



In the Share

Cherry Tomatoes, members 46-66
Carnival Squash, 1 piece
Green Beans, 1 bag
Carmen Sweet Peppers, 2 pieces
Red or Yellow Bell Pepper, 1 piece
Edamame, 1 bag
Leeks, 2 pieces
Beets, 1 bunch
Choice of Dragon or Romano, 1 bag
Lettuce, 1 head
Garlic, 1 head
Tomatoes, as noted on signs

The cherry tomatoes slowed down a bit this week, so it will take us a few more weeks to get through the entire rotation. If you are on the pickup list from number 46 to 66, please remember to ask us for your cherry tomatoes today.

The cherries were the only tomato to slow down though. We harvested close to another ton, and did not even finish harvesting all the beds. As we packed them up, I considered putting a sign on the tomato crates at pickup that said "take as many as you want." But I decided against it because I feared you might take fewer than we have to give! Though still more blemished than we would like, all the tomatoes have great flavor this year. One of the side effects of drought is that the flavor is not diluted by extra water. You will have many varieties in your share today including a number of heirlooms, so you will get to judge for yourself.

Our intern Eric sent the tomato recipe on the back of the newsletter. He raved about it even as we were in the midst of the tomato harvest, so I figured it had to be good. I made it for dinner last night with a side of steamed green beans and it was wonderful. The tomatoes concentrate to a lovely

(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

Tomato Bosses, 2012

Every season there comes a week when the tomatoes take charge. One week the plants are full of promising green orbs. The next there is red dripping from very vine, demanding attention, threatening to drop to the ground and burst into a messy soup if ignored. This was the week the tomatoes transformed themselves from just another crop to the boss of us all.

I remember back in July when the very first fruits started to ripen. Jake and I looked out at the field and groaned and hung our heads, suddenly heavy with the knowledge of what was to come. The interns looked at us and wondered at our reaction. At the time they were still innocent of the demands of the tomato kingdom. Now that the joy of the first ripe fruit is past, they are beginning to understand how ruthless the tomato bosses can be. We harvest and haul and sort, careful not to slip on the fallen fruits that have started to rot and stink in the aisles, careful not to carry disease from the early varieties to the late ones. We work hard to keep the plants happy and to keep the fruits coming even though they have already filled all our crates and taxed our patience with their all-or-nothing ripening habit.

I wasn't really sure it would happen this year. The plants were off to an earlier than usual start, and for reasons still unknown refused to produce much unblemished fruits. It was slow and steady and unusually manageable. For a while there I was wondering if we would ever reach the point of being overwhelmed with tomatoes. It finally happened on Wednesday.

We were late to get started on the tomatoes because we had a small crew and extra work packing orders to pack for the Good Food Garden Party this weekend. So, we knew it was going to be rough. But when the crew pulled in 20 buckets of tomatoes from the first bed they harvested, a bed that produced 12 buckets the week before, we understood the full magnitude of what was ahead. Let's just say, we did not finish by quitting time...

The good and bad news is that the tomatoes will one day die. Whether from disease or frost, they will die. There is no way to stop this natural process. It happens every year. Every year we try to hold it off, and every year we cannot help but smile when the tomatoes are finally taken down by forces more powerful than they, and we are freed from their relentless harvest schedule.

Meanwhile we pick and haul and sort and pack, and we are grateful for this bounty, as demanding as it is. No matter how many we put up for use later in the year, nothing can compare to the fresh tomatoes of summer. They are well worth the stink of fallen fruit clinging to our shoes. So, we conform ourselves to the needs of this crop and enjoy its beauty and flavor as long as it commands us.

Recipe

I consider myself somewhat of a tomato fiend. It's hard for me to bring myself, in anything but a year of huge abundance, to eat tomatoes any way other than sliced with a bit of salt. But when I do, this is one of my favorite things to make. It's best with several different types of tomatoes if you have them.

- Eric Udelhofen, Farm Intern

Tomato Galette

from *Harvest to Heat* by Naomi Pomeroy

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 tsp coarse salt plus more for tomatoes
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 stick butter chilled (I cut this by as much as half)
- 1/2 cup crème fraiche, cream, or half and half
- 1 pint of tomatoes sliced
- 1/3 pound of cheese

1. Dough: combine flour, salt, baking powder and butter pieces (I usually grate frozen or chilled butter). Mix until butter is incorporated. Mix in cream. Turn onto a plate and cover to chill for 2 hours (this step is skippable if you're in a rush).
2. Put the tomatoes in a colander and sprinkle with salt. This draws out extra water. Let drain for a while.
3. Heat oven to 425. Dust a work surface with flour, and roll dough into 12 inch round about 1/8 inch thick. Dust flour under dough if it sticks.
4. Slide a baking sheet under the dough (rimmed is harder to slide under, but fewer juices seep over and burn on the bottom of the oven). Leaving a 3-inch border, scatter cheese on top of dough and then arrange tomatoes evenly over the cheese. Fold the sides over the tomatoes, pleating as you go around.
5. Bake until golden brown, 30-40 minutes. I like it better on the more done side.

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sweetness that is almost as good a eating them raw. The next time I make it, I think I will try adding some thyme to the dough or else some basil to the tomatoes. The recipe is so simple as to invite creative modifications!

The leeks are a new item this week. They are tall and thick and some the best leeks we have ever grown. Do not hesitate to use these up because there will be more coming. Originally, I had wanted to send potatoes with the first leeks, but alas the drought seems to have had a serious negative effect on our potatoes. We harvested about 200 feet to find only 88 pounds. Thankfully we still have more potatoes to harvest, and I expect we will be able to deliver them with the next batch of leeks, but for now I hear tell that leeks and tomatoes go together well in a late summer salad (more on that below). Of course, you can also use leeks in place of onions in most dishes.

The lettuce that is back this week could form the base of that late summer salad I mentioned. This is what I would do: Chop a variety of tomatoes into small wedges, to fill about 2 cups. Wash and thinly slice about half of a leek to fill about 1 cup. Rip the lettuce into bite-sized pieces. Toss all vegetables together with olive oil, salt, pepper, and a bit of thyme, basil, oregano, or cilantro. It is quick and yummy and requires no fire. I love salad, so I am very happy to see the return of lettuce for the fall.

The carnival squash is also a sign of the changing season. This squash is very similar to the delicata. I steam or bake it and eat it skin and all just as I would a delicata. Of course, its shape is just perfect for stuffing, if you are so inclined.

This late summer crop of beans and edamame is outrageously good. I am a lover of these vegetables because of how easy they are to prepare in addition to their flavor. You all have green beans today and then also a choice between Dragon Tongue or Romano beans. In my kitchen we steam or sauté the green beans and we eat the Dragon Tongue and Romano raw in salads. Of course we always cook the edamame and serve it with salt on the pod. Then you get a bit of salty flavor when you pull the beans from the pods with your teeth.

These legumes seem to be in their peak right now, which means they will drop off quickly in the next couple of weeks. I expect one more delivery of green beans and also another of edamame. This week will be the last for Dragon Tongue and/or Romano beans. Though we have had a bumper crop, I will still be sad to see them go.

Next week: Salad mix, onions, tomatoes, and possibly green cabbage, plus more edamame, peppers, and possibly the last of the green beans.

Larry Meiller Show on WPR

Garden Talk on WI Public Radio

Friday, September 7th

11:00 am to 12:30 pm

Ideas Network 90.9 FM

Claire Strader and Megan Cain of Madison FarmWorks will talk about our urban garden design, installation, and education business. They will also answer garden questions from callers.

Troy Community Farm

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