



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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	First of the year!
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Gold w/tops
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Celery	Yes	Plastic	First of the year
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	Not enough for all boxes this time
Eggplant	Yes	Plastic	Some green bell pepper instead
Fennel	Yes	Plastic	Last of it
Garlic	No	No	First of the year
Green Beans	Yes	Plastic	
Lettuce	Yes	Plastic	Red leaf and/or green leaf
Onions	Yes	Plastic	Walla walla
Potatoes	No	Paper	Red Norland
Tomatoes	No	No	Mix of high tunnel varieties
Yellow Squash	Yes	Plastic	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

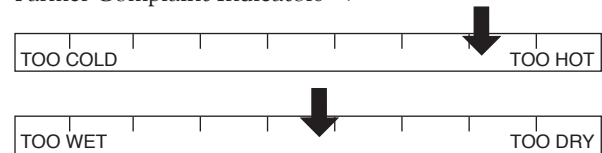
Potatoes!

There's always so much excitement around tomatoes, but I think the first potatoes are even better for a couple of reasons. Reason one is that potatoes are a little more versatile, there are just so many tasty ways to eat them. Reason two is that potatoes don't 'ripen' so we can dig as many as we want when we want them, we don't have to wait for them to turn red. Unlike tomatoes, potatoes don't start out green and turn red. If exposed to light your red potatoes can turn green, but you shouldn't eat them at that point.

There's something so satisfying about digging new red potatoes out of the cool moist soil. Even if you don't want to have a garden, growing some of your own potatoes is a pretty simple, rewarding pursuit. And if you have a family, kids love rooting around digging for potatoes. It's a great excuse to get their knees and hands in the dirt.

Farm Report 7/21/16

Rainfall0.86"
 High Temperature 91°
 Low Temperature 62°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



These first couple of rounds of potatoes have to be dug by hand and handled very carefully, since the skins haven't 'set' yet. The skins set when the plant above ground dies back, the plants we dug these from were still green and healthy, but starting to show signs of maturity.

We dug these on Tuesday since they were calling for rain Tuesday night. Hand digging potatoes out of mud is not fun. The rain didn't materialize, but better to get it done ahead of the worst of the heat.

We send these first potatoes in a plastic bag, but don't store them in there for long. They are so fresh and alive that you should eat them right away, or at least get them out of the plastic bag.

We've got five varieties of potatoes at the farm this year, mostly are standard reds and yukons, but also one of my favorites called Red Gold, which we'll probably harvest for the next round of spuds.

Lots of firsts of the season in the box this week.

Fresh garlic is always a treat. It's going to be a tricky year for garlic, and not all of it is going to be perfect. Consistent moisture and a little heavier ground in the garlic patch has made the garlic very wet most of the growing season, which causes a bunch of problems. Mostly you may find some split wrapper leaves and a little browning at the edges. The garlic itself will still taste awesome, but cosmetically it won't be ideal. That said, enjoy the first bulb of the year sliced razor-thin on some pizza or in a pasta.

I've been fighting with gold beets for a few years and have had a heck of a time getting a decent planting of them for a number of reasons. Well, the stars aligned

for 2016, and we have gold beets coming out our ears. Gold beet tops are one of our favorite cooking greens, and since the early chard was a failure, this is a pretty great substitute. The leaves did suffer some damage in The Storm, and we removed most of the damaged ones, but you still may find that some are rough around the edges. Gold beets are a wonderful ingredient in many things that use beets, since they don't hijack the color of the meal, the way that their red cousins do.

Summer celery returns to the box this week. The heads are fairly decent-sized and manageable. The flavor of local celery is a little more intense than California celery, because we don't live in an irrigated desert. I like it's stronger flavor, it makes better chicken salad.

The first eggplant are in some of the boxes this week, it takes time to build up enough so that everyone gets one at the same time, even though we have about 300 eggplant plants in the field. If you don't get an eggplant you'll get a green pepper instead.

We're also short of cucumbers this week, so some of you will get an extra yellow squash or two instead. One drawback of having the high tunnel cukes on the same irrigation as the tomatoes is that once the tomatoes start ripening we have to be careful they don't get so much water that they crack, but that means the cukes suffer a bit, and we're just not having a normal cucumber year.

Now that the peas are done we can focus on green beans for the next few weeks. Everything has been growing fast in this heat, and some of the beans were getting too large already. We'll have to see how the ones for next week react to these hot days.

This is the tale end of the lettuce season, and it's going out with more of a whimper than a bang. Too much water and heat left these heads small and with some rib decay from moisture. Still, there should be enough for a couple of BLT's.

The tomatoes are continuing to ripen in the high tunnel, everyone should get 3 or 4 this week.

The onions continue to mature and dry up in these hot days. These sweet walla wallas won't keep forever but will keep fine on the counter for a few weeks.

Lastly is the first of the basil harvest. Keeping on top of basil is a challenge when it's hot. It grows so fast that we have to keep picking it so that it doesn't go to flower, which makes the flavor too medicinal. We should have it for several weeks now.

Farm News

Keeping cool and staying hydrated has been a top priority on the farm this week. I know it's hot today, but Monday was the worst at the farm because it was dead calm. I'll take 95 and a breeze over 85 and calm.

There was rain forecast for Saturday night last week, so we were busy getting some things prepped and planted late last week. I replanted the last of the fall carrots that had been storm ravaged. Hopefully we'll have enough, although this heat is going to cause problems with germination too.

I also got all of the fall beets seeded. We had a pretty nice three-quarters of an inch of rain Saturday night, so that was perfect for getting these off and growing.

We also transplanted the last round of cauliflower, cabbages and some of the fall broccoli. We're down to just two more successions of broccoli in the greenhouse waiting for their turn the next couple of weeks.

Coming next week: Basil, tomatoes, cukes, summer squash, peppers, kale, green beans, gold beets, onions, garlic and maybe sweet corn?

This recipe looks like it makes quite a bit, so you may want to halve it.

Warm Dijon Potato Salad with Green Beans

- 3 pounds red potatoes
- 1 pound green beans, trimmed
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons whole grain Dijon mustard
- 1 shallot minced
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 30 grinds black pepper
- 1/3 cup packed finely chopped flat-leaf parsley (could substitute basil)

Place the potatoes in a large pot and cover with cold water by at least a couple inches. Salt the water generously, bring to a boil and cook until the potatoes are fork tender, about 20 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water.

Bring another pot of salted water to a boil and throw the beans in just for a minute or two until they turn bright green. Strain them and run them under cold water to stop the beans from cooking.

In a mixing bowl combine the remaining ingredients and whisk until smooth.

Cut the potatoes in half lengthwise and then into roughly 1 inch chunks. Cut beans in half. Toss the potato chunks in the dressing and then toss in the green beans and the parsley.