



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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red w/ tops
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	Lots of it
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Eggplant	Yes	Plastic	Not all boxes
Garlic	No	No	
Onions	No	No	Yellows and a red
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Sweet carmens, bell and a poblano
Potatoes	No	Paper	Carola
Salad Mix	Yes	Plastic	
Spinach	Yes	Plastic	
Winter Squash	No	No	Sugar Dumpling

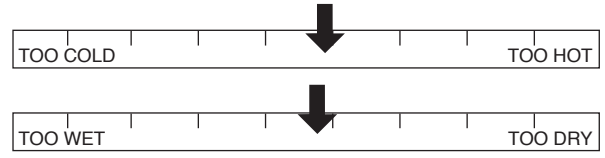
## Big Broccoli

We're all so used to seeing an abundance of broccoli in the store all of the time that it's easy to assume that broccoli is a simple crop to grow and harvest. If you're a gardener you probably know that it's a little bit fussy. In fact I think it's easier to grow a larger quantity on a farm than a little bit in a garden. On a farm you can skip over the funky heads and leave them behind. In a week like this where we harvest about 600 heads it got me thinking about the knowledge that goes into it.

Knowing when to pick a head of broccoli is probably the hardest thing to teach someone on the farm. There are many factors affecting how rapidly broccoli matures. First it depends on which of the many varieties of broccoli we're harvesting. Then there's the size of the 'beads' which is what we farmers call the little tiny flower buds that make up a head of broccoli. Small beads=good, large beads=bad. Then there are varieties where the beads never get very large and so we need to look at the shape of the head and pick it before it gets flat or wonky. Knowing the weather forecast is also important, if it's going to be 80° we're going to harvest more than if the high is going to be 60°, because the higher temperatures will cause more of it to reach an over mature stage. The question you have to keep asking yourself is whether or not each head of broccoli

## Farm Report 9/25/14

Rainfall . . . . .0.24"  
 High Temperature . . . . . 75°  
 Low Temperature . . . . . 48°  
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



is the best it's going to be today. And, as I harvest each head, I think of the opening of Dr. Seuss's *Oh, The Places You'll Go*, "Congratulations, today is your day, you're off to great places, you're off and away."

I confess that I have a problem with being a control freak about harvesting broccoli. I do end up harvesting quite a bit of it myself, part of that's because I'm a control freak, but a larger part is that I enjoy harvesting broccoli. There's something very satisfying about swiping your harvest knife through the thick stalk and rapidly snapping off the leaves. The only time I don't enjoy it is when it's Sunday morning and there's 200 heads ready at once. That was the case last weekend, but, gratefully, Michael was on chores.

There may be a little more that you can reasonably use this week in your box, and some of the heads are quite large. The good news is that because it's so fresh it will keep in a plastic bag in your fridge for a couple weeks. There will be more next week, but probably just a single head. A simple way to prepare broccoli is roasting, and I think that's all we do with our broccoli these days. Cut the florets into roughly similar sized pieces, toss with olive oil, salt and pepper and spread out on a cookie sheet. Roast in a 375° oven until done, about 15-20 minutes, stirring it a couple of times.

We went back through the eggplant one last time for the season, and there wasn't enough for all of the shares. If you don't get one you'll have an extra pepper or two.

The peppers are starting to slow down now that most of the fruit they set has ripened. This will be the last round of bell peppers, and may be the last poblano.

More onions in the box this week. We usually don't have them and potatoes the same week, but the bountiful onion crop this year means we have more to give.

Another nice bag of lettuce mix this week. I'm not sure we'll get another picking, it'll depend on the weather.

The spinach is still looking good, another nice big bunch this week. We may pull off a couple more weeks if the weather cooperates.

The carrots sized up nicely in the last week. In fact I'm a little concerned that we may need to do our bulk harvesting sooner rather than later. I like to wait a little later until we have more of our boxes available to fit them in, but too many of them right now are full of broccoli, onions and potatoes.

The beets continue to size up also. We'll have to pick the rest of them for the winter shares soon, so that they don't get too big. The beet tops are not as nice right now, the longer they're in the field the more opportunity for them to pick up cercospora or other beet leaf maladies.

The squash this week is sugar dumpling. It's quite similar to last week's acorn, perhaps a little sweeter.

More of the carola potatoes this week and garlic round out a nice late September box. I had thought we'd put cabbage in the box this week, but decided to hold off a week since we had the deluge of broccoli.

### Farm News

Continued mild weather has made for a fairly relaxed pace around the farm this week. Without any impending threat of frost or rain we can pretty much go about our business without having to get in a panic about anything. This means we can get some things cleaned up and wait for the eventual change in the weather. The problem with the mild weather, apart from the broccoli all maturing simultaneously, is that very soon some storage crops are going to be fully mature and need to be harvested. With two more weeks of the summer season share to go, it makes it difficult to figure out where everything's going to go. As it is right now, we find ourselves shuffling onions around from one container to another, just so we have enough boxes for harvesting. Why don't we just simply buy more boxes? We already have so many that storing them when empty takes up a ton of space, it's hard to justify the storage space that more boxes would occupy for 10 months out of the year.

The forecasted warm weekend was looking too perfect to not take advantage of. Squash stores much better if it has time to cure outside for several nice warm days. The guys clipped them all from their plants on Tuesday and they'll have almost a week to sit out there and toughen up their stems and skins before we pick them up and put them in bins early next week. It's always a luxury to have the time to bring in the squash this way instead of in a panic ahead of a frost.

The coming Pumpkin Day also gives us a chance to spruce things up around the farm, take care of little projects that have slipped off of the to do list lately. It's always good to have an excuse to clean things up.

**Coming next week:** Arugula, carrots, cabbage, spinach, chard, peppers, squash, onions, garlic, broccoli.

### Roasted Broccoli with Garlic and Red Pepper

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- 1 1/4 pounds broccoli crowns, cut into florets (about 8 cups)
- 3 1/2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Large pinch of dried crushed red pepper

Preheat oven to 450°F. Toss broccoli and 3 tablespoons oil in large bowl to coat. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Transfer to rimmed baking sheet. Roast 15 minutes. Stir remaining 1/2 tablespoon oil, garlic, and red pepper in small bowl. Drizzle garlic mixture over broccoli; toss to coat. Roast until broccoli is beginning to brown, about 8 minutes longer. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

### Beet And Carrot Pancakes

- 1 1/3 cups (packed) coarsely shredded peeled beets (from 2 medium)
- 1 cup coarsely shredded peeled carrots (from 2 medium)
- 1 cup thinly sliced onion
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- Sour cream

Preheat oven to 300°F. Place baking sheet in oven. Combine beets, carrots and onion in large bowl. Mix in egg, salt and pepper. Add flour; stir to blend well.

Heat 1 1/2 tablespoons oil in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Using 1/3 cup beet mixture for each pancake, drop 4 pancakes into skillet. Flatten each into 3-inch round. Cook until brown and cooked through, about 4 minutes per side. Transfer pancakes to baking sheet in oven; keep warm. Repeat with remaining beet mixture, making 4 more pancakes. Serve pancakes with sour cream.