

In the Bag

Carnival Squash, 2 pieces
Red or Yellow Onions, 1 bag
Salsa Basket, 1 bag
Beets, 1 bunch
Green Bell Peppers, 2 pieces
Italian Frying Peppers, 3 pieces
Sprouts, 1 bag
Basil or Cilantro, 1 bunch
Garlic, 1 bulb
Slicing Tomatoes, TBA

Honestly, Jake and I were a bit worried about how the share would come together this week. On Monday we had no idea that there were so many beautiful peppers out there or that some of those tomatoes we intended to deliver to you green still had the potential to ripen. But once we got to harvesting, we were delighted to see so much food in one place. It's true that the individual vegetables may not go together as obviously as last week's selections did, but still we have plenty to work with!

The peppers are my favorite part of this share. I would rather that they were fully ripened to red, but with the frost that was predicted for Tuesday night and the generally colder temperatures these days, the peppers just are not turning. So, we harvested the plants hard, thinking that green peppers are way better than frostbitten peppers! I included a recipe for dhal on the back of the newsletter thinking those two bell peppers (the fat, blocky ones) and a few tomatoes stuffed with dhal and served with rice would be an excellent meal. I myself would save the Italian frying peppers for use on a pizza this weekend (along with onions, garlic, tomatoes and basil) but you could stuff them as well. I hear they are great when stuffed with the stems and seeds intact, as the seeds give these

(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

A Lovely Afternoon

It's only the hardy few mosquitoes that have survived this week. On Monday they could not fly in the rain. On Tuesday they had the wind to knock them down. And by Wednesday the cold of the night before had done most of them in. Should I be embarrassed by my delight at this mosquito massacre? I'm not. I had a genuinely lovely afternoon on Wednesday, in the cool air, the warm sun, and the clear vision that is possible only when not wearing a mosquito net.

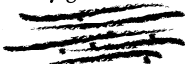
The afternoon was lovely on the merits of its own climactic conditions, but that loveliness was even more pronounced when compared to the days and hours that came before. While the mosquitoes were not a problem this week, the cold and wet were.

It rained all day on Monday. A slow, cold, miserable rain that seemed like it could stop at any moment, but never did. Jake and I were suited up in our head-to-toe rain gear all day. We harvested summer squash, tomatillos, and onions while the rain beat constantly on our backs, dripped off our hoods, and seeped its way into the cuffs at our wrists and ankles. As noon approached, we discussed going to Jake's house for tea and a warm up but worried that we would get caught in the comfort and never make it back out. So we pushed through until we had finished what had to be done and then we quit early. By that point we were covered in mud from crawling around harvesting onions and had to be sprayed down with the hose before getting in the truck to leave. I took a hot shower when I got home and was truly grateful to be inside for the rest of the day.

We don't start work until 8:00 AM on Tuesdays (we start at 7:00 AM every other day), so there was some extra time for the farm to warm up and dry off before we got out to harvest the peppers and tomatoes for your shares. The wind kept the mosquitoes down and dried the herbs that we had to harvest for wholesale. And the sun eventually came out to warm us up as well. Tuesday was a good day. Though the water from the hose at the wash shed did feel ominously warm. In reality the water from the hose is a constant temperature. Isn't it about 55 degrees when it comes out of the ground? So, when it feels warm on my hands I know that my hands are cold. I wondered how that would go on Wednesday when we spend most of the day in the wet, shady wash shed.

Sure enough Wednesday morning was cold and covered in heavy dew. While it did not frost on Tuesday night as predicted, it did get down into the 30's. By the time we got to the farm it was only in the low 40's. The crew was covered in hats and sweaters and rain gear and still we shivered. That hose water was feeling like a hot spring on our cold hands while bunching beets. There was talk of the need of new gloves and new waterproof boots all morning. But the shares were all harvested eventually, and the morning did pass.

It passed on to a lovely afternoon, warm and sunny and productive. We finished harvesting all the onions (small and sad as they are) and also took a few more forkfuls of potatoes out of the ground. Now it feels like fall when these swings from cold to lovely and back again are oh so common.



Recipes

It's a stuffing theme! This dhal recipe is great stuffed in tomatoes and peppers and served on a bed of rice. I would cut the tops off the tomatoes and scoop the insides right into the dhal as it boils. For the peppers, I would slice them in half from top to bottom and discard the seeds. Then blanch the peppers for a minute or two in boiling water to soften them just a bit. Stuff both the tomatoes and peppers with the dhal and bake in the oven until the tomatoes soften, maybe 10 minutes. Serve the stuffed vegetables on a bed of basmati rice and garnish with chopped, fresh cilantro or basil.

Basic Indian Dahl

From Extending the Table by Joetta Handrich Schlabach

Fry in 2 Tbs. oil until golden brown:

1 onion, finely diced	1 ½ tsp. cumin
1-2 cloves garlic, minced	1 tsp. ginger root, finely grated
1 tsp. turmeric	¼ tsp. ground cardamom

Add:

1 cup dried red lentils	1 tsp. salt
3 cups hot water	

Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer until lentils are tender, about 45 minutes. Remove cover and simmer over very low heat, stirring frequently, about 20 more minutes, until lentils are mushy and thick, about the consistency of refried beans. Garnish with onions, thinly sliced and browned, or a squeeze of lemon. Serve with rice.

Butternut Squash with Whole Wheat, Wild Rice, and Onion Stuffing

From N. Atlas, Vegetarian Gourmet, Fall 1996

I could not find my very favorite squash-stuffing recipe, but this one is close. I would modify it to include a few stalks of celery to be sautéed with the onion and garlic. I love celery in stuffing! Also, I would use this recipe with carnival and delicata squash as well as butternut. Maybe cut the quantities in half for the two carnivals you have in your share today.

2-4 butternut squash (about 4 pounds)	
¾ cup raw wild rice, rinsed	1 Tbs. sesame seeds
3 cups chopped onion	½ tsp. dried sage
1 clove garlic, minced	½ tsp. dried thyme
2 Tbs. canola oil	salt to taste
3 cups whole wheat bread cubes	1 cup orange juice

Halve squashes, remove seeds and place cut side up in shallow baking dish. Cover and bake in 350-degree oven until easily pierced with a knife but still firm, about 50 minutes. Cool. Meanwhile, bring 2 cups water to boil in a saucepan. Stir in rice, reduce heat and cover; simmer until water is absorbed, about 40 minutes. Scoop pulp from squash, leaving ½-inch-thick shells. Chop pulp; place in a large bowl. Sauté onion and garlic in oil in a skillet until golden, 4-5 minutes. Stir cooked rice, onion mixture and remaining ingredients into squash pulp. Spoon into shells and place in foil-lined baking dish. Cover and bake until heated through, about 20 minutes.

(continued from "In the Bag")

peppers their characteristic flavor and sweet taste. I have never tried it, but if that pizza does not happen, I will.

If you cannot think of enough ways to use up all the peppers, freeze them! Freezing peppers is the easiest food preservation you will ever do. Just cut them up, put them in a freezer bag, and put them in the freezer. In the winter they are great in pasta sauce, on pizza, or in any cooked dish.

The tomatoes are the biggest surprise of the week. We were planning on harvesting green tomatoes for you, but when we got out there, we saw that there were enough red ones to include in your share. Okay, today they may still be pink, but give them a few days on the counter in your warm kitchen and they will be red eventually. I know they will not be as good as they were in the height of the summer, but after two weeks without tomatoes, I'm hoping you will not notice the difference too much!

The winter squash in your share this week is called carnival. It is my favorite squash to grow. I like the size and color and shape, and I love that these taste much like a delicata but keep so much longer. When I don't want to go to all the trouble of stuffing them as in the recipe on the left, I will simply cut them in half, scoop out the seeds, and bake them with a pat of butter or a drizzle of olive oil and some fresh thyme or rosemary in the empty seed cavity.

Another yummy way to eat the squash would be to roast them with the beets, onions, and garlic. Honestly I don't even peel the carnivals when I have them this way. I just scoop out the seeds and cube them right along with the beets (and maybe some potatoes and parsnips if I have them on hand). Then I toss the vegetables with sliced onions, whole garlic cloves, olive oil, salt, pepper and lots of fresh or dried thyme. Lay out the mixture on a cookie sheet and roast until the vegetables are tender and their edges are just slightly crispy. The carnival skin will soften in the process. I find it quite palatable and much less trouble than peeling this ridged squash!

This salsa basket is likely the last for the year. There is a slight chance there will be another in a couple of weeks, but with the cool weather, the chance is very slight.

And spouts are back! You will see more of these on and off over the next few weeks. I eat them on top of anything, even stuffed peppers and squash!

Troy Community Farm

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