



In Your Box

Cucumbers*
 Round Red Tomatoes*
 Sungold Cherry Tomatoes
 Green Top Beets
 Yellow Onions
 Red Onions
 Eggplant
 Golden Zucchini*
 Sweet Corn
 Carrots*
 Broccoli
 Heirloom Tomato
 Romaine Lettuce
 Melons for most folks
 Zinnias

*included in Salad Shares

King Corn

Most of our neighbors grow lots of corn and beans—and not much else. On the other hand, we grow over forty different crops, along with a little bit of corn and beans.

Corn and beans have a rich history in the Americas, being among the crops that originated here. Along with squash, corn and beans were known among the Native Americans as the Three Sisters, and provided the basis for the original agriculture on this continent. Corn is the only grain crop that can be harvested by hand without other tools such as a sickle or a scythe. Beans, a legume, host *rhizobium* bacteria on their roots, providing nitrogen to the plants around them and following them in future years. Broad-spreading, low-growing squash smothers weeds and tolerates drought very well, as well as keeping deer and raccoons out of any crop it is grown with—the spiny leaves, apparently, are unpleasant to walk on, and not good to eat.

Biologically speaking, our corn is the same corn as our neighbors' except for a few genes that code for the production of sugar instead of starch; both are the same species, *Zea mays*. Interestingly, although immature corn was eaten by Native Americans, it wasn't until Europeans got hold of the crop that sweet corn as we know it today was developed.

Our beans come from a different species than the soybean commonly grown by our neighbors (*Phaseolus vulgaris* as opposed to *Glycinus max*), and soybeans are native to Asia, not America. Like corn, beans come in a sweet, immature state (our green beans), as well as a popping form native to the Andes, but not yet available in this country.

Our neighbors like to tease us about our little patch of corn and beans, but we like to think that they help us fit into the neighborhood just a little bit better.

Something to watch for:

Next week's newsletter will include an offer for our winter shares, as well as the opportunity to "bulk up" on onions, garlic, and winter squash.

Weather: Last Thursday night we got pounded with just over two inches of rain, but missed out on the high winds that plagued many of our surrounding communities. The weather finally turned sort of hot on Sunday, and now that September has rolled around we had the most summer-y day of the summer so far.

Activities on the Farm: We cleaned the barn from last winter's sheep leavings (including lots of straw for bedding), going right down to the cement floor. With the cleanout of an adjacent animal pen, and three dumpsters full of garbage in the spring, we finally accomplished a complete cleaning of the barn: we have now hauled out (or decided to keep) every bit of hay, manure, garbage, and junk that was in the barn the day we moved onto the place. Chris continued mowing across the creek for the forest planting, finding some large rocks and breaking our field mower in the process.

Comings and Goings: Chris' dad, Bob, brought the boys back from their trip to Colorado on Tuesday, which was also the last day for our picking crew members Ben and Laura, who held out magnificently until the end without a hint of short-timer's disease.

Next Week's Box may include: More melons, sungolds, salad mix maybe, cippolini onions

The Farm Kitchen

Sweet Corn makes a final appearance in this week's box. Almost certainly, this won't be the greatest sweet corn you've ever tasted, but we are satisfied with the quality (proving here that we are not ruthless self-promoters). We did not have an easy corn year—the weeks when we should have been planting organic sweet corn were soggy and cold, sure seed-rotting weather; so we seeded the corn in soil blocks in the greenhouse, and transplanted it out to the field. Conventional wisdom says this won't work, but we achieved a good stand and a crop of sweet corn that would have come too late had we simply waited for dry seeding weather. Unfortunately, our late variety of corn (maturing this week) was not entirely consistent, and while some ears are perfectly ripe today, a number were just slightly under, but would have gone by come next week. So we picked it all. The small ear size and incomplete filling is also due to the inconsistent, cool weather.

In most of this week's boxes, **Melons** make their first appearance of the season. If you didn't get a melon—we were a little short—you got an extra box of **Sungold Cherry Tomatoes**; we should have enough melons next week to go around to everyone. Some boxes had the yellow-skinned, crisp, white-fleshed **Asian Melon**, while others received the blue-skinned, green—and orange-fleshed **Butterscotch Melons**.

Even if you didn't get two boxes of **Sungold Cherry Tomatoes**, this recipe is worth giving up that quick gobble on the way home that we hear so much about.

Slow-baked Sungolds

1 pint Sungold cherry tomatoes
3 Tbsp olive oil
2 tsp finely chopped fresh thyme or oregano
2 Tbsp grated Parmesan
Salt

Preheat the oven to 300. Cut cherry tomatoes in half along their equator. Brush a baking dish large enough to hold the tomatoes in a single layer with a thin coating of olive oil. Arrange tomatoes in the dish, flat side up. Drizzle olive oil on the tomatoes, then sprinkle on the herbs and Parmesan. Sprinkle with salt and bake for 2 hours; the tomatoes should be shriveled and lightly browned around the edges.

Romaine Lettuce heralds the beginning of the fall salad season, which should include a goodly amount of lettuce, the return of our salad mix, and another harvest of radicchio.

Onions from now on will be suited to storage, although these early onions will not store as well as the later ones. A cool, dark, dry place (not the refrigerator) works best, although meeting just two out of the three will get you plenty of shelf life. Don't keep them in the refrigerator until after you've cut them open. The **Yellow Onions** in this week's box are the normal kind. The **Red Onions** will be milder, and well suited to sandwiches, hamburgers, and lighter cooking; although I use them interchangeably.

Sometimes we have beets, and sometimes we have **Beets with Greens**. These "green tops" on the beets take a little longer to pick, but the taste great and we hate to leave them in the field. We are in the midst of a great beet year, since they love the moderate coastal weather we have been enjoying, and the storage crop looks great.

Beet Greens and Chickpea Pasta

1 lb pasta, cooked
2 Tbsp olive oil
Tops from one bunch of beets, chopped
1 14 oz can chickpeas, drained
1 cup diced tomato
1/4 cup grated parmesan
Salt and pepper to taste

Over high heat, saute the beet greens in olive oil until they just slightly wilt, 1–2 minutes. Toss with the rest of the ingredients and serve.

Zucchini Fresh

Several small (less than 9") zucchini (gold or green)
Extra-virgin olive oil
Salt and Pepper
Grated Parmesan

Slice the zucchini as thinly as possible the long way, and arrange in a single layer on a platter. Drizzle lightly with olive oil, lightly salt and pepper, and grate Parmesan cheese over the top. Serve as is, or broil just until the cheese begins to brown.

The **Zinnias** are just for fun, or to brighten up a corner. When you get them home, trim about an inch from the bottom of the stems and place in slightly warm water. By changing the water every day, we routinely get ten days to two weeks out of a flower bouquet in our house.

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