

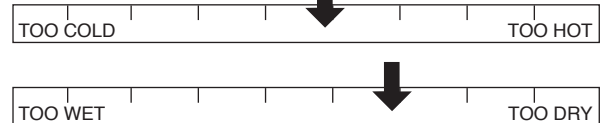


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Celery	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Eggplant	Yes	Plastic	
Fennel	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	
Onions, Fresh	Yes	Plastic	
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	
Tomatoes	No	No	
Yellow Squash	Yes	Plastic	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

Farm Report 8/9/14

Rainfall0.12"
 High Temperature 88°
 Low Temperature 56°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



but in difficult years, like this one, it is an assurance that we can get enough to make it feel like summer. It also takes some of the pressure off when the field tomatoes are not doing well.

The first bulb onions of the year are in the box this week. These are a fresh Walla Walla-type. Not super-sweet like the real deal, but if you cook them down a while they sweeten up nicely. Some of these are quite large this year. Most of the onions are still in the field sizing up, and it looks like it will be a good year for them. Next week may be the first part of the onion harvest as we pick the rest of these Wallas.

Everyone gets an eggplant (or two) this week. We are not known for our bountiful harvests of eggplant, but this year they are looking great.

The carrots have sized up nicely and grace the box with their presence again. Some are a bit funky, but considering the conditions they went through they look awesome. It will be a few more weeks until the next planting is large enough to harvest. By then it will almost be September, where does the summer go?

A nice bag of basil to accompany your tomatoes. Simple pasta with chopped tomatoes, basil, lots of fresh garlic and mozzarella cheese has been a staple around here the last couple of years during tomato season. The only thing we cook is the pasta, the rest is just thrown in with the drained pasta, along with some olive oil.

We've got quite a bit of powdery mildew making it's way through the summer squash patch, which is not unusual for this time of year. I'd say we've got two more weeks of declining harvests of summer squash until they succumb to it.

Tomatoes~

What a difference a week makes in tomatoland. They've been sort of slow to ripen this year in the high tunnel, but maybe I'm just overly anxious. In looking at last year's records we didn't have 9 tomatoes in the box until August 22nd last year. Almost all of these are coming from the high tunnel right now. Interestingly the 2000 square feet of the high tunnel may almost out-produce the tomatoes in the field this year. There are a few coming in from the field, mostly smaller reds, but a few heirlooms as well. Not even close to enough to get everyone an heirloom though. So, enjoy the red tomatoes for now.

2014 is turning out to be a challenging year in the tomato field. The constant moisture in June created some fungal disease that lingers and grows, even though the rains have stopped. Most diseases in tomatoes attack the foliage first, which on young plants can really limit how much fruit they produce. It also exposes the fruit directly to the sun, causing sun scald, a firm, fibrous layer on the fruit. Normally our tomato plants are almost 5-feet tall by now, this year they're not even close, and are never going to get there.

It was because of challenging seasons like this that we invested in the high tunnel four years ago. In good tomato years it kind of makes for a bumper crop of them,

More of the small green beans are in the box this week. They've been small in both yield and size this year. We'll have one more week of them next week.

One last fennel bulb is in the box. They have started to bolt to seed in the field, but have otherwise been an outstanding crop this year.

The cucumbers in the high tunnel are winding down, and the field cukes have reached their max production. Much like the summer squash we'll have a slow decline of these over the next few weeks.

Corn, celery and garlic round out a nice August box.

Farm News

The drier trend continues at the farm, and I don't see much chance of rain in the extended forecast. It was a rare treat to not have to irrigate anything until about mid-July, but it sure doesn't take long for things to really dry out. This week we've been busy getting water to things around the farm to keep them in top condition. So many things that we pick this time of year are made up mostly of water, and without it we're picking two cucumbers instead of six.

Some of the fields we're in this year are quite far away from the buildings, which can make getting water to them a challenge. After the same problem in 2013, I had spent some time last winter designing a new sprinkler line that required less pressure to use in far away locations. It had its inaugural run last Friday and was an almost total failure. One of the parts that I've been using for years had undergone a redesign to make it cheaper, and, coincidentally, had also rendered it useless. Look for a future ranting newsletter about how greed has destroyed our ability to DIY.

After quite a bit of time of the phone I actually got ahold of the manufacturer and did get them to send me the older, useful version (at my expense of course). I think people in other parts of the country don't realize how short our growing season is, we need things watered in August because it's only got six more weeks of decent growing conditions.

Another harbinger of September is last week was the beginning of the fall seedings for things like spinach. This week the first fall arugula will go in the ground. Even though we're rapidly entering the peak summer season, we've got an eye on what's going to be in the box in September.

Speaking of fall crops, the carrots and beets all got a thorough hand weeding and are looking good. We had

continued poor germination on the beets, but there should be plenty. The carrot germination next door was excellent, which makes me really wonder about the quality of the beet seed.

The large field of fall brassicas is looking very good, I think we'll start picking the kale there for next week's box. We're trying to keep ahead of the cabbage worms, which have been quite aggressive this year.

The final round of transplants went in last week with a few high-fives amongst the crew. Transplanting is not an arduous chore around here, but it's nice to get it done.

The other thing that we finally got done last week was to get the electrician out to do his work on our service panel. It seems like it took forever to iron out exactly what Xcel wanted us to do where our service comes into the farm. With that done we can finally get on their schedule to come out and switch things over so that we can finally get the solar array powered up. It really bums me out that we've let the best months of solar production slip away to bureaucratic bumbling, but dealing with them is very much like dealing with the weather, there's really nothing you can do to change it.

Coming next week: Tomatoes, potatoes, kale, peppers, eggplant, celery, corn, cukes, zucchini, yellow squash, beans.

Corn-and-Tomato Scramble *Gourmet | July 2009*

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar
- 1 1/4 pounds tomatoes, cut into bite-size pieces
- 1 bunch scallions, finely chopped, keeping white parts and greens separate
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 4 cups corn kernels (from about 8 ears)

Whisk together oil, vinegar, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Toss tomatoes with dressing.

While tomatoes marinate, cook white parts of scallions in butter with 3/4 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until golden, about 4 minutes. Add corn and sauté until just tender, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and cool.

Stir together corn, tomatoes, and scallion greens.