



In Your Box

Basil*

Carrots*

Greenhouse Cucumbers*

Red Tomatoes*

Sungold Cherry Tomatoes

Salad Mix*

Fresh Red Onion*

Gold Zucchini

Caribe Potatoes

Mini Red Cabbage

Beets with Tops

*included in Salad Shares

How It Works: Salad Mix

The bagged greens we put in your boxes almost every week provide a measure of consistency to the flow of the seasons here. The process begins each week with preparing three 150-foot beds using our tractor-mounted rototiller. Typically, we have tilled under a previous crop two weeks prior to this bed preparation. We roll the beds using a lawn roller mounted on a different tractor, our International 140; this tractor provides pressure down on the roller as well as the normal lifting capacity of our other tractors. The frame holding the roller also holds four row markers, set ten inches apart.

Once the beds are tilled, rolled, and marked, Kim proceeds to the field in the minivan with her tote full of seeds and an antique, but very serviceable, hand-pushed seed drill. Each of the twelve marked rows is seeded to a different variety of salad green, most of them requiring a different setting on the seeder (Kim can choose from 36 hole sizes to meter out the seed). We reserve one bed for lettuce, one for miscellaneous greens such as the red beet leaves or the blonde chicories, and one for what we refer to as "flea beetle greens". Flea beetle greens are members of the mustard family, universally attacked by a small, shiny beetle that jumps like a flea when you come close. We cover these greens with a layer of spun-bonded polyester (a white, gauzy fabric that is permeable to light, air, and water, but not bugs) laid over wire hoops and buried along the edges. This keeps most of the bugs out.

As soon as the salad greens come up, so do the weeds. We use yet another tractor to cultivate the closely-planted rows. This tractor, an Allis Chalmers G from the 1950's, has its engine mounted in the rear, and the driver can look right down between his (for now, it is his and not her) feet to see exactly what is happening with the basket weeders, a set of ground-driven baskets that spin the just-germinated seeds out of the soil, where they rapidly wither. A week later we do it again to catch the next flush of weeds.

Three to four weeks after planting, we harvest each variety individually into crates lined with a mesh bag. Once picked and weighed, the crates are transported to the packing shed where we wash them individually before mixing them in a large tank of water. The mix is then removed to the mesh bags again, and placed in an old washing machine (no longer used for clothing!) to spin dry. Dried salad goes in the cooler overnight to chill down before bagging the next morning.

Weather: On Monday morning, just as we had finished loading up the harvest van to go harvest carrots, we received an inch of rain in less than an hour. That was not so great, but Tuesday afternoon topped it with two inches in less than thirty minutes. In my opinion, this was downright unfair of the weather man, but I made the best of it by walking through the downpour to look at the flow of water across the sloping land on the farm to determine why certain places in our lower fields seem to wash in the downpours we've experienced this year, and what we might be able to do to prevent this problem in the future; I got wet but also got some good ideas.

Activities on the Farm: Our first crop of fall lettuce transplants went into the field on Friday, along with our fall storage turnips, winter radish, and daikon radish. Everything weathered the three inches of rain just fine, which left us feeling fortunate. Harvesting, washing, and delivering of course went on, as always, along with maintaining the greenhouse crops, which don't care one bit whether it rains or not.

Comings and Goings: Chris' mom came to visit from Seattle, bearing salmon; the kids think they must have gone to heaven, since they have spent the better part of the last two days at the pool with Grandma.

Next Week's Box may include: Carrots, eggplants, salsa fixin's, and more...

The Farm Kitchen

We pulled just enough **Carrots** out of the mud this week to fill our orders, and not another more. We are hoping for dry weather before the weekend for a chance to harvest the rest of the first carrot crop, planted back in early April.

Greenhouse Cucumbers have been fantastically productive this year, and we have been eating them like mad here on the farm. Andy has been taking three or four each time he takes the Thursday deliveries, eating them like corndogs; he praises their “munch-ability” and their re-hydrating qualities.

Maine Coast Cucumber Salad

2 greenhouse cucumbers
1/4 cup rice vinegar
2 Tbsp. olive oil
3 Tbsp. sesame oil
2 tsp salt
1 Tbsp. sesame seeds
1 Tbsp. seaweed sprinkles (or finely chopped seaweed)
Quarter the cucumbers lengthwise, then slice into 1/4-inch pieces. Put in a serving bowl, add the rest of the ingredients, and stir well.

The **Red Greenhouse Tomatoes** came on in full force this week, so you’ve got lots. We have made our best effort to give everybody some “now” tomatoes and some “later” tomatoes. To make the “later” tomatoes into “now” tomatoes, just set them on a windowsill or warm counter; a windowsill works well because the tomatoes still seem to absorb the sunshine even though they aren’t on the vine. To make tomatoes last a little longer, do your best to find a cool spot; a refrigerator is too cold.

With tomatoes, you almost have to have **Basil**, so here you go. And this salad is a staple at our house all summer long.

Tomato-Basil-Garlic Quick Salad

Great for a quick lunch. Quantities are not sacred at all!

2 tomatoes
4 Tbsp. basil
2 garlic cloves
3 Tbsp. olive oil
Chop the tomatoes, basil, and garlic. Mix with olive oil. Let sit for five minutes and enjoy

This week’s **Gold Zucchini** is the first of the crop; zucchini always start slowly, then ramp up to full production. We harvest them small to keep them under control, and to keep them tasty and delicious. We grow the gold zucchini because they are easier to pick amidst a sea of green leaves on a hot afternoon with sweat running in your eyes, as is often the case when harvesting a 500-foot row of zucchini; we find them to

be as finely flavored as any of the green varieties. Toss these early ones in a stir-fry or soup, or anywhere a taste of summer is desired.

Are those potatoes ugly or what? **Caribe Potatoes** are normally one of the most beautiful vegetables in the world, with bright purple skin mottled with pink. These got hit with the hilling disks while I was hilling up the potatoes, which happened late this year due to rains that kept us out of the fields during critical weeks. The spuds still taste great.

We grow our **Red Cabbage** small on purpose, since most families won’t go through a large one. Small cabbages are a function of high plant densities and the right variety.

Light and Lively Slaw

The Dressing
2 Tablespoons rice wine Vinegar
2 Tablespoons canola oil
2 Tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
2 tablespoons minced cilantro or parsley
salt to taste

The Slaw
3 cups thinly sliced red cabbage
1/4 cup thinly sliced fresh onion
1 small beet, grated (raw beet)
1 large carrot, grated
1 Tablespoon sesame seeds

In a bowl combine all the dressing ingredients. Set aside. Combine the cabbage, onion, carrot, beet, and sesame seeds in a medium bowl. Toss the dressing with the slaw ingredients. Wait 10 minutes for flavors to blend and serve.

Again I offer a reminder to enjoy your **Beet Greens** along with your **Beets**; cooked like spinach and dressed up with butter and salt, they are a great healthy side dish, packed with nutrients.

Salad Mix with Beets and Feta

2 tsp red wine vinegar
3 Tbs. olive or nut oil
1 lb baked red beets
3 cups salad mix or arugula
1/4 lb feta cheese, crumbled
Whisk together the vinegar and oil to make a vinaigrette. Add salt to taste. Slice the beets thinly and toss with a little bit of the vinaigrette. Combine the greens with the vinaigrette, and arrange over the beet slices. Crumble feta on top.

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