

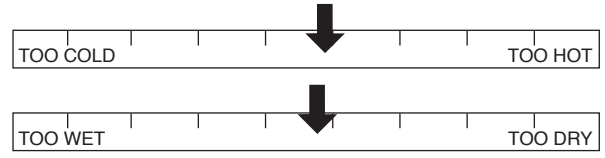


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Cauliflower	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Kale	Yes	Plastic	Lacinato
Leeks	Yes	Plastic	
Onions	No	No	Yellows and a red
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Sweet red carmens and hot red serranos
Spinach	Yes	Plastic	Yay!
Winter Squash	No	No	Sweet REBA Acorn

Farm Report 9/18/14

Rainfall0.05"
 High Temperature 72°
 Low Temperature 34°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



We'll have squash each week from now on, and the harvest is looking good. I think yields and sizes of fruit are down somewhat, but we usually have more than we can send in the boxes anyway. We'll start out with the earlier squashes like acorn and sugar dumpling, and then have the later butternut and delicata. There are also some buttercup and kabocha but they may just go in the winter shares since they're really best eaten after October 1st.

Take care cutting these acorns in half if you go that route, their skins can be quite hard. If the shape allows I like to break off the stem with the back of my knife and then set it stem-end down to cut it in half, that way it can't try and roll away on me. Acorn is also a great squash for stuffing, almost like a twice-baked-potato but with a squash.

Lots of other yummy fall cooking in the box this week:

We're into the peak season for the brassica family and you'll find three of it's members in the box this week; kale, cauliflower and broccoli.

We're starting to get into the best part of the broccoli season and some of these heads are well over a pound. Fall broccoli, not unlike squash, also has more time to mature than the summer crop. This results in a heavier, dense head that has a nicer flavor.

Everyone will have a cauliflower in their box this week. Cauliflower can be one of the more challenging members of the brassica family to grow. The uniformity of it is always lacking, so it is tricky to get enough in the field for everyone to get it, without having a bunch of it go to waste. These are very nice heads this week. We have a second planting coming, but it's still a couple of weeks out depending on the weather.

Squash!

I know not everyone is super enthusiastic about squash. I think part of the problem is that in our season-less grocery stores where everything is available all the time we stop appreciating some of the less flashy seasonal things. But to me these cool September nights, when you don't want to turn on the furnace yet, are perfect times to turn on the oven and roast a couple of squash. I like to eat the first few as simply as possible, maybe with a little butter and salt. Unfortunately our kids don't share my enthusiasm with simple squash presentations, so they have to have theirs doctored up.

I baked a couple of these Acorn this week and they were excellent. I'm hoping that since we had such a tasty melon year that the squash will all be equally delicious. I used to not care much for acorn squash, but the work on breeding new varieties has really made for some tasty selections. I've been growing this variety of acorn for several years now, and although it does have a fair number of off-types in the seed, it still is the tastiest acorn I've found.

Squashes grown in our cooler climate, especially in a cooler summer, take longer to mature. This delayed maturity means that the plant has more time to develop sugars and flavors in the fruit than it does in an area where the temperatures are warm year round.

The kale is the lacinato type this week. We've had some of the worst cabbage worm pressure this year that we've ever had. We do use an organically approved Bt spray for cabbage worms, but it has been somewhat ineffective. Some of your kale leaves may have a hole or two.

This week we have a mix of the last of the summer carrots and the first of the fall carrots. If you get smaller ones they're from the fall patch. The fall carrot field is looking good, but it needs about 3 more weeks to yield a bountiful harvest, which is about perfect for this time of year. We don't want the carrots too early or we have no where to put them.

Hey, there's spinach in the box this week! What do you know? Even a blind pig finds an acorn sometimes. It had been beaten up pretty badly by the storms a few weeks ago but it managed to grow out of it before bolting to seed. Enjoy. There may even be more next week.

This week's onions are the last of the walla wallas or the first of the yellow storage onions, along with the first of the red onions. We really had a great onion crop this year, so much so that we'll be putting onions in the box every week until the end of the season now.

Leeks and garlic and peppers round out a nice September box. The small red peppers are ripe serranos, they will be quite hot. Normally we try and keep up with them by picking them green but they seem to have gotten ahead of us.

Farm News

Many places around the farm and western Wisconsin woke up to some early frost on Saturday morning. I was concerned, but was not going to be convinced that we were going to get frost on September 12th. We did put row cover over the winter squash and the peppers just in case. But our spot on the edge of the hill here tends to stay a little warmer due to good air drainage. Down in the valleys they had quite a killing frost on soybeans that weren't quite mature yet, but we didn't get much below 35° on the hill. The basil was really the only casualty, and without tomatoes the basil season was pretty much over anyway. I was grateful it didn't get any colder, having to bring in all the squash this early in the year can be a headache.

We finally also have had some nice sunny, dry days. That's what we need this time of year to get all the fall storage crops to reach maturity. At the same time it's nice that the temperatures aren't too warm, which

really makes all the broccoli and cauliflower come at once. Perfect September days with deep blue skies are really about my favorite days of the year.

The weather has also allowed us to get a jump on fall cleanup. One way to make it not rain any more is to put all the irrigation hoses away. We have almost a half-mile of 2" blue irrigation hose that needs to be neatly rolled up, tied and put in storage for the winter. It's also time to start pulling tomato stakes and cages out of the field and put to bed some of the areas we're done with. I had to mow off all of the buckwheat that I'd planted in August because it was flowering already. I seeded some more buckwheat last week and it's interesting to see that it hasn't come up yet. I think it knows that the frost will kill it in a few weeks and it doesn't want to bother emerging.

Coming next week: Cabbage, broccoli, salad mix, spinach, beets, sugar dumpling squash, onions, potatoes, carrots, peppers.

Acorn Squash Stuffed with Mushrooms and Rice

- 2 acorn squash (1 pound each), halved crosswise, seeded, and bottoms trimmed to lie flat, if necessary
- Salt and pepper
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 1/2 pound crimini or button mushrooms, trimmed and diced small
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced small
- 3/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 cup long-grain white rice
- 2 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan (2 ounces)

Preheat oven to 450 degrees. On a rimmed baking sheet, season cut sides of squash with salt and pepper, drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil, and turn cut sides down. Cover sheet tightly with foil and roast until tender, about 35 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a medium straight-sided skillet, heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil over medium-high. Add mushrooms, onion, and thyme; season with salt and pepper. Saute until mushrooms are golden, 8 minutes. Add rice and broth and bring to a boil; cover and reduce heat to low. Cook until liquid is absorbed, 20 minutes.

Remove squash from oven and heat broiler. Carefully scoop out 2 to 3 tablespoons flesh from each squash half and stir into rice; season with salt and pepper. Divide rice mixture among squash halves, sprinkle with Parmesan, and broil until melted, 2 minutes.