

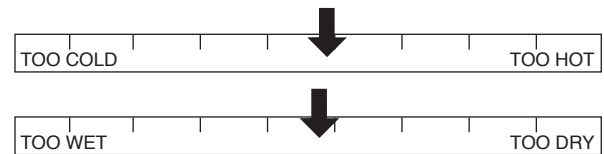


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Cantaloupe	Yes	No	Two for most boxes, some get 1 and shell beans
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Cilantro	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Eggplant	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Poblano, sweet red Carmen and green bell
Potatoes	No	Paper	Yukon Gold
Tomatoes	No	No	Reds and an heirloom
Watermelon	Yes	No	Dark Belle

Farm Report 8/28/14

Rainfall 1.10"
 High Temperature 88°
 Low Temperature 56°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



Carrots are back in the box this week. They, too, were a little disappointing when we were harvesting them yesterday. I think some portion of the row must have been in a more compacted spot. If you get a bunch of funky looking ones, don't despair, they'll be nicer next week.

The tomatoes are continuing to slow down as the high tunnel winds down and the field tomatoes are not super productive this year. This may have been the last picking for the high tunnel, it's time to get those plants out of there and prep it for spinach for the winter shares.

Melon mania continues, just in time for your Labor Day celebrations. When I have the time and inclination, I like to cube the cantaloupe and have it ready to eat in the fridge, so it's a quick snack. Keeping it supplied like that in our fridge is a challenge since our children basically go on a melon fast this time of year. In an effort to keep them out of the melon patch I put in a few plants of huge watermelons for them this year, we picked one that was 25 pounds last weekend and it kept them busy for a couple of days. This will be the last of the watermelon, and we may have another cantaloupe or honeydew next week.

A poblano pepper is new to the box this week, and these plants have been very productive. The poblano is the dark green pepper in the box. They are the classic pepper used for chile rellenos, among other things. They have just a little bit of heat when they're green and then turn quite hot when they're red. When the ripe ones are dried they're known as anchos. I like them for adding to a fresh salsa to get a lot of pepper flavor without having to make it so hot that the kids

Transitions

The seasonal transitions continue on an almost weekly basis this time of year. We leave behind last week's sweet corn and celery but continue on with the melon season and tomatoes this week. Next week we'll see a bigger shift as we get back into fall arugula and maybe even some leeks.

This coincides with our transition from summer to fall as we flip the calendar to September. There's a frenzy of activity around our house as the kids get ready to head back to school. The weather has turned cooler this week and made it feel like September.

One casualty of the weather this last week was the shell beans. I had high expectations for them this week, but they were basically fried by our 48-hour heat wave on Sunday and Monday, so that there were very few that were good enough quality to harvest. About 1/3 of the boxes will have a pound of them this week, while the rest will have a second cantaloupe. It just didn't make sense to send everyone 1/3 of a pound of shell beans, by the time you shell them there wouldn't have been much left.

won't eat it. The red pepper this week is the first of the sweet carmen peppers. They will continue to ripen for the next several weeks.

The tricky thing about growing eggplant is that in order to have enough plants that we can get one for everyone in any given week, we then end up with weeks of eggplant. Don't feel bad if you run out of ideas for them. We've only got three recipes for them up on the website, so feel free to email me your favorite recipe and I can add it to the mix. Personally I love baba ghanouj, and if we're grilling something I try and remember to throw an eggplant or two on the grill when we're done with it and let them cook, turning them every ten minutes or so. Grilled eggplant makes the best baba because it gets a smokiness that I never get from the oven.

We dug the first of the Yukons for this week's potato selection, and I have to admit that the yield there was pretty disappointing. Pretty potatoes though.

The garlic this week is a new variety to us this year. I got it from a guy in southern Wisconsin, who got it from a guy, so I don't really have a name for it. Red is how we're referring to it at the farm. It has smaller cloves, and more of them. I was impressed at how it fared in the field, and I think it's worth growing for a few years to see how it adapts to our conditions. I'm also curious to see if it keeps better than our usual larger clove bulbs. I think it's flavor is a little milder than our other variety, let me know what you think.

This may be the last of the cucumbers, it's been 9 weeks of them, so I don't think anyone will be too disappointed.

More basil and cilantro round out the box.

Farm News

Well it was without any fanfare or balloon drop that we flipped the switch on the solar panels finally last week. The engineer from Xcel came out last Thursday and ran some tests on our system to make sure it wasn't going to open a wormhole into another dimension or something. We passed with flying colors and that was that. Of course, it's now been the cloudiest week we've had all summer, but a few sunny days have given us a sense of how it's going to perform for us. The most we've produced in one day so far is 120 kWh, which is great. I'm just so relieved to be done with that project that I need some time away from it to decompress. I'll write more about it when I get a little distance. But, officially we are now refrigerat-

ing and irrigating your produce using electricity made by the sun, rather than nukes or coal, which is pretty awesome.

After some more rain on Sunday night it was pretty wet around the farm on Monday. The majority of the day was spent organizing the garlic harvest now that it's been curing for 3-4 weeks in the greenhouse. The first thing we have to do is select bulbs that we want to use for seed for next year's crop, which is usually about 20-25% of the harvest. The largest bulbs and cloves make the best seed for next year because they bring that large genetic material with them, as well as having the most energy reserves in their larger size. We also clip all the tops and roots off all the bulbs so that they are taking up less space as we move them into storage. It was an excellent year for the garlic, some of the seed bulbs weigh 1/3 of a pound, which is huge. Now that we've sorted through it all it's clear that we have some extra that we'll make available for sale in the store on the website next week.

The weather forecast all week has been pointing to some significant rain beginning today, so I spent most of the week prepping next year's fields and getting a cover crop of oats and peas planted on them. The wet spring this year prevented us from dealing with the red clover in these fields in any sort of timely manner. These fields are nice and fertile and it continued to grow like crazy until we had a field of dense, five foot long clover vines that were laying down. This is almost an impossible situation to deal with given our equipment. We've been battling it to get it under control and ready for next year for weeks. I'm not sure what I would do next time, but I now know what I wouldn't do, which sometimes is the best thing to learn.

Coming next week: Arugula, carrots, peppers, tomatoes, leeks, kale, garlic, onions.

Tomato, Mozzarella, and Basil Salad

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1/4 teaspoon English dry mustard
- 1/8 teaspoon sugar
- 1 large vine-ripened tomato, cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- 1/4 pound fresh mozzarella cheese, cut into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- 6 to 8 large fresh basil leaves, sliced thin

In a small bowl whisk together oil, vinegar, garlic, mustard, sugar, and salt and pepper to taste. On a platter arrange tomato slices alternately with mozzarella and top with basil. Drizzle salad with vinaigrette.