



In the Bag

Shell Peas, 1 bag
Broccoli/Cauliflower, 1 bag
Green Cabbage, 1 head
Snow Peas, 1 bag
Sugar Snap Peas, 1 bag
Garlic Scapes, 1 bunch
Salad Mix or Lettuce, 1 bag or head
Sprouts, 1 bag
Basil, 1 bunch

When we harvested your vegetables last week, the harvest crew was so happy with the contents that we wondered if that share would possibly be the best one of the season. A short 7 days later, and we are having the same thought about this share. Never have we been able to deliver all three types of peas in one week before. And another pound of broccoli and cauliflower. And basil. And salad. Yummy!

The three types of peas will be the most confusing part of this share. They can be a bit difficult to tell apart. Here are some clues:

Shell Peas – These are in the biggest, heaviest bag, and are the only pea in your share without an edible pod. If you make the mistake of biting into one, you will know it right away by the toughness of the pod. Instead, crack them open and slip the peas out with your finger. I believe these peas to be the very sweetest of all peas, and well worth the work. Add them raw to salad or lightly steam them and serve with butter or olive oil.

Snow Peas – These are the flattest and widest peas in your share. Most of you will have the paler green sumo pea, which is surprisingly sweet. This is my favorite snow pea and is very hard to find in the seed catalogues, so we have been saving our own seed for this variety for the past three years. It keeps getting better! Others of you will have the darker green Oregon giant. I'm pleased that this more standard variety is performing quite well next to the sumo this year, but it is a little less sweet.

(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

A New Cabbage Harvest

As some of you may recall, the week that we harvested cabbage last year was the week I despaired of ever filling your bags to overflowing for the season. We had not had any rain in a month; we had no irrigation; it was hot; and the vegetables were suffering even more than my morale. I think that particular harvest was my very lowest point as the farmer for Troy. Maggie and I were both reminded of that despair during this week's cabbage harvest and were filled with gratitude that this season is shaping up so very differently.

Every farmer's wish is for one inch of rain falling gently on a Friday or Saturday night every week. While the timing has not always been exactly on, we have gotten that precious one-inch-per-week most weeks in May and June. That rain has made all the difference. While the potato plants were shriveled sticks, completely devoured by potato beetles and heat last year, they are luscious, flowering bushes full of health, vitality, (and soon potatoes) this year. While our onions never amounted to more than scallions last year, they are forming beautiful juicy bulbs this year. The broccoli is bigger and yummiest. The kale is lovely and full. The tomatoes have green fruits the size of overstuffed golf balls. And on and on with the good news. Maggie is wondering if this will be the season we have been hoping for. But I'm still holding onto my guarded optimism, for now.

Assuming the rain will continue to fall as it has been, not too much, not too little; and the weather stays warm as it has been, not too hot, not too cold; and the hail and wind bypass the farm as they have so far, our only problem will be the weeds. They are thick this year! Conditions good for vegetables are the same conditions that are good for weeds. Luckily, weeding is my very favorite farm job. Not only do I like the simplicity and satisfaction of it, I also like that it is the only task that I do not have to plan and prepare for ahead of time. No hauling plants from my backyard to the farm for transplanting, no deciding what to harvest and instructing each team, no purchasing trellising or mulching supplies. All we need are our hoes and a good attitude. And who could lack that in this beautiful weather surrounded by flowers and food? Those who hate to weed I suppose.

I think I will have more luck converting the farm team to the love of weeding than I would have convincing the vegetables to grow in the dry ground, so I'll take this season, delivering your cabbage with one hand and wielding my hoe in the other.

(continued from "In the Bag")

Sugar Snap Peas – These can be found in the only pea bag you have left. They are more similar to the shell peas than the snow, but are shorter and have a thick, juicy pod. These peas are the current favorite among pea lovers and you will see why when you taste one.

All these peas can be eaten raw as a snack or in a salad. The snow peas and sugar snaps also shine as raw dipping vegetables or cooked in stir fry. All three can also be served on their own just slightly steamed.

Green cabbage is a new item in your share. My favorite, and an exceedingly simple, way to eat cabbage is with rice, salt, and butter. I just cook the rice with some extra water and throw in the chopped cabbage to steam at the end when the rice is almost done. Then I stir in butter and salt and eat it all up. My very favorite food growing up was my grandmother's (or my mom's depending on who I was eating with, they were a bit competitive on this point) stuffed cabbage. My mom made hers with tomato sauce which was delicious, but my grandma just boiled hers in water. I loved eating my grandma's with salt and butter. And I still love cabbage with salt and butter today.

We have had a hard time harvesting **salad mix** this year. It is in our most weedy part of the farm, but we have a taste of it for most of you today. You can add it to your salad bowl right out of the bag. Or for those of you that prefer the **lettuce**, we have some more lovely butterheads this week. I think we have another two or three weeks of lettuce or salad mix to come, before the summer heat coaxes it all to bolt. (Bolting means to go to seed, and usually also means the vegetable becomes bitter.)

For me **basil** is the taste and smell of summer. While this week's bunch will not make much pesto, it will be plenty to add to your sandwiches for the week. Or you can serve it with goat cheese and a baguette next to another huge salad of lettuce, spouts, and peas. I had my first basil of the season in that very meal just last week. I was helping a friend of mine prune the bolting heads off of the basil in her garden and throwing them on the ground just like I would do at the farm. Luckily, she reminded me that I was not at the farm pruning hundreds of plants but in a garden where those little heads were precious and few. We picked those delicious leaves back up and brought them home and made a meal.

Next week there should be one more delivery of peas, and then that will likely be it for the year. Pea season is short and sweet. We will also have more lettuce and kale and kohlrabi. Fennel will be the new and exciting item for the week.

Reminders

Farm Share - Late Pick-Up

If you miss your share pick-up at the farm during the usual hours from 4:00 to 6:30 PM on Thursdays, you can stop by my porch at 1814 Sheridan Drive (do not be led astray to nearby Sheridan Street). Unclaimed shares will be on my step from 7:00 PM on Thursday until 6:00 AM on Friday. Be sure to grab a newsletter with your bag! At 6:00 AM (and you know I am very prompt!) any remaining shares are repacked for fellow CSA member Shirley Jonas to use in the free Friday meal at St. Mark's Lutheran Church.

Regent Share – Late Pick-Up

There is no official way to pick up your share late from the store. But if you cannot make it between 5:00 and 8:30 PM, you could call and make arrangements directly with the co-op staff.

CSA Flower and Herb Garden

The CSA garden is officially open! Stop by when you pick up your share or anytime during the week (especially for the Regent Street pick-up members) and harvest a bouquet or herbs. If you don't know your way, take a map from the entrance kiosk to guide you to the farm. There are clippers and rubber bands in a bucket in the flower garden, which is right inside the farm gate. Please remember to keep the gate closed! Humans are welcome, but the deer are not!

Recipe

Fresh Pea Pod, Broccoli, and Rice Salad

From MACSAC's Asparagus to Zucchini Cookbook and Crystal Lake Gardens

1 package (6 ounces) long-grain and wild rice mix
1 1/2 cups chopped broccoli
1/3 cup red or green onions
1/4 cup bottled clear Italian salad dressing

1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon lemon pepper
1 1/2 cups snow and/or sugar snap peas, strings removed
1/3 cup slivered almonds

Prepare rice mix according to package directions. Cool slightly. Steam broccoli until crunchy-tender. Toss with remaining ingredients and refrigerate 2 to 24 hours.

Troy Community Farm

Claire Strader

1814 Sheridan Drive, Madison, WI 54704

Phone: 442-6760 e-mail: farmer@troygardens.org

Send newsletter comments, suggestions, and recipe ideas to:
Liz and Marcia Campbell, Editors
mcatoncampbell@gmail.com