

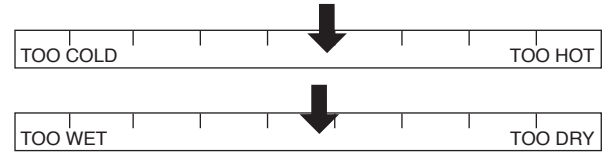


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red w/tops
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Celery	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	Lots!
Fennel	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	
Kale	Yes	Plastic	Green
Onions	Yes	Plastic	Sweet
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Hot serrano
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	First of the year
Tomatoes	No	No	Red slicers
Yellow Squash	Yes	Plastic	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

Farm Report 7/30/15

Rainfall 0.84"
 High Temperature 88°
 Low Temperature 63°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



variety of cucumber, which means it doesn't require pollination to set fruit, which is what you must have if you're growing cukes in a structure where there are no (or very few) pollinators. Of course, hybrids that don't require pollination are kind of fancy, the seed for Corinto is 37 times more expensive than Marketmore.

The bottom line for me is that I'm grateful for the high tunnel cukes since we can have them so early, but when the field cukes are ready that's all I want to eat, they just taste better, even if they have seeds. If you're wondering which are which in your box, the high tunnel cukes are much more uniformly dark green and perfectly shaped. The field cukes vary much more in size and shape and tend to be somewhat pointed on one or both ends.

If you are just totally at a loss of what to do with a dozen cucumbers start out by sorting them by size. The smaller ones will make better refrigerator pickles and the larger ones better salads. Be aware that all of the cucumbers we grow are slicing cucumbers rather than pickling cucumbers. There really is a difference, and you wouldn't want to make any long-term type pickles with slicers, they just get too mushy. Some fridge pickles for a couple weeks would be fine.

The first sweet corn of the 2015 season is in the box this week! As most of you know, we do not grow sweet corn at Hog's Back Farm for various reasons, but rely on a local grower here in Arkansaw, Dan Sam to grow our corn for us. His farm is not organic, therefore the corn isn't either. He does not grow any GMO sweet corn for us, only supersweet hybrids. The corn is picked on the same day you pick up your box, which makes the quality excellent. My suggestion is always to enjoy it on Thursday nights when the flavor is at it's

Cucumbers

I can't remember the last time we had this many cucumbers all at once. It's been many years. When I queried the folks who follow the farm on Facebook about how many cukes is too many for the box they said the sky's the limit. So there's perhaps as many as a dozen cucumbers in your box this week. I pride myself on being a little more accurate with our planning, but the field cucumbers came on with a vengeance. We have one 200 foot row of them and that row yielded over 1,500 cucumbers in the last week. And the high tunnel cucumbers are still cranking them out too.

The field cukes are a classic open-pollinated variety known as Marketmore 76. It's not an heirloom, but a product of traditional plant breeding by Dr. Henry Munger of Cornell. Munger passed away at the age of 94 in 2010, but left behind more than fifty varieties of cucumbers through his work as a plant breeder. He was a classic land-grant plant breeder and lamented the loss of traditional plant breeding in the rush to embrace biotechnology.

The big difference between our high tunnel variety of cucumber (Corinto) and Marketmore is that Marketmore requires pollination. Corinto is a parthenocarpic

best, but some of the newer varieties really hold their flavor well for days in the fridge.

Other new items this week are the first of the onions. These are sweet variety similar to the Walla Walla-type onions, only not grown over the winter like they can in Washington. Some of these puppies are massive, almost two pounds! Sometimes we have time at the farm to really clean the garlic and onions carefully, but when we're dealing with huge amounts of everything else it falls to the bottom of the list. Consequently your onions will come to you pretty much exactly how they came out of the ground on Wednesday, dirt and all.

Ditto the garlic this week, we just didn't have time to clean it up before packing. The good news is we got all of the garlic harvested on Monday in the oppressive heat. It was a long slog, but it was time. I'm grateful to Jesse and Andrew for their perseverance, and to the help lent by Melinda, Iris and Baker. The harvest looks good, although we do have a lot more of a disease called fusarium showing up with the constant moisture level all spring. If you have a brown streak on your bulb that's what that is, the garlic is perfectly edible nonetheless, we just can't re-plant it as seed.

One hot serrano pepper is in the box this week, it's the first harvest from the tomato/pepper fields. They are quite hot, but with nice flavor.

Everyone should have four tomatoes in their box this week. These are still coming exclusively from the high tunnel, but I'm starting to see some color out in the field and we may have to do some limited picking out there next week.

More lovely fennel this week, these plants have been growing like crazy like everything else. If you go the fridge pickle route you may want to think about including some thin shavings of fennel, which pickles nicely.

Another bunch of beets is in the box. This will be the last of the early beets and we'll have to wait until September to get some later ones, but the fall beet plantings are looking excellent.

The green beans this week had some bug damage so there won't be as many of them and you'll need to pick through them a bit.

The celery has really been fantastic this year. Since we have so many cucumbers I'm tempted to try some refrigerator pickles with celery leaves instead of celery seed, but if I don't get to it, be my guest.

Carrots, basil, kale and summer squashes round out the last box of July 2015. Onward to August...

Farm News

Wonderful to have the weather break finally Tuesday night. We were all getting a little cranky and exhausted from the constant humidity, or at least I was. The half-inch of rain Tuesday morning was welcome since we'd gotten all the garlic moved into the greenhouse by the end of the day on Monday.

It does feel like we are still woefully behind on many things on the farm this year. Things like weeding, prepping for next year, mowing fallow ground, and a million other maintenance chores. But, as we are losing fifteen minutes of daylight a week right now, I'm not sure we're going to ever get caught up before frost. I saw my first woolly bear caterpillar yesterday, so can frost really be that far away?

Coming next week: Tomatoes, cukes, zucchini, yellow squash, celery, potatoes, carrots, peppers, basil, corn.

Sweet and Sour Fridge Pickles *from member Bridget O.*

- 6 cups thinly sliced cucumbers (don't worry if you don't have exactly 6 cups, this recipe is very forgiving)
- 1 ¾ cups sugar
- 1 cup white vinegar
- 2 tablespoons canning or kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon celery seed (optional)
- 1 cup thinly sliced red onion (optional)

Put sliced cucumbers and onions in a large bowl. Add remaining ingredients into a saucepan and heat until sugar melts. Pour mixture over cucumbers and onions and stir until mixed. Refrigerate and stir a few times the first 12 hours. Keep in the refrigerator for at least one week, then enjoy!

Tomato, Cucumber and Corn Salad

- 1 to 1 ¼ pounds ripe tomatoes, cut in small dice
- 1 cucumber, peeled if waxy, seeded if the seeds are large, and cut in small dice
- 2 ears corn, steamed for 4 minutes and kernels removed from the cob
- 1 to 2 serranos or jalapeño pepper, minced (seeded for a milder salad), or 1/2 teaspoon Aleppo pepper
- Salt to taste
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice or lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Optional: 1 ounce feta, crumbled (about 1/4 cup)

Mix together all of the ingredients. Let sit in or out of the refrigerator for 15 minutes before serving, then toss again.