

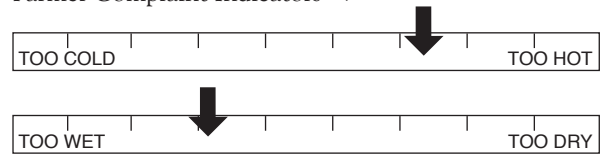


What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Arugula	Yes	Plastic	
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Cauliflower	Yes	Plastic	Not all boxes
Garlic	No	No	
Leeks	Yes	Plastic	
Onions	No	No	Yellows and a red
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Bell, carmens and jalapeño
Potatoes	No	Paper	Red norland
Salad Mix	Yes	Plastic	
Spinach	Yes	Plastic	
Winter Squash	No	No	Sugar Dumpling

## Farm Report 9/24/15

Rainfall . . . . . 1.95"  
 High Temperature . . . . . 82°  
 Low Temperature . . . . . 56°  
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



The arugula and salad mix came through last week's hard rains and occasional hail in relatively good shape. There are some holes and ragged leaves, but for the most part they bounced back pretty well. Make sure not to store them too wet, or they will not keep very well. I like to put a paper towel in the bottom of my bag of salad after I've washed and spun it.

The spinach is much more brittle and took more of a beating. We ended up skipping this week's planting of spinach and harvesting what would have been next week's. It's a little smaller, but was in much better shape than the other planting.

We can't ever seem to get enough cauliflower for everyone, and this will be our final attempt. There's just too many issues with it to harvest any past this week. I'm still hopeful that the last two plantings of broccoli will come through.

The fall carrot harvest has begun and it looks like it will be a good one. Now we just need to figure out where to put them all. I know everyone's enjoying the extended warm weather, but I'd really prefer it to be about 50° now. Everyone will get a nice bag of them this week and from here on out.

The peppers are still coming in pretty strong. They'll start to wind down in the next week or so. There's just not too much fruit left on the plants at this point. But, with no frost anywhere in sight, there's plenty of time to ripen what's there.

The potatoes this week are back to the red norlands. I was hoping to have one of the other two varieties we have out there in the box this week, but it's been too wet to get into the field to dig them. Next week.

### Leeks

Leeks are always a fall favorite at our farm. It seemed appropriate to be harvesting them on the first full day of fall yesterday. They've had a bit of a challenging year, waiting a long time to get in the ground while we waited for dry weather back in July. The ground has been fairly moist every since we transplanted them. Because of the constant moisture they are very brittle, we were damaging the leaves and the roots when we were pulling them for harvest. The warm weather has also made them wimpier than normal. They need some cool nights and dry conditions to toughen up a bit.

This is an earlier variety which tends to be a little fragile anyway. We have some later ones planted for the winter shares, but the warm, wet conditions has also made for more disease in the leeks, so their numbers look like they'll be down for the year.

Leeks are good for more than just potato leek soup. One frustrating thing about looking for recipes for leeks is that the recipes often call for a huge amount of leeks by themselves, but they really can be used as a complement to so many other foods. Roast chunks with potatoes and carrots. Sauté and add to mashed potatoes. Sauté and finish with a little cream and dried thyme. Finely slice and add to hamburgers or pizza.

The squash this week is the sugar dumpling. It's quite similar to acorn, if a bit sweeter. These weren't very productive this year, so this will be the one and only appearance of this variety of squash.

Onions and garlic round out Week 16.

### Farm News

The wet weather continued this week at the farm and it's getting rather tiresome. Traditionally this would be some of the driest weeks of the year. We've had over 25 inches of rain since May 1st, but what's notable is that we've had very few 1-inch plus rains, mostly it's just been routine sub-1-inch rains, that recur frequently. It looks like the pattern may shift finally somewhat this week, but some of the damage is done.

The other real issue right now is the heat. In a typical year we try to have things pretty well sized up in the field by this time of year, because they don't grow too much more. Cool fall days mean that things can just stay in the field until a freeze threatens, but the warm conditions has things continuing to grow and me worrying about getting things harvested and stored before they get too large.

Some dry conditions would be great to continue harvesting some of the storage potatoes and carrots. We began harvesting the carrots on Tuesday, but only have so much space in the cooler for them right now. It was pretty wet still at one end of the field but otherwise they were coming out nicely. We had enough crates to harvest 1,500 pounds, and then had to head in to wash them. We made it about 2/3 through the washing when the barrel washer we use for carrots broke down. There's a right angle reducing gear box that goes from the motor to the chains that drive the barrel and the bearings in the gearbox gave out. Not exactly something you can fix with twine and duct tape. It's a pretty old piece of equipment, so I'm seeing if I can get the gearbox rebuilt, buying a new one is not really an option. Thankfully the gears themselves seem fine.

It's a tricky thing about a farm with so many moving parts. Some of them only get used a day or two a year, so it's hard to know when they're close to a breaking point until they break. It should come as no surprise that things never break when your not using them. It's also hard to justify costly repairs on things we use so infrequently, but when we need it, we need it.

**Coming next week:** Arugula, salad mix, carrots, squash, onions, potatoes, kale, peppers, garlic.

### Potato and Leek Gratin

- 1 garlic clove and butter for the dish
- 3 pounds potatoes (the whole bag), peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 quart milk
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 T. chopped parsley
- 3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 2 large leeks, white parts only, thinly sliced
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Grated nutmeg
- 1 to 2 cups grated Gruyere
- 2 T. butter cut into small pieces

Preheat the oven to 375F. Rub a 9×12 gratin dish thoroughly with the garlic, then with butter to coat well. Put the potatoes in a pot with the milk, herbs, sliced garlic, leeks and 2 t. salt. Slowly bring to a boil, then gently simmer until the potatoes are barely tender but not to the point of falling apart. Discard the bay leaf and drain, reserving the milk.

Make a single layer of potatoes, leeks and garlic in the dish. Season with pepper, a little nutmeg, and cover lightly with cheese. Repeat until all the potatoes and cheese are used up, ending with a layer of cheese. Add enough of the milk to come up to the last layer of potatoes (about 1 \_ cups) dot with butter, then bake until a golden crust has formed on top, about an hour.

### Roasted Acorn or Sugar Dumpling Squash

- 2 acorn or dumpling squash, about 1 pound each
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Extra-virgin olive oil, optional
- 1 stick (1/2 cup) unsalted butter, softened
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons amaretto
- 8 fresh sage leaves
- 1/2 pound crushed pignoli cookies, almond biscotti, or vanilla wafers

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Split the squash in half through the equator and scrape out the seeds with a spoon. Set the squash halves, cut sides up, on a baking sheet and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil, if desired. If squash are very large, cut lengthwise into quarters.

In a bowl, cream the butter with the sugar, and almond liqueur. With a brush or a spoon coat the cut sides of each squash half with the butter mixture and put 2 sage leaves on top of each. Sprinkle with the crushed cookies. Bake until tender, 30 to 35 minutes, basting every 15 minutes with any remaining butter.