



In the Share

Cherry Tomatoes, 61-91 & EOW
Salsa OR Edamame, 1 bag
Onions, 1 bag
Carmen Sweet Peppers, 4 pieces
Red or Yellow Bell Pepper, 1 piece
Purple Carrots, 1 bunch
Belgian Greens, 1 bunch
Green OR Dragon Beans, 1 bag
Summer Squash, 3 pieces
Basil or Cilantro, 1 bunch
Garlic, 1 head
Tomatoes, as noted on signs

Members on the every week pickup list starting at 61 and continuing through 91 will get cherry tomatoes this week, as well as all the EOW green week members. EOW yellow week members will get them next week, and as long as the plants are still producing we will start the rotation again.

It is a choice between salsa or edamame this week. Neither crop produced enough to give to everyone, thus the choice. The tomatillos are near the end of their production so this will likely be the last time salsa appears in the shares. But we should see more edamame over the next few weeks as new varieties begin to mature.

Belgian greens are new this week. These are actually the tops of Brussels sprouts plants with a fancy name. We cut back the plants to encourage the sprouts to form, and we get to eat the tops as a side benefit. These greens are available for only two weeks when they are being cut. We tried them for the first time last year and were delighted with how delicious they are. In our taste tests they rated higher than both collards (which they resemble) and kale. Use them as you would use either of those greens. I like them sautéed with garlic, onions,

(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

Honey

This year has been our best honey year ever. Because of the warm winter and early spring, our bees were out flying much earlier than usual. It was a wonder to go outside in March and hear a buzz so loud that we had to look for the source. It was the neighbor's silver maple alive with bees gathering nectar and pollen from the blooms. The tree was literally buzzing with good news for the summer ahead.

Though it was rough going through the drought months, the hives were strong and managed to put up nine supers of honey. A super is a box of honeycomb that is used specifically for surplus honey. As beekeepers we add supers once the brood chamber (where the hive makes babies) is full of pollen, nectar, and plenty of bees. The supers give the hive extra space, but can also be easily removed when it is time to extract the honey.

We took off the supers at the end of July as the summer honey flow was ending. Then, this past weekend, Sarah and I enlisted Sierra, Lisa, and Pete to help us turn those nine supers of honeycomb into four five-gallon buckets of liquid gold.

The extraction process involves first removing the wax cappings that the bees use to seal the finished honey in the comb. Uncapping the combs with our capping scratchers is a somewhat delicate and very sticky process. Once the cappings are off, the dripping combs go into the extractor. Our extractor can hold three combs at a time. Once it is loaded we turn the handle to spin the comb as fast as we can. Much like in the spin cycle of a washing machine, the honey is pulled out of the comb by the centrifugal force and is caught by the outer wall of the extractor. As the comb empties, the honey drips down the sides of the extractor and gathers in the bottom. Next we open the gate on the extractor and the honey pours through two screens that filter out any wax bits and lands in a five-gallon bucket. The last step is to open the gate on the bucket and fill the glass jars with beautiful, sweet honey.

The final product is a one-pound jar of honey made by our bees using flowers from the farm, prairie, and woodland at and around Troy Gardens. Each year the flavor is slightly different depending on which of these flowers were especially productive. Typically there is plenty of basswood and clover in our honey, which makes for a very light, sweet flavor with some cinnamon overtones. Sarah and I have gathered and tasted honey from around the world and have only found one other that we like as much as our own. (That one was a lavender honey from France given to us by Sarah's dad.) Of course we are biased, but for us it is hard to beat honey produced pretty much in our own backyard!

Starting today, our farm honey will be available at the farmstand throughout the fall (until we sell out.) We know many of you love our honey already, and we are happy that we have enough for most everyone to try it this year.

Recipe

As a child I was never one for veggies, however in the last few years I have realized that your taste buds do change over time! One of my favorites is sweet bell peppers. I love eating them roasted, raw, baked, you name it, but my favorite is to stuff them with other summer favorites such as corn, tomatoes, hot peppers, onions and black beans. This recipe does take a little time to put everything together however it makes 6 peppers so you can feed a large family or have leftovers for the week.

Enjoy!

- Christine Welcher, Farm Intern

Stuffed Bell Peppers

6 large bell peppers
2 cups of chopped onions
1 clove of garlic
1 poblano pepper (or other hot pepper)
1 cup grated cheese (cheddar, colby, parmigiana, feta all work)
1 lb cooked sausage or tempeh
Couscous or rice (I vary the amount because I enjoy mostly veggies but it's a good way to stretch the ingredients)
Salt, black pepper, cumin, tumeric, paprika, and cayenne to taste

4 oz of mushrooms
1 large tomato
1/2 cup of corn
1 cup of black beans

1. Wash and cut the tops off the bell peppers about 3/4 to 1 inch from the top. Clean out the seeds and set aside. (You may need to cut a bit off the bottom to make them sit better in the baking pan as well.)
2. Cook rice or couscous as directed and set aside to cool.
3. Sauté onion, garlic, mushrooms, leftover pieces of bell peppers, corn and hot pepper until cooked. Place in a large bowl to cool a bit.
4. Sauté sausage or tempeh (or omit completely if you wish). Place in the bowl with the veggies to cool.
5. Stir in rice or couscous and add spices to taste. TIP: Cumin is a fairly strong flavor so start with a 1/2 tsp and add if you want more. The amount of spices will depend on how much rice/couscous is used and if you used meat or a meat alternative. Cut up the raw tomato and add to bowl. Stir ingredients together until well mixed.
6. Grease the bottom of a baking pan with your favorite oil and place peppers.
7. Fill the peppers as full and possible and top with extra cheese
8. Bake at 400 for 40-45 minutes or until peppers look roasted.
9. Serve warm!

This is how I make them however I've tried them with varying amounts of the various ingredients depending on what I have on hand and have always enjoyed them. You could make them more Italian by using basil and oregano, or more Mexican with the addition of cilantro. They even hold up well when individually wrapped in tin foil and grilled when camping! With this week's Carmens, I would cut them lengthwise and make stuffed pepper boats.



(continued from "In the Share")

olive oil, tamari, vinegar, and a few sesame seeds. Sarah and I eat greens this way at least once per week and delight in them every time.

Though you have had many carrots this year, these are the first purple carrots! The variety name is Purple Haze. They have purple skins but orange cores and unlike most other purple or red carrots, these are delicious. Though I have tried many various colored carrot varieties, I always drop them after a year or two because they can never hold up to the flavor of the orange carrots. But Purple Haze is finally a keeper. I hope you enjoy them.

The sweet peppers really picked up their production this week. There are four lovely Carmens for everyone as well as one red or yellow bell. For a while there I thought this crop might never come in, but here it is at last. I especially love roasted red peppers. We plan to light the grill this weekend and roast peppers and eggplant for winter storage. Both these crops freeze easily after roasting and peeling. And they are truly delicious in the middle of winter when we are sick of eating squash and potatoes.

Next week: the first winter squash?! more peppers, Belgian greens, and tomatoes, also scallions, garlic, and perhaps more edamame.

Haiku

Smelling the buckwheat,
a bee alights on the bloom.
Sweetness from such stench.



Everyone at the farm wrote a haiku for farm intern Paige's 21st birthday last week. Mine was about the fall honey flow. Once we take the supers off the hives, the bees usually put up buckwheat for their own winter stores. As anyone who has walked by the farm knows, blooming buckwheat smells like manure.

Troy Community Farm

Claire Strader • 442-6760 • claire@troygardens.org