

Hog's Back Almanac



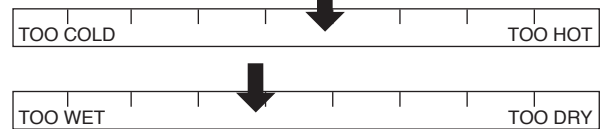
Autumn Harvest 1
October 13, 2016

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

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Celeriac	Yes	Plastic	
Cilantro	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Herbs	Yes	Plastic	Parsley and thyme
Kale	Yes	Plastic	Green curly
Leeks	Yes	Plastic	
Onions	No	No	Yellows and a red
Parsnips	Yes	Plastic	
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Jalapeños
Potatoes	No	Paper	Russets
Shallots	No	No	
Spinach	Yes	Plastic	
Winter Squash	No	No	Jester and/or acorn or delicata

Farm Report 10/13/16

Next AH Share Date . . . Thursday, October 27th
 Rainfall0.71"
 High Temperature 71°
 Low Temperature 36°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



Reminder: Autumn Harvest shares are delivered every-other-week, so the next delivery is Thursday, October 27th.

The shares this time of year are pretty amazing, if I do say so myself. So many good smells to warm up the kitchen with on a cool fall day.

There are still some remnants of the end of the summer share this week, with peppers, cilantro and broccoli in the boxes. We just don't pick the jalapeños regularly enough not to end up with tons of them at the end of the year. I realize that not everyone wants a handful of jalapeños, but I thought we'd send some in the boxes for those who do. Some will be green, some red, and they are hot.

Since we have hot peppers, I thought another bunch of cilantro was in order. I was having difficulty getting a decent row of cilantro back in August, so I kept seeding it until it came up well. Consequently there was some extra. It's one of the things I miss the most in the winter, so it's nice to have it when the winter is just around the corner.

Root crops are a big part of the Autumn shares, whether it's carrots, celeriac, beets, parsnips, rutabagas, watermelon radishes or turnips. All of these crops are looking good and are being harvested right now. Only the carrots, parsnips, beets and celeriac made it in the box this week so there would be room for other items.

We have about the nicest crop of parsnips we've ever had. Parsnips are a pesky crop, slow to germinate, long growing season, difficult to harvest. It's only about

Welcome to the first Autumn Harvest share!

It looks like our first real chance at a freeze tonight (I'm writing this Wednesday night), and that seems an appropriate time to be starting the Autumn Harvest shares. My new slogan for the Autumn Harvest shares is "*All the food that fits*". These boxes are generally very full and quite heavy, so please bring enough bags and muscle to get them home.

Occasionally, the spatial relations part of my brain doesn't align with what I say is going to be in the box here in the newsletter, and we have to leave something out in order to get the boxes closed. The most likely things to leave out in that circumstance are the blocky root crops, like beets, rutabagas, turnips, etc. They store well and if they don't fit one week we'll try them next time.

Space shouldn't be too much of an issue this week, since the squash are small and there's no cabbage. The key is not to smash the softer things like spinach and kale in our quest to close the boxes.

every-other year that we even have them in the boxes. This year we'll have more than usual, and some are huge, over two pounds. One of the things that makes harvesting them difficult is that they are in the ground so long that the end of the taproot is somewhere down in the bedrock by the time we're harvesting them. Consequently, the ends of all our parsnips get cut off, because we just can't get that deep with our digger. Some get cut off shorter and some longer.

Celeriac is the gnarly looking globe that smells of celery. They are one of the best root crops, with wonderful flavor. We like to cube them and roast them, but grating them to make a fresh slaw is a favorite use as well. Obviously, you need to peel them fairly thickly to get to the heart of the matter. We don't use a peeler, but use a sharp knife which will take off a thicker slice.

More of our lovely carrots and potatoes are in each week of the Autumn shares. A good 4 or 5 pounds of each takes up quite a bit of real estate in the boxes. The carrots are tasting excellent this year, even though their yield is down due to the stormy July weather. We should have about 25 carrots per foot of row, but because of hard rains when they were germinating we ended up with more like 15.

This week we've got russet potatoes for baking or boiling. I really enjoy the flavor of the skins of these when we make baked potatoes. They also make tasty oven fries, or french fries if you want to get really fancy.

The squash this week is primarily the new Jester variety. As with all of our squash this year, it's not keeping well at all, so we had to supplement with some acorn and delicata in order to have enough for everyone.

Farm News

It's all about harvesting at the farm right now. The only thing that stops us is our bodies or we run out of space in the coolers. By the time we were done harvesting for the shares this week we had the cooler pretty full from floor to ceiling, and I managed to do it without making too big of a mess. Storage crops are heavy, and when you're stacking boxes seven feet high it can get a little dicey.

We started out on Monday getting most of the beets harvested and washed. Beets can handle quite a bit of cold weather, but some were just getting so big that I wanted to get them out of the ground. Next it was on to the watermelon radishes and rutabagas, again picking the large ones to keep them from getting oversized. We'll let the rest keep sizing up until it looks like we're

going to get some weather in the mid 20's. Once the ground freezes we're done, so it's good to keep an eye on the forecast this time of year.

While Brandon and Kevin were working on that I went over to the neighbors to get the carrot harvester out of storage. I don't have a good space for it at our farm, and John and Susan have a shed that it fits nicely in. I bring them a bunch of funky carrots for their cattle as rental. Don't worry, these are carrots that are too gnarly for people to eat, but the steers love them.

Getting the carrot harvester and washer set up was the first goal on Tuesday. We headed out and got about 1,500 pounds harvested and washed before lunch. Then it was on to dig a row of parsnips, transplant some late spinach in the high tunnel and get the leeks harvested for this week's share. It was a busy couple of days, and there's quite a few more in store next week as we continue to bring in the storage crops.

Pasta with Parsnips and Bacon

- 1 large parsnip, or two medium (3/4 pound), peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, more for drizzling
- Kosher salt and black pepper, as needed
- 1/2 pound dried campanelle or farfalle pasta
- 1/4 pound bacon, diced
- 1 medium leek, thinly sliced
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 2/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Toss parsnips with oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast, tossing occasionally, until parsnips are golden and tender, about 25 minutes.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook pasta according to package instructions until 1 minute before it's al dente. Drain.

In a large skillet over medium-high heat, brown the bacon until crisp, about 5 minutes; use a slotted spoon to transfer bacon to a paper-towel-lined plate to drain. Discard all but 1 tablespoon of fat from the pan.

Return skillet to heat and add leeks. Cook in remaining bacon fat until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in heavy cream and cooked bacon. Simmer mixture until slightly thickened, 2 to 3 minutes.

Stir in pasta, parsnips and cheese. Simmer until heated through and cheese is melted, then remove from heat. Season with salt and pepper; toss with parsley. Serve drizzled with olive oil, with plenty of black pepper on top.