

Hog's Back Almanac



Winter 3 November 12, 2015

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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red
Cabbage	Yes	Plastic	Red
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Celeriac	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	German Red
Herbs	Yes	Plastic	Thyme
Kale	Yes	Plastic	Curly
Leeks	Yes	Plastic	
Onions	No	No	Yellows and a red
Peppers	No	No	Dried Sweet Paprika
Popcorn	No	No	
Potatoes	No	Paper	Blue Gold
Radishes	Yes	Plastic	Watermelon
Rutabagas	Yes	Plastic	
Spinach	Yes	Plastic	
Winter Squash	No	No	Butternut and Buttercup

Popcorn

The popcorn did well this season, we've got a nice bunch of 3 ears for everyone this week and then we'll have enough to keep drying over the winter and put in the first share box of 2016. Hang these in the kitchen or some other airy space and let them keep drying. It takes quite a while for popcorn to have the right amount of moisture left in the kernel so that it pops well. I did shell some last week and try popping it, and it's definitely not ready to pop yet.

The secret to good popcorn is having just the right amount of moisture inside the kernel. Popcorn pops because the moisture inside the kernel boils, produces steam and explodes the kernel. Too much moisture and it doesn't build enough pressure in the kernel before popping, which results in kernels that don't pop very well. It's a delicate balance. Sometimes we've gotten it to the right level of moisture and then put it in a jar, which screws it up.

Shell some off the cob on New Year's Eve and it will probably be ready. If I remember I'll send out an email

Farm Report 11/12/15

Rainfall 1.02"
 High Temperature 72°
 Low Temperature 32°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



Tuesday, November 24th is the

LAST DELIVERY

of the 2015 season!

Note that because of Thanksgiving we deliver on TUESDAY that week.

Same pickup sites and times.

and let you know when ours pops well. If you want to be really industrious you can use the husks for making tamales.

We've finally got some fall cabbage for the box this week. It's not that we didn't have it sooner, we just have to figure out how to fit everything in the box. Now that broccoli is done, we should be able to fit this nice head of red cabbage in. We did have some issues with the red cabbage occasionally having a bad leaf in the interior of the head, not a big deal, but something to keep an eye out for.

We harvested some nice tender spinach from the high tunnel for this week's boxes. It's not a huge amount, but it's yummy. Definitely best for fresh eating, not cooking. The warm weather has made all of our fall arugula overgrown, so it's nice to have the spinach.

This week's peppers are the sweet paprika peppers that we love. The variety is Boldog Hungarian, so you have a few options for using these. If you stem and seed the peppers you can grind them up to make a sweet paprika powder. But we use them to make tasty Mexican sauces, much like you would with a dried pasilla.

They also add a nice complexity to a simple red sauce for pasta or to chili. Most of the time we stem and seed them and then re-hydrate them in enough boiling water to cover. After which we dump the peppers and water into a blender and purée them.

It's pretty unusual for us to still be harvesting kale from outdoors. In fact, I'm guessing we'll have more for the last share. This week it's the curly green and next time it will be lacinato. If the weather stays warm the kale just keeps growing, although the short day length means that it grows pretty slowly now.

The leeks continue to be harvested from the field as well. Leeks are very hardy, so we usually have them still in the field this time of year. Some years though we have to wait until the ground thaws in order to harvest them, but that's not the case in 2015.

More of the blue gold potatoes are in the box this week. Have you tried mashing these? They really make some pretty tasty mashers.

The goal is to get everyone a couple watermelon radishes and celeriac this week, but one may get left out if we're having trouble getting the boxes closed.

The squash this week is one each of buttercup and butternut.

Farm News

The weather has continued very mild for this time of year. If we had late tomatoes in the high tunnel, they still would be alive. As it is we've got a bunch of tomato weeds in the spinach in the high tunnel and some of them are getting quite large. I'm not sure when it's ever going to get cold enough to kill them.

Our cover crops on next year's fields were also starting to get a little out of control. We plant oats, peas and radishes that will winter kill and make for nice planting conditions next spring. They can get so large that it makes getting ready to plant in the spring more difficult. Earlier this week I decided to mow them all down and get ahead of them. At least now there will be smaller pieces to deal with come next spring, provided they don't just keep growing.

Best guess for the last box for your Thanksgiving planning: Carrots, potatoes, onions, garlic, thyme and parsley, celeriac, radishes, cayenne peppers, spinach, arugula, green cabbage, butternut and buttercup, beets, rutabaga, brussels sprouts (~2 lbs?), leeks, kale, corn meal.

Kale and Red Cabbage Slaw With Walnuts

- 4 cups stemmed, slivered curly kale
- Salt to taste
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 3 cups finely sliced or shredded red cabbage
- ¼ cup finely chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons seasoned rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar
- 2 to 3 teaspoons Dijon mustard (to taste)
- 1 small garlic clove, minced or puréed (optional)
- 1 tablespoon walnut oil
- ¼ cup plain yogurt
- Freshly ground pepper

Place the slivered kale in a large bowl. Sprinkle with salt and add 1 tablespoon olive oil. Toss together and massage the leaves with your hands for about 3 minutes. The kale will lose some volume.

Add the cabbage and walnuts to the kale and toss together.

In a small bowl or measuring cup, combine the rice vinegar, sherry vinegar, Dijon mustard, optional garlic, walnut oil, yogurt and salt and pepper to taste. Whisk together and toss with the salad. Taste and adjust seasonings. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or longer before serving. Toss again and serve.

Stir-Fried Tofu, Red Cabbage and Winter Squash

- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar
- 2 teaspoons sugar or honey
- 2 teaspoons dark sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 2 tablespoons canola oil or peanut oil
- ½ pound firm tofu, cut in 1- x 2-inch dominoes
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh ginger
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¾ pound butternut squash, cut in 1/2-inch dice
- Salt to taste
- 1½ pounds red cabbage, cored and coarsely chopped
- Rice, bulgur or buckwheat noodles for serving

In a small bowl, whisk together 1 tablespoon of the soy sauce, the rice wine vinegar, sugar or honey, sesame oil and cornstarch. Set aside.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over medium-high heat until a drop of water sizzles and evaporates upon contact. Add the tofu, and stir-fry until lightly colored, about three minutes. Remove from the pan, and season to taste with soy sauce.

Add the remaining oil to the pan. When it is hot, add the butternut squash. Stir-fry until it begins to color, five to eight minutes. Add salt to taste, the ginger and garlic. Stir-fry for about 30 seconds, and add the cabbage. Stir-fry until the squash is tender and the cabbage is crisp-tender, about six minutes, adding about 1/4 cup water to the pan from time to time if the vegetables begin to stick. Return the tofu to the pan. Stir the sweet and sour mixture, and add to the vegetables. Stir just for a few seconds until they are glazed. Remove from the heat and serve with grains or noodles.