



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

| | Fridge? | Bag? | Notes & Varieties |
|---------------|---------|---------|--|
| Arugula | Yes | Plastic | |
| Basil | No | Plastic | Last of it |
| Beets | Yes | Plastic | Gold w/tops |
| Broccoli | Yes | Plastic | |
| Cauliflower | Yes | Plastic | Two huge heads |
| Eggplant | Yes | Plastic | |
| Garlic | No | No | |
| Onions | No | No | Yellow and reds |
| Peppers | Yes | Plastic | Sweet Carmens, Green bell and Anaheims |
| Spinach | Yes | Plastic | |
| Tomatoes | No | No | Reds and Heir-looms |
| Winter Squash | No | No | Acorn and Sugar Dumpling |

Cauliflower

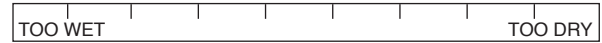
There's a great quote about cauliflower in a vegetable book I have, "Cauliflower was a vegetable created by hands, a vegetable luxury, like a fine piece of furniture, or a hand-woven cloak." Like any handmade product, it can have it's eccentricities.

There are two main things that make cauliflower a challenge. First is that it's very sensitive to stress. Water stress, heat stress, post-traumatic stress, you name it and it's sensitive to it. Stress can cause it to completely shut down in the field and cease growing until conditions improve. The second thing is keeping the heads nice and white. The traditional method, which we still use, is to tie up the leaves of each plant and block the sun once the head has started to form. It's a time consuming step, and adds the step of untying and re-tying them at harvest if they're not ready. We use rubber bands to hold the leaves over the top of the head, so at least that's a bit more convenient than twine.

One more thing about cauliflower that can be problematic is that multiple successions have a pesky way of maturing simultaneously if a bit stressed. That's where our two plantings of cauliflower found themselves after

Farm Report 9/15/13

Rainfall 8 drops
 High Temperature 95°
 Low Temperature 61°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



It fell off

last week's heat wave. We had gone through and tied up many of them almost two weeks ago, and I thought we better go through and harvest some last Friday. Well, it turned into the largest single cauliflower harvest day in our farm's history bringing in over 300 nice large heads. Since then we've harvested another 200, which means half of our walk-in cooler is filled with cauliflower.

When you open your share this week you will find two of these large heads. There will be another one on it's way next week, so hunt up your favorite cauliflower recipe. They are freshly harvested so they will keep well in a plastic bag in your fridge for a couple of weeks.

The broccoli is continuing to be quite productive as well. Two heads are in the box again this week. It also will keep well in the fridge. We are really enjoying roasting broccoli (or cauliflower). Just cut off the florets, cut up the peeled stem too, toss them with olive oil, salt and pepper on a cookie sheet and roast at 350-400° stirring a few times until you reach the desired amount of brown-ness.

Some lovely gold beets are in the box this week. They, too, have grown rapidly over the last two weeks. Some of these are a bit large. The tops are a lovely deep green and make some of our favorite cooked greens, I prefer them to chard.

It's unusual for us to have an overlap of tomatoes and cauliflower, but with a dozen tomatoes in the box this week there's plenty of both to make any tomato/cauliflower recipes you've had your eye on. I'm guessing this will be the last week of double digit tomato numbers.

The peppers are still coming in pretty well considering the topsy-turvy weather. I had to pick some more of the hot Anaheim peppers since the plants are loaded with fruit. The Anaheims that have turned red look a lot like the Carmens. **We put the hot Anaheims in the bag with the onions to differentiate them from the Carmens**, but when in doubt taste a little of the pith, or white part, of the pepper.

The winter squash is also maturing rapidly so we've got more coming in the box this week. It will keep on your counter, so don't worry that you've got to stay on top of that one. One acorn and one sugar dumpling are in the box. A recipe is below, try stuffing the acorn with some cauliflower rice if you're into the Paleo thing. I'll have a cauliflower rice recipe next week.

The main crop of onions are mostly done curing in the packing shed and they are looking very nice this year. Three nice yellows and a couple of reds are in the bag with the hot peppers, along with this week's garlic.

Eggplant, spinach, basil and arugula round out the box. This is probably the last of the basil and some of it still has a little cold damage from the cool nights we had after the heat wave. The spinach is a little rough looking from maturing in the intense heat.

Farm News

Last week's update of the USDA's drought monitor downgraded us into the 'Severe Drought' category. It will be interesting to see if we enter the 'Extreme' category this week. After a very dry late summer and fall last year we are now drier than we ever were last year. With the continued drought we have been irrigating almost nonstop. Shorter term crops like the broccoli and cauliflower in this week's box haven't seen more than an inch of real rain during their 7-8 weeks in the field. Without staying on top of the irrigation we would have a very sad box this week.

While we are fortunate to have the infrastructure in place to be able to get water to most of our crops, it still takes a toll on the crew and our electric bill. When using overhead sprinklers we need to water when the wind is almost non-existent, which means most of it gets done between 6pm and 6am, and sometimes we've been running it all night and still can't keep up. When there's no moisture at all in the subsoil anything we add is just sucked up or evaporated off. It's also taken a toll on preparation for next year, without rain to break down cover crops and germinate new ones we run the risk of leaving bare soil exposed over the winter.

Coming next week: Broccoli, cauliflower, leeks, tomatoes, peppers, delicata squash, potatoes, spinach, salad mix.

Roasted Curried Cauliflower *Bon Appétit | September 2004*

12 cups cauliflower florets (from about 4 pounds cauliflower)
 1 large onion, peeled, quartered
 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
 3/4 cup olive oil
 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
 3 1/2 teaspoons curry powder
 1 tablespoon Hungarian hot paprika
 1 3/4 teaspoons salt
 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro

Preheat oven to 450°F. Place cauliflower florets in large roasting pan. Pull apart onion quarters into separate layers; add to cauliflower. Stir coriander seeds and cumin seeds in small skillet over medium heat until slightly darkened, about 5 minutes. Crush coarsely in mortar with pestle. Place seeds in medium bowl. Whisk in oil, vinegar, curry powder, paprika, and salt. Pour dressing over vegetables; toss to coat. Spread vegetables in single layer. Sprinkle with pepper.

Roast vegetables until tender, stirring occasionally, about 35 minutes. (Can be made 2 hours ahead. Let stand at room temperature. Rewarm in 450°F oven 10 minutes, if desired.)

Mound vegetables in large bowl. Sprinkle with fresh cilantro. Serve warm or at room temperature

Maple Glazed Acorn Squash

2 acorn squash (about 2 1/2 pounds)
 2 tablespoons butter
 3 tablespoons maple syrup
 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
 1/8 teaspoon garam masala
 Salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Cut each squash into 4 equal rings, removing the stems. Place the squash onto a large rimmed sheet pan or 2 casserole dishes. Pour about a half-inch of water into the dishes or the sheet pan and sprinkle the squash with salt and pepper. Bake the squash for 15-20 minutes. While the squash is cooking, melt the butter and combine it with the maple syrup, cinnamon and garam masala. Remove the squash from the oven, pour off any remaining water and brush liberally with the melted butter mixture. Bake 5 minutes, brush again with the remaining butter mixture and bake another 5 minutes.