



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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red w/tops
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	Nice
Cabbage	Yes	Plastic	Sweetheart
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Fennel	Yes	Plastic	w/ tops
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	First of the year!
Kale	Yes	Plastic	Lacinato
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Peas	Yes	Plastic	Sugar snap
Yellow Squash	Yes	Plastic	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

Stormy Weather

This is the box of vegetables that almost didn't happen. I was about five minutes from sending an email pulling the plug on this week's share when the electricity came back on after being off for 15 hours yesterday. No electricity here means no water and no refrigeration, not ideal circumstances for the integrity of your veggies.

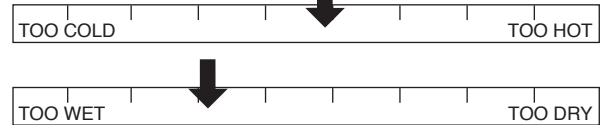
The kids and I were playing a game at 8pm or so Tuesday night, and I was closely watching the radar as the storm headed our way. It looked bad on the radar and the way it sounded was odd. Almost like the sound of the thunder was getting muted by the clouds. I was just saying to them that I didn't like the look of it, when all our devices started going off with tornado warnings.

As we rode out the storm in the basement I was more concerned that the greenhouse didn't end up in the next county, and that we'd still have a house to sleep in that night. It was the most violent storm we've had since we moved to the farm. We lost a huge tree in the front yard and didn't even know it until first light in the morning, because you simply couldn't hear any specific sound, just the roar of the wind and rain.

We started out Wednesday morning by surveying the damage, which was quite extensive. This week's lettuce was a total loss, too much wind-driven rain to be salvageable. I didn't see any signs that hail was a factor,

Farm Report 7/7/16

Rainfall 4.03"
 High Temperature 91°
 Low Temperature 56°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



just very strong winds and rain. Most other things for today were o.k., the beet tops are a little rough and the chard that I was planning on ended up being kale instead. The cabbage looked about ready to harvest so we opted for that instead of the lettuce.

We may actually see more problems with next week's box than this one, as things that were nearing harvest look like they got run over with a steam roller.

The reason I was close to cancelling this week's share was, without water or refrigeration, we'd have been sending in a box of warm, muddy produce. And I appreciate that a lot of you would have been understanding, but I'm just not comfortable delivering a box of compost.

What we did end up with is nothing like a box of compost. In fact, I would argue that a better box the day after a storm like that would be very hard to come by.

The broccoli this week is big and beautiful. Broccoli gets picked every day this time of year, so much of it was already in the cooler when the storm hit. Even so, there was actually some damage on some heads which is just crazy, broccoli is tough stuff.

And hey, how about them green beans! They were ready to roll, so we picked them on Tuesday. Everyone should get a nice bag of them. It's the earliest we've ever had them, since we experimented with transplanting an early round of them. The main problem with the experiment is they're too early, we've still got peas to pick!

Speaking of peas, a smaller bag of them this week, but this planting was not as productive as last week's. We'll have one more round of them next week.

The beets are a nice change of pace this week. Some of them are still quite small, so we've given you a few more to work with. As I said above the tops did get some damage from the storm.

The cabbage is our lovely sweetheart cabbage. Since the lettuce was a bust I thought it would be nice to have something for fresh raw eating. This sweet early cabbage makes a great slaw.

The fennel have started to size up nicely so one is in the box this week. We've included the fronds for those of you who like to get fancy with them. We should have more fennel for the next week or two.

The summer squash and zucchini are ramping up production and everyone should get a couple of each this week. Despite heavy pressure from cucumber beetles they've been doing quite well.

Carrots, cukes, kale and scallions round out a lovely box for the day after the deluge.

Farm News

Well, prior to the big blow, things were looking pretty awesome on the farm. Monday and Tuesday were heavy duty weeding days, along with picking 200 pounds of green beans. The weeding list was getting pared down significantly and we were about to be able to coast for a couple weeks. These heavy rains will mean that we'll kind of be back where we started from. Weeds thrive in wet packed soil.

Other storm damage concerns: Every single tomato cage in the field was laid out flat, that's never happened before. We got them all righted yesterday afternoon, but they took a pretty good beating. The other big bummer is that the row covers that were on the germinating fall carrots got ripped to shreds, which basically means that I have to start over from scratch to get any fall carrots. After rains like that there will be no carrots that can penetrate the hard crust left behind. I'll have to order more seed and hope that it dries out enough to get them planted in the next two weeks. This was the kind of weather event that will shape the rest of the 2016 season.

The potato crop has been looking lovely, the wind and rain certainly flattened them, but I'm hopeful that they'll perk back up after we get a few sunny days. They can certainly use the moisture this time of year.

The onions are also looking great, but the wind did smash some tops of the earliest ones. With the tops knocked down they won't size up any more, but they

were about ready for harvest. We'll start harvesting them for next week's box.

Our lovely flour corn that we grow for the winter shares also took a beating. It's basically laying flat now and past experience says that it's probably not going to straighten up anytime soon. Rick, the neighbor who does the syrup for us, has acres and acres of corn that is laying pretty flat or is even broken off.

The bottom line is that things look a little rough in the field right now. Next week I should be able to better assess superficial damage versus something more lasting.

Coming next week: Peas, summer squash, cukes, onions, fennel, scallions and other items TBD.

Sichuan Dry-Fried Green Beans

3/4 pound green beans
 1/4 cup peanut or vegetable oil
 5 or 6 dried red chilies
 1/4 teaspoon ground Sichuan pepper
 1 tablespoon minced garlic
 1 teaspoon minced or grated fresh ginger
 3 scallions, white parts only, thinly sliced
 4 ounces fresh shiitake or cremini mushrooms, finely chopped
 1 1/2 teaspoons Chinese rice wine or dry sherry
 1 1/2 teaspoons chili bean sauce
 1/2 teaspoon sesame oil
 1 teaspoon sugar
 1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

Rinse the green beans and dry them thoroughly; even a small amount of water will cause oil in the wok to spit. Cut the beans into 2-inch lengths. Prepare the sauce: In a small bowl, stir together the rice wine, chili bean sauce, sesame oil, sugar, and salt until the sugar is dissolved. Set aside.

Heat a wok or large skillet over high heat until a bead of water sizzles and evaporates on contact. Add the peanut oil and swirl to coat the bottom. Add the green beans and stir-fry, keeping the beans constantly moving, for 5 to 6 minutes, or until the outsides begin to blister and the beans are wilted. Turn off the heat, remove the green beans, and set aside to drain on a plate lined with paper towels.

Remove all but 1 tablespoon of oil and reheat the wok. Add the chilies, Sichuan pepper, garlic, ginger, and scallions and stir-fry until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the mushrooms and stir-fry for another 1 minute, until the mushrooms have browned and started to crisp. Add the sauce. Return the green beans to the wok and stir-fry for another 1 minute. Transfer to a plate and serve hot.