

In the Bag

Butternut Squash, 1 piece
Blue & Yellow Potatoes, 1 bag
Salsa Basket, 1 bag
Leeks, 1 bunch
Beets, 1 bunch
Sweet Peppers, 2 pieces
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch
Garlic, 2 small bulbs
Slicing Tomatoes, TBA

Oh the beautiful butternut. I know it is a standard, unremarkable vegetable, but my fondness for the butternut has grown considerably over the last few years. Not only is it a reliable keeper (just right there looking pretty on the kitchen counter), but it also has a great flavor that is perfectly at home in dishes as varied as butternut parmesan soup, squash curry, and even "pumpkin" pie. All those disparaging things I said about the acorn last week only become more true when compared to the butternut.

Here's a tip I learned a few years ago on how to peel this very hard vegetable: First, cut off the relatively straight top part from the bulb at the bottom. Then stand each part up on cutting board, cut side down. Use a sharp knife to peel straight down the side around the entire circumference. It's not a fun job no matter how you do it, but this method is definitely the safest and most efficient I have found. After it is peeled use it for soup or curry or whatever you like. If you want to use it for pie (as a replacement for pumpkin in any recipe), just bake it in the shell and then scoop out the flesh. That's the easiest way!

You have both blue and yellow potatoes today. You are probably familiar with the moist, waxy yellow potatoes. The blues are quite a bit drier and they have that stunning blue color (you will see it
(continued on the back)

Claire's Comments

Preservation Competition

Not too many people know this about me (unless we have played any kind of board or card game) but I have a competitive streak. Honestly, I don't think it's that I need to win so much (though that is fun!). What I really like is all the egging on and verbal sparring that goes along with any game played with passion. Even losing is fun as long as you can get in a few well-timed witticisms while you go down. Now that you know my dark secret, I have to admit that Jake and I have taken this playful competition thing a bit out of the realm of games. We're talking food preservation.

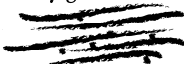
Back in June when we had more broccoli than any one farm knew what to do with (remember?!), Sarah and I invested in some ziplock bags and started freezing. We also started a list of what we had preserved, how many, and when, that we posted on our refrigerator. Jake and his wife Kat did the same. Most every Monday since then Jake and I have compared notes on what we canned or froze or dried or over the weekend. When I heard he had put up several gallons of frozen sweet peppers, I claimed all the "farmer food"* peppers I could respectfully lay my hands on and tried to match him. When he read Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* and found out how many jars of tomatoes she had preserved for the winter, Jake was out there stripping all the romas off the vines we had abandoned in an effort to catch up with her. We compared techniques, quantities, recipes, and in some cases we even traded jars in order to compare the finished product. It's been a friendly competition over all.

A few days ago I transferred Sarah and my hand-written list of preserved foods to an excel spreadsheet where I can track how many bags of pesto and jars of salsa we use this winter. Both Sarah and Jake took great pleasure in calling me a nerd, but I stand firm that this information will be useful next year when we start to preserve the next bumper crop of what-have-you. Competition aside, I don't want to put up more than we can use in a year. It's a lot of work and it takes time.

Sarah and I have just two more crops to preserve. On Saturday Maggie (many of you know Maggie from the farm!) is coming over and we are pickling a few jars of cylindra beets. These are a new variety that I decided to grow specifically for pickling. I'm excited to see how they work. The last crop is greens. After the CSA weeks are over, Sarah and I will strip off the last of the kale and chard leaves, steam them, and put them in our freezer. I know for sure that we used 26 bags of greens last winter - one for every week that there is no kale in the field. We love greens, so we may even try for a few more this year. Then the preservation competition is over, and we get to eat it all up!

If you are looking for some easy foods to get you past the CSA season and on into the winter a bit, take a look at the storage share option on the back. We have some extras that are easy to store AND some of those cylindra beets that you could pickle!

*"Farmer food" is the part of the harvest that is blemished or old or in some way unfit for CSA shares or market. All the farmers and farm workers have access to farmer food - which in many cases has been quite plentiful this year - for eating or preserving.



Recipe

This week's recipe comes from Heidi Shatz. You'll remember her from the Potato Leek Soup recipe. Here's what she has to say about beets, including several options for cooking the beets before making the recipe. I should note that Heidi lives in a small cabin in the UP without the benefit of running water or electricity – thus her fondness for fall beets roasted in the wood stove!

The Best Beet Recipe Ever!

Adapted by Heidi Shatz from *Perfect Vegetables* by Cooks Illustrated

- 4 Tbs. butter (olive oil does not taste the same, but you can try)
- ½ inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and cut into sticks (use more if you love ginger)
- 1 Tbs. chives, chopped (green onions work well, too)
- 1 bunch beets (remove and rinse the greens and cut them into strips)

If you have the time, roasted beets are the most fantastic food ever to hit the palate. I like to throw my beets in my woodstove wrapped in aluminum foil, or on the grill when it is hot outside, or finally in a 400-degree oven when neither of the first two options are possible. It takes about an hour, but is well worth the wonderful flavors that are brought out by roasting. If there is no time for roasting, boiling is faster. Whichever way you choose, cook them until you can stick a knife, skewer, or anything pokey through them.

When the beets are cooked, their skins will slip off easily. Do so, and then dice them into beautiful red cubes of goodness.

Meanwhile, melt the butter in a skillet over medium heat. When the foaming subsides, add the ginger and cook until crisp, 3-4 minutes. The ginger should look golden. Add the beet greens and wilt. Finally add the chives and beets with some salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

I love this over rice as a main dish. It also makes a lovely side dish.

(continued from the front)

when you wash them) all the way through. Jake says that his favorite way to eat blue potatoes is in potato salad. If you use both the blues and yellows, the contrast makes for a very pretty dish. Or you can just roast them with your beets, leeks, peeled butternut squash cubes, peeled garlic cloves, and sweet peppers. Toss all the vegetables in a little olive oil with salt, pepper, and your favorite herb (I prefer thyme or rosemary myself). Then roast it all on a cookie sheet until the vegetables are cooked through and starting to crisp in the hot oil. This dish is one of my favorites for fall. It is so easy and so yummy.

I think this time really will be the last salsa basket. While the tomatillos are still producing somewhat, the hot peppers are finally giving in. This may be the last week for tomatoes also. They had quite a resurrection a few weeks ago, but it looks like their second life will be ending soon as well. Instead we will have Brussels sprouts and pumpkins next week, along with some truly lovely sweet potatoes. It think this may be the best sweet potato year we have had in a while. Not only are many of the tubers full and fat, somehow the mice have not discovered them yet. Usually we lose a high proportion of the crop to mice who love to dig under the mulch and fill up on so much sweetness. This year they left them for us!

Storage Share Option

If you are feeling the preserving bug the way I am, these vegetables are an easy way to put some food up for winter. They will all keep in a cool closet or basement for several months. (Though the potatoes and beets will be a bit happier and longer lasting in your fridge.) Our quantities of both yellow and sweet potatoes are very limited, so order early if you are interested in those crops. All orders will be filled on a first come-first serve basis and for those we cannot fill, we will make refunds.

Number	Item	Price	Total
	10# Butternut Squash (3 to 6 squash)	\$ 9.00	
	10# Round Beets (like those in your share today)	\$10.00	
	10# Cylindra Beets (long & skinny – perfect for pickling)	\$ 10.00	
	5# Yellow Potatoes	\$9.00	
	5# Sweet Potatoes	\$ 10.00	
	2# Garlic (10 to 15 heads)	\$ 10.00	
		Total	

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Return this form with a check by 10/11 to Claire's address (1814 Sheridan Drive, 53704) or to the farm stand. Your storage vegetables will be ready for the last pick-up on 10/18.

Troy Community Farm

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