



In the Share

Red Onions, 3 pieces
Kohlrabi, 2 pieces
Beets, 1 bunch
Beans, 1 bag
Cucumbers, 2 pieces
Edamame, 1 bag
Salsa basket, 1 bag
Sweet Peppers
Eggplant, 1 piece
Summer Squash, 4 pieces
Garlic, 1 head
Tomatoes, TBD

Tomatoes continue to dominate your shares this week. I surely declared "Tomato-nado" too early a couple of weeks ago! Each week's tomato harvest dwarfs that of the week before, a trend I (and the truck's groaning suspension system) hope ends this week. If you are starting to grow weary of them, just try to remember that when they wind down next month, local fresh tomatoes will vanish for about 10 months.

Another item that I fear you might be tiring of, are the summer squash. Each Wednesday of late, we have been asking each other how many squashes we can pass out to the members without inciting some sort of riot...this week we agreed on four. All I can say is that I feel your pain and reassure you

(continued on the back)

From the Farmer

Arrivals

I have written here the last week or two about the impending changing of the seasons and goodbyes on the farm. This week we bid adieu and a heartfelt "thank you" to four more interns, and many of our summer plantings are sputtering to the end of their lifecycles (maybe not such a tragic thing that some of those relentless summer squash plants are finally calling it quits!). As I was walking home from the farm yesterday, past the prairie that is suddenly towering and ablaze with new colors, I could feel my attention slowly slipping towards the season's end.

It was at that moment that I had a sudden (and if I'm completely honest, slightly disconcerting) realization that we still have a tremendous amount of food in our fields, and that two more months of deliveries stretch out before us! I got to thinking that perhaps my mindset could use a little recalibration, lest I start to prematurely wither like one of those squash plants. Just like with the rest of life, every farewell and ending on the farm can be examined from a different angle to reveal a hello or a beginning.

This week's heat certainly felt like a new arrival. After such a cool and cloudy season, the spike in temperature and humidity felt palpable. The crew made sure to bring extra water to the field (and we all made sure to eat an afternoon popsicle or two), and everyone sweat their way through the harvest chores. Wash shed tasks, featuring shade and spraying water, suddenly became a bit more popular, and we had to be sure to fill all of our wash tubs early in the morning, before the beating sun had a chance to heat up all the water in our pipes. On Monday afternoon, when I got an entire face full of water while trying to fix one of the irrigation sprinkler heads, it was a welcome relief instead of the major irritant it would have been a week before.

Along with the heat, our tardy pepper crop seems to have finally decided to join the party and start to ripen. Peppers are the consummate heat loving vegetable, and this season the fruits have been languishing on the plant for weeks, refusing to turn color. All peppers start green, before sweetening up and exploding into red or yellow or orange. Historically we have always waited for them to turn color before harvesting them, but I will admit this year to having been tempted to give up hope and just pick them green. This week, I feel glad that we kept the faith and waited. To be sure, you will not be overwhelmed with the number of peppers in your share this week, but at least they have begun to ripen, and they are delicious.

My favorite new arrival this week was the emergence of the cover crop that we seeded early last week. A critical part of an organic cropping system, a cover crop is a crop that is planted primarily to manage the soil fertility and structure, to provide long term weed suppression, to prevent soil erosion, and to increase biodiversity on the farm. As swaths of ground become fallow, we try to get them all seeded to various cover crops. Last Thursday's rain came at a particularly opportune time for us, and we have managed to establish very nice looking stands of rye, vetch, oats, peas, and "groundhog" radishes. I love the green patchwork patterns that result, and I love even more that each section in cover means one more section that does not have to be actively managed anymore this season. Hopefully we can greet the arrival of a few more sections in cover over the next week or so.

-Jake

Recipe

My parents are coming from Michigan this weekend to visit, to help us get some canning done, and mostly to lavish attention on the grand kids. It is always fun to have visitors this time of year, when the food is so delicious and abundant. I plan to serve them the following dishes, along with a tomato salad with balsamic vinegar dressing, on the night they arrive.

Zucchini Fritters topped with Eggs

From Farm Fresh and Fast, Fairshare CSA Coalition's new cookbook

Ingredients

*1 pound summer squash, coarsely grated
1 teaspoon salt
1 large egg
½ cup chopped onion (optional)
1 bunch chives, finely chopped
½ cup all purpose flour
¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
salt to taste
½ cup olive oil
1 dozen eggs*

Directions

Place summer squash in a colander and toss with salt. Let it sit 10 minutes then squeeze out any extra water. Whisk the egg in a large bowl and add squash, onion, chives, flour, pepper, and salt. Heat the oil in a large skillet. Drop the batter into skillet (about 2 Tbs each) and flatten with a spatula. Cook until brown, flip and cook other side (2-4 minutes per side). Poach the eggs and top each fritter with one poached egg. Serve immediately.

Mark's Favorite Green Beans

Ingredients

*1 pound green beans
1 heaping Tbs tahini
2 Tbs crushed peanuts
2 Tbs tamari
2 Tbs red wine vinegar
1 Tbs brown sugar
2 cloves garlic, minced
few drops spicy oil (optional)
a pinch of salt*

Directions

Lightly steam the green beans. Set aside, whisk tahini until smooth. Mix in remaining ingredients, including the beans.

(continued from "In the Share")
that the end is in sight.

I love eating this time of year, and I think one of the beauties about this week's farm fare is that most of it stands on its own so well. I would suggest not messing with it too much, as the boundless flavors should not be over dressed or over cooked.

In my humble opinion, the best way to eat a kohlrabi is to peel it and eat it raw. It is also delicious in a slaw with carrots. I also think that it is very difficult to do better than lightly steamed beets dressed with a little butter, salt and pepper. I would recommend the same treatment for your green beans (being careful not to overcook them). Remember that the Dragon Tongue beans in your bag will lose their color if cooked and I think are best raw.

The edamame in your share are green soy beans that are grown specifically for fresh eating. Simply boil the whole pods in water until they are just tender, drain and sprinkle with a bit of coarse sea salt. Serve them whole and pop the beans out of the pods one at a time, either with your fingers or your teeth.

On these sweltering nights, when the idea of turning on my stove or oven sounds , I have been often turning to tomato salads with balsamic dressing. Simply slice some ripe tomatoes and distribute them over a platter. Top the slices with thin slices of red onion, salt, pepper, and a dressing of 3Tbs olive oil, 1Tbs balsamic vinegar, and 1 Tbs maple syrup. Sprinkle coarsely chopped fresh basil over top and serve. We have also been eating our share of open faced tomato basil sandwiches with fresh mozzarella. Enjoy them while they are here!

Coming next week... more tomatoes and peppers and the first of the winter squash.

Troy Community Farm

Jake Hoeksema • 240-0409 • jake@troygardens.org