



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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Basil	No	Plastic	
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Gold w/tops
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Celery	Yes	Plastic	
Cucumbers	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Onions	Yes	Plastic	Walla wallas
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Green bell and serrano
Potatoes	No	Paper	Red Gold
Sweet Corn	Yes	Plastic	First of the year
Tomatoes	No	No	
Yellow Squash	Yes	Plastic	
Zucchini	Yes	Plastic	

Summer in a box

I'm going to spend most of the newsletter pontificating about the CSA movement, but a little info on the box this week:

Corn! Who doesn't love sweet corn. As always, our corn is from Dan and Tammy Sam, down the road from us a few miles. It is not organic, but it is non-gmo, and Dan does an excellent job and picks it every Thursday morning for us. We'll have it week's 8-11.

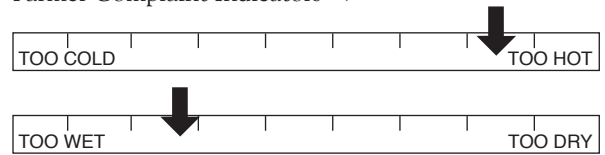
The potatoes this week are the lovely red golds. This is one of my favorite varieties of potatoes. Again, they are very fresh, so store them outside the plastic bag. We'll take a couple of weeks off of potatoes to let the skins toughen up so we don't have to hand dig them.

The high tunnel tomatoes are coming into their own, everyone should get five nice ones this week. Keep them on the counter until they give easily with light pressure, some will be ready to go right away and others may need a few days.

This is the last round of early broccoli, the heat makes it a little wonky, which is why we take a break from now it until September.

Farm Report 7/28/16

Rainfall 1.68"
 High Temperature 94°
 Low Temperature 65°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



I had hoped to have beans in the box this week, but too much rain, heat and humidity caused enough mildew and rot, that it made them a no-go. Next week is looking better.

State of CSA

An article in the *New York Times* last week had the CSA community nodding their heads in agreement. The article was about the rise of the online food delivery services marketing themselves similarly to the CSA model. It wondered whether or not these box schemes are hurting the traditional model of CSA. Nationwide CSA share sales are down, from large farms to small, but I don't think that it's solely a result of the box delivery companies.

The short answer is that it's complicated. The box schemes are a factor, but so is the Blue Apron-type meal in a box companies. We also have 9,000 farmer's markets around the country, which means that there's one near you just about seven days a week. The way people eat has also changed significantly in the past decade. More meals eaten out, means fewer cooked at home.

As these factors change, each farm is taking home a little bit less revenue each year. The growth in farmer's markets is great, but if each farm is taking home less and less revenue, it quickly becomes unsustainable. The same is true of CSA farms. All of the farms are competing for the same pieces of a shrinking pie. If you've been farming for a while, it's hard to adapt to a contracting model. Add to that a climate that seems to be getting more volatile by the year, and it makes running our kind of farm in 2016 a challenge.

I wonder too about the movement of communities to the online space and how much of a factor that is. There's been a decline going on for a while now in community organization involvement, whether religious or civic. The online space allows us to very specifically tailor our community to our interests, rather than a general coming together, which is more the definition of community. I think that online segregation has also led us to some of the more difficult social problems we're facing now. It's sounds cheesy, but we really are all in this together, and letting talking heads and trolls on the internet divide us is terrible for our future.

I don't think I've done a particularly good job of creating community around our farm, other than writing this newsletter and bugging everyone to read it every week. I would love to involve everyone in the farm more and get members to connect around our food, but I simply can't do any more than I'm doing now, and physically, I probably need to do less.

I know of a couple of farms who are not continuing their CSA programs after this year, and I find myself wondering if their members will look for another CSA farm, or if they'll just opt for farmer's markets and other options. My gut feeling is that the vast majority will pick the latter. As that happens, the pie shrinks for all of us.

I don't have a crystal ball, but local organic foods have been noticed by big business, which is probably not a good thing for farms like ours. Time will tell how things shake out in the marketplace. I think that farms like ours will be spending the next several years adapting to a different landscape if they want to remain viable.

Farm News

Hot and wet is the news around the farm right now. We've continued to receive moisture at pretty regular intervals, and are now up to 12 inches of rain since June 1st. That's about 150% of normal, and there are some things that have been significantly impacted. We will have almost no outdoor tomatoes this year, the pounding they received in the storm, followed by high heat and humidity is just a perfect storm for fungal disease. A big bummer since so much work goes into them. The high tunnel tomatoes are looking great, and we're so grateful to continue to have them as our backup.

The watermelons are suffering a similar fate. They are also very sensitive to disease, and for the second

year in a row, both plantings are going downhill fast. Cantaloupes are showing some signs of issues, but they should be all right, since they are generally tougher to begin with.

The last casualty is our garlic. Don't worry, you'll still get plenty, it just won't be as nice as I like it to be. The heads are huge, we just have a significant amount of disease on some of the bulbs which can cause splitting. I'm a little concerned about how well it will store this year also. Autumn harvest share members may get all their garlic in the first box, so it gets to you while it's still in nice shape.

Sorry for such a doom and gloom newsletter this week. It's just been that kind of a July at the farm. I'm looking forward to turning the calendar to August next week and getting a fresh start.

Coming next week: Peppers, tomatoes, eggplant, cucumbers, zucchini, yellow squash, onions, green beans, sweet corn, kale, carrots, celery, garlic, basil.

Raw Beet Salad

- 1 pound beets
- 1 large shallot
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard, or to taste
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons sherry vinegar or other good strong vinegar
- Minced parsley, dill, chervil, rosemary or tarragon

Peel the beets and the shallot. Combine them in the bowl of a food processor fitted with the metal blade, and pulse carefully until the beets are shredded; do not puree. (Or grate the beets by hand and mince the shallots; combine.) Scrape into a bowl. Toss with the salt, pepper, mustard, oil and vinegar. Taste, and adjust seasoning. Toss in the herbs, and serve.

Marinated Zucchini Salad

- 1 pound medium or small zucchini, preferably a mix of green and yellow
- Salt to taste
- 3 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley, mint, chives, dill or a combination

Slice the squash as thinly as you can. Sprinkle with salt, preferably kosher salt, and let sit for 15 to 30 minutes. Rinse and drain on paper towels. Mix together the lemon juice, garlic and olive oil. Toss with the zucchini. Season with salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate for four to six hours. Remove from the refrigerator, and remove the garlic clove. Add the fresh herbs, and toss together. Taste, adjust seasoning and serve.