couple of days. They can be kept in the fridge, but make sure the plastic bag is open a bit so that moisture can't be trapped in the bag.

It's salsa week at the farm, we bagged up a separate bag with a few items to make it easy to make some fresh salsa. In the bag are 3 kinds of hot peppers, a tomatillo or two, this week's garlic and an onion. All the peppers in the bag are hot, some of the Anaheims have started to turn red, and they look almost exactly like our sweet carmen peppers. To avoid too much confusion we took a week off of picking the carmens since they needed to ripen up more anyway. Also delicious in your salsa or *pico de gallo* is the cilantro, a couple of tomatoes and the kernels from one of the corn cobs.

The potatoes this week are the red norlands. The plants have died back now so the skins are better able to handle going through the bumpy process of digging and washing. The rest of the potatoes are still sizing up with some looking like they'll just keep going until frost.

The majority of the tomatoes, 75% or so, are still coming from the high tunnel this week. I think this is probably peak week for the high tunnel and next week will be similar, but after that we'll probably see a drop off in tomato numbers for the rest of the season. The field tomatoes are just not where it's at in 2013. Thanks goodness for the high tunnel though, it's remarkable to get over 3,000 tomatoes out of less than 300 row-feet of tomatoes. There should be enough heirlooms for everyone to get one, but most of them are on the small side.

Lacinato kale is back in the box this week. It's nice to get through the fall planting this time of year so that we can really clean it up good and keep it healthy going into September. The kale grown in the August heat is a little tougher, so a longer slow cooking may be a nicer way to go with this bunch.

The cukes and zukes are starting to wind down now. It seems early, but when I look at the numbers we've had cukes in the box for 10 weeks, and summer squash in for 7, so that's about right.

The carrots are looking a little rough as the dry

weather continues. They're in a field that is a little out of reach of our irrigation, so we're calling them 'dry-farmed' carrots. I rarely peel our carrots, but I have been peeling these.

This will be the last of the celery, which will probably please some of you. A few of you may get a rubber-banded bunch of stalks since we didn't have quite enough to go round.

Basil, a green pepper, corn and eggplant round out another box just begging for gazpacho, ratatouille or bread salad.

### Farm News

I'll be brief this week since I already used up most of my column inches. We've gone from our cool and dry stretch into hot and dry. Most of it's come with a breeze, so working hasn't been too uncomfortable. My, my, could we use some rain though. The bouts of thunder that went through on Wednesday just teased us as they went by. The heat has helped speed along some of the crops though as we hurtle towards September.

**Coming next week:** Basil, rainbow chard, carrots, onions, garlic, peppers, hopefully cantaloupe, cukes, maybe the last of the summer squashes, tomatoes, sweet corn and maybe leeks.

### Ratatouille Emeril Lagasse

- 1/4 cup olive oil, plus more as needed
- 1 1/2 cups small diced yellow onion
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 2 cups medium diced eggplant, skin on
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves
- 1 cup diced green bell peppers
- 1 cup diced red bell peppers
- 1 cup diced zucchini squash
- 1 cup diced yellow squash
- 1 1/2 cups peeled, seeded and chopped tomatoes
- 1 tablespoon thinly sliced fresh basil leaves
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley leaves
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Set a large 12-inch saute pan over medium heat and add the olive oil. Once hot, add the onions and garlic to the pan. Cook the onions, stirring occasionally, until they are wilted and lightly caramelized, about 5 to 7 minutes. Add the eggplant and thyme to the pan and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the eggplant is partially cooked, about 5 minutes. Add the green and red peppers, zucchini, and squash and continue to cook for an additional 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes, basil, parsley, and salt and pepper, to taste, and cook for a final 5 minutes. Stir well to blend and serve either hot or at room temperature.