

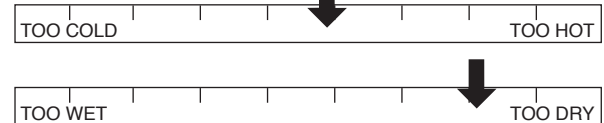


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Cantaloupe	Yes	No	Various
Celery	Yes	Plastic	Last of it
Cilantro	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Eggplant	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Kale	Yes	Plastic	Lacinato
Onions	Yes	Plastic	Walla wallas
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Green bell and serranos
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	Last of it
Tomatoes	No	No	Reds and an heirloom
Watermelon	Yes	No	Yummy
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	Last of it

Farm Report 8/21/14

Rainfall0.23"
 High Temperature 86°
 Low Temperature 61°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



melons yesterday. The variety this week is the same football-shaped variety that we grew last year called Sweet Beauty. We also are growing it's sister variety called Dark Belle, which we'll have in the box next week.

We try not to schedule it so that we have both watermelon and cantaloupe in the box the same week, but we only have so many weeks to get melons here in the North. The good news is that the flavor and sweetness of the melons this year is excellent, in fact I've even complained a little that they're too sweet.

Not everyone will get a cantaloupe because a couple of pickup sites got them last week. Otherwise you should have either a Sarah's Choice cantaloupe or a Tirreno cantaloupe in your box. The Tirreno has more pronounced striping on it. If you have something that looks like a white puffball instead of a cantaloupe, it is a white honeydew melon that we're trialing this year, they're kind of small, but tasty.

I like melons and take the melon season fairly seriously, often picking almost all of the melons myself. But even the most expert melon picker cannot guarantee that every melon is perfect, if you get a clunker my apologies, but if you get the best melon you've ever had please let us know.

Along with melons this week we have what may turn out to be the peak week for tomatoes, with a dozen in the boxes. The high tunnel is winding down and the field is not going to take up all of it's slack this year, so enjoy them now.

The first bunch of cilantro of the year is in the box this week. We had some planted earlier, but it was just too

Melons

It has been a challenging year on the farm for melons. A cool, wet spring doesn't lend itself well to melon production. Other non-weather related challenges have been notable as well. Our main variety of cantaloupe that I grow, called Sarah's Choice for those of you keeping notes, is usually a very reliable melon. But something is causing problems with it this year in both places that I planted it. Numerous small lateral cracks develop in many of the fruit and eventually rot as the fruit ripens. I would say that we've lost half of this variety to this problem. We have been trying to save as many as we can, so if you get one that has a small crack eat it sooner rather than later.

The other problem we've been having is the crows. Normally we don't really have any crow problems, but the last few weeks have been quite dry, and I think the crows are looking for moisture anywhere they can find it. And if a crow decides have a drink from your watermelon, it's not going to survive it. We finally had to row cover them to keep them from bothering them, which worked well, but also made them ripen quickly. So it was that we found ourselves picking 300 water-

weedy to ever size up well. This planting is just in time for some fresh salsa or pico de gallo.

Speaking of pico, onions and serranos are my other two favorite ingredients, and a clove of garlic doesn't hurt. The onions have been nice this year, we grilled some earlier this week with some lovely T-bones that we had in the freezer.

A nice big bunch of lacinato kale is in the box this week. This is the first planting of the fall kale. There are a few holes from the local cabbage worms, but otherwise it's a lot of kale goodness. The kale is growing so quickly right now, that I think we could put it in the box every week.

This is the last week on the celery. It's been a good year for it and we will be sad to see it go. Some of the heads we picked this week were massive.

Sweet corn and zucchini also are winding down this week. It's been another good year for the sweet corn from Dan and Tammy. I always enjoy the sweet corn season because it gives me an excuse to go to someone else's farm and chat, which otherwise never seems to happen. Dan and I always compare notes about how our various crops are doing. He sells most of his produce at the Eau Claire farmer's market and from a roadside stand at his farm.

The eggplant have been doing very well this year. Hopefully you're not getting sick of them. We really enjoy cubing them into about 3/4" cubes and drizzling them with olive oil, salt and pepper. Then we roast them on a cookie sheet at 350° or so until starting to brown. Roasted eggplant is a great addition to so many meals.

A nice big green pepper and garlic round out another peak season August box.

Farm News

It continues to be quite dry at the farm. The more potent showers seem to miss us to the north or south lately. Hopefully we'll get some measurable rain out of the storms going through this morning.

Keeping up with daily harvests is the routine at the farm right now. Cantaloupe need to be harvested daily, but with the cucumbers and summer squash winding down that will free up some time to get back to other projects.

Fall seedings of greens have been progressing each week. We've got several nice plantings of spinach, salad mix and arugula up and growing well right now.

The first fall arugula may be in the box in a couple weeks.

Larger storage crop harvests have continued as well. Earlier this week we pulled this year's shallots. These mostly go in the winter shares, but we'll have a few in the summer share boxes later on. And then at 3pm yesterday as we were winding up harvesting for the shares this week, I started to get concerned about how much rain they were forecasting for today. So, in the interest of being safe not sorry, I decided we should bring in the yellow onions ahead of the rain. If your onions are mostly mature and you get a significant amount of rain it can cause problems with them curing and storing well. Starting a large project like that at 3pm is not ideal, but we had all 5,870 onions topped and in the shed by 6:15, but I think I'll be a little sore tomorrow.

Coming next week: Cilantro, carrots, peppers, tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, eggplant, melons, garlic.

Pico de Gallo: Fresh Tomato Salsa *Epicurious April 2011*

- 3/4 pound tomatoes (about 2 medium), seeded and finely diced (1 1/2 cups)
- 1/3 cup chopped cilantro
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 serrano chile, finely chopped, including seeds, or more to taste
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice, or more to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon fine salt, or 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl. Season to taste with additional chile, lime juice, and salt.

This salsa keeps in the refrigerator for up to one day. Before you serve it, stir it well and drain any excess liquid that has accumulated in the bowl.

Eggplant Dip (Baba Ghanoush)

- 2 to 3 medium eggplants (about 3 pounds total)
- 2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/3 cup tahini
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
- Juice of 2 lemons (about 1/2 cup)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 450°F. Rub the outside of the eggplants with olive oil and place them in a roasting pan. Roast the eggplant until the skin has charred and the interior is tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool.

Peel and seed the cooled eggplant, roughly chop the flesh, and then transfer it to the bowl of a food processor. Into the processor bowl add the tahini, garlic, lemon juice, some salt and pepper to taste, and a few teaspoons of cold water. Process the mixture to a coarse paste, adding a bit more water as needed to allow the mixture to blend. Adjust salt and serve.