



In the Bag

Red or Green Cabbage, 1 head
Summer Squash or Beans, 1 bag
Radishes, 1 bunch
Lettuce, 1 head
Kale, 1 bunch
Sprouts, 1 bag
Basil, 1 bunch

When you pick up your bag of summer squash or beans, I can hear you thinking in your head "is she joking? There is so little in here." I wish I were joking, but it is true that the harvest on these items is just starting, slowly. You will have more of both of these favorites in the near future, but for now you only have a taste, an appetite-whetting taste.

The **green beans** are a variety called Maxibel and are my long-standing favorite. They are an "haricot vert" or French filet type which is bred to be long and slender, extremely tender, and exceedingly flavorful. My experience has been that once folks taste these, there is no going back to standard green beans. The **yellow bean** variety is Rocdor. While my favorite has always been green over yellow, these beans caused me to question that conviction. I found them to be delicious and almost buttery raw from the plant. Steam up either of these beans and serve them with or without butter.

Your **summer squash** bag will be some combination of zucchini (straight and green), patty pan (round and yellow), and yellow squash (slightly bulbed and yellow). Honestly, I am not yet a real summer squash connoisseur, so I do not taste a big difference among these varieties. However, I know just what I would do with these this week. Sauté a little onion in olive oil, then add the sliced squash cooking until tender. Finally top with fresh, chopped basil. Serve with pasta and pesto (recipe on the back). Delicious!

(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

Bring on the Rain

We weeded the sweet potatoes on Monday morning. As we pulled off and rolled up the remay (a covering that keeps the plants warm and protected), we became coated with the dry, dusty dirt flying free from the edges. Then I took the walk-behind tiller out to take down the weeds between the beds. I have to say the tiller weeding technique was not especially effective at uprooting the weeds that day because the ground was so dry and hard. But it was effective at covering me with one more layer of dirt. It had been two weeks since the last rain. On Monday I thought I would be writing to you today asking you to please set aside your more rational, scientific natures and to please do all could to burst the clouds: wash the car, leave the laundry on the line, bike to work without raingear in your pack, etc.

Then on Tuesday it rained. It rained a full two inches at the farm. One inch for last week. And one inch for this week. We are back on track with our perfect weather season. I think I owe it all to the Farm and Field students.

Our Farm and Field program employs 12 to 16 high school youth each summer to work on the farm and in the natural areas while learning about environmental leadership, organic agriculture, natural areas restoration, and gaining important job skills. Though it was cool, overcast, and even drizzly by the time they got to work at 8:00 AM on Tuesday morning, hardly a one of them brought rain gear or even warm clothes. That was all it took to turn the "chance of rain" into a reality. While they suffered in the cold and wet, the farm soil drank in the slow, steady rain with a great thirst.

I am happy to thank the farm crew for bringing on the rain, but I am even more pleased to be able to thank them for how they handled their own suffering on that day. In the cold rain, we picked the beans that you have in your share, weeded an additional planting of beans, and took down all 30 beds of the peas that have been filling your shares for the past few weeks. It was everything I wanted to get done that morning. When the crew was soaked to the bone and starting to lag at about 10:00 AM, I announced that if we could just finish taking down the pea trellis we could be done for the day. Wet as they were, they redoubled their efforts, started making jokes about the squish in their shoes, and finished the job a whole hour before our usual quitting time. Everyone was happy to go home and get dry and proud that they had finished the job.

Maybe the students will remember to bring rain gear and warm clothes from now on. If they do, I hope the sky no longer demands their well-borne suffering to bring on the rain.

(continued from "In the Bag")

You have your choice of **red or green cabbage** this week, but most of you will get red (because we did not have much green left in the field.) Aside from being another one of those gorgeous super-model vegetables (like the purple kohlrabi and the fennel), red cabbage is an especially good addition to salad. Just chop it raw and add it in. All cabbage keeps well in the fridge, so store any unused portions in a plastic bag until it is time for another salad. One quick warning about red cabbage: it will turn an unusual blue color when cooked. It's not bad, just unusual.

Kale is back this week. Today you have your choice of the more typical curly green kale, the very similar but more colorful curly red kale, or the especially tender red Russian kale. I love them all! I am especially proud to offer you the red Russian this late in the year, however. Usually the flea beetles (tiny black beetles that jump like fleas and eat millions of tiny holes) have completely devoured this delicious variety by now. I saw *Measure for Measure* at American Players Theater this past Friday, and as part of our elegant pre-show picnic, I was served a yummy kale salad (made with red Russian kale) that I could not get enough of. My friend told me she got it from MACSAC's *A to Z* cookbook, so I included the recipe below. This may be the recipe to finally convert those of you who still doubt the delicious potential of kale!

Lettuce, radishes, sprouts, and basil are all back this week as well. You can eat more of those cooling summer salads for another week. And the basil bunch this time is definitely big enough for pesto. Next week look for more fennel, beans, and maybe beets.

Upcoming Events

Savor the Summer Festival

Saturday, 12 August
10:00 am to 4:00 pm
at Troy Gardens

Mark your calendars now for this annual Troy Gardens event! This year we have a Hmong and a huitlacoche cooking demonstration; workshops on dried flower arranging, uses of native plants, mosaic art in the garden, and creating birdhouses; plenty of kid's activities (including a hay ride around the land!); and a full day of live music (including Madison's favorite band, the Kissers!). This will be a great day to spend on the land with friends, family, and lots of fun. Bring a blanket, purchase a meal or a snack from the food tent, take a walk, and savor the summer.

Recipes

Sesame Kale Salad

From Doug Wubben and MACSAC's From Asparagus to Zucchini Cookbook

1 pound fresh kale (or chard, spinach, or other greens)	1 clove garlic, minced
2 tablespoons soy sauce	2 teaspoons honey (or other sweetener)
2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil	1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds	dash of black or ground red pepper, or more to taste

Separate kale leave from stems. Chop stems and greens. Steam stems a couple of minutes, then add the greens and steam until just tender. Drain. Let kale cool enough to handle. Squeeze out as much water as possible. Place in a serving bowl. Mix the remaining ingredients in another bowl; add the greens. Mix, chill, and serve. Makes 4-6 servings.

Basil Pesto

This is the classic use for basil. You can serve pesto over pasta, spread it on bread with tomatoes and lettuce as a sandwich, or use it as a sauce for pizza. If you still have some left, you can freeze it in an ice cube tray and serve it in the winter when you are aching for a taste of summer.

3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil	1/4 teaspoon salt
1 garlic clove	1/3 cup freshly grated Parmesan
1 tablespoon pine nuts or walnut pieces	4 cups fresh basil leaves

Place all ingredients except basil leaves in a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth, then add basil, a handful at a time, blending until all the basil is incorporated and pesto is somewhat smooth. Makes about 1 cup.

Troy Community Farm

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