



In the Share

Delicata Squash and/or
Sweet Dumpling Squash, 2 pieces
Cabbage **OR** Chard, 1 head/bunch
Beets, 1 bag
Onions, 1 bag
Carmen Red Peppers, 3 long pieces
Bell Peppers, 1 large & 1 medium
Small Red Peppers, 3 pieces
Roma Tomatoes, 1 bag
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch
Garlic, 1 head

For those of you who sometimes feel a little overwhelmed by the vegetables in your share, this week you have a bit of a break. Most all of this week's share will keep well on into the fall and give you plenty of time to plan something delicious to do with it. In fact, both the delicata (long with the stem at one end) and sweet dumpling (squat with the stem at the top) squashes will continue to sweeten and improved their eating quality if left to mature on your counter for a couple more weeks. Jake ate the first of the delicatas last week was disappointed in them. They are after all the sweetest and smoothest squashes we grow, so our expectations are high. Jake's advice is to give them a little more time. Don't let them sit for too long though. These early squashes are not especially good keepers and will start to develop spots if left overlong.

The onions, of course, will keep for quite a long time, along with the beets and cabbage, right there in the your fridge. I have had all these crops last in my fridge from fall to spring with no problem at all. Why each of them was in my fridge (or root cellar) for that long is another question. In the case of onions and cabbage, I try to stock up on enough to get me through to spring without having to buy extras from the store. In the case of beets, of which I am not particularly fond, the few I have just sit

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Claire's Comments

Canning Season

Jake and I both celebrated the Labor Day weekend by finishing up our tomato canning for the year. Given the early demise of the tomato crop, it was an especially hot and fast canning season for us. Normally we have through the end of September to gather enough second-quality and leftover fruits to turn into sauce and salsa. Not so this season. Not only did the tomatoes rule our work-lives with their relentless harvest schedule for several weeks, they also ruled our home lives as we cooked and canned as fast as possible, just ahead of the inevitable rot spots and fruit flies. There was no leeway to wait and put off the canning until the next batch of seconds. The late blight made this a now-or-never sort of season. After several conversations about what it might be like to just give up and buy canned tomatoes from the store, we both finally came to the farm on Monday and declared our canning chores complete! We made it!

Jake and I both learned to can early in our farming careers when we had more time than money and more tomatoes than tomato sales. It was obvious that we should turn those extras into winter food rather than into compost. We made tomato sauce, stewed tomatoes, salsa, and kept our eyes open for new ways to prolong the feasting of tomato season on into the winter. Last year Sarah added frozen roasted tomato soup to our preservation list, and this year she added sun-dried tomatoes from the solar food dehydrators she made this spring. I added pizza sauce to the list last year, and shared both the recipe and a jar with Jake. Sure enough, he added that new item to his list as well. Both Jake and I, and especially our partners, are worried about what might be added next. These few weeks of tomatoes are so all-consuming that there is little time for any non-tomato activity, including, on some days, cooking dinner. Soon enough, Jake's wife Kat and my partner Sarah are counting up the jars and telling us to stop. They are ready to reincorporate non-canning activities into our lives!

I must admit, for a few years, I gave up canning. I did not miss it. I did not gaze at my canner with nostalgia. I did wish I could be cooking down tomatoes instead of relaxing in the sun. But I also kept up my skills. My friend Lisa preserves a great deal of food for winter, and each summer during tomato season I would go and visit her for a marathon canning session. I got a few jars of tomatoes out of the deal and that kept me happy. The road from that one marathon session per year back to the current state of affairs was surprisingly short. There is something so satisfying about seeing the pantry stocked with delicious local tomatoes that it makes all the work worthwhile, addictive even. Still, now that the tomatoes are totally and completely gone and both Jake and I have been called off of canning for the year, we are happy to pack up our canners and enjoy these last few weeks of sun.

Laurel's Farm to Table

Beets

Beets are high in antioxidants and can store for long periods of time. Some people don't care for beets, citing their "earthy" flavor, but beets are also 3% sugar, which make them irresistible to anyone with a sweet tooth. They are versatile, and can be served hot or cold. When available, their greens are delicious fresh, sautéed, or steamed.

To store: cut off greens and store in plastic in the hydrator drawer.

To roast: coat with a little oil or wrap in foil. Roast at 350 until easily pierced with a fork. This could take up to 90 minutes. Let cool. Skins should easily rub off with paper towels. Roasting concentrates the flavor of the beets and is preferred to boiling.

To steam: place in single layer in steamer pan with 1" of water. Cover and steam until easily pierced with a fork, about 45 minutes. Cool and peel.

- **Borscht:** puree roasted or steamed beets with cooked aromatic vegetables (celery, carrots, onion, greens, etc.), top with sour cream or yogurt. Can be served hot or cold.
- **Roesti:** grate fresh beets with potato or carrot and toss with flour, salt, and pepper. Pan fry in a bit of oil and butter, serve with sour cream or yogurt
- Quick **pickled** beets with orange and rosemary (courtesy CooksIllustrated.com): steam 4 lbs beets, cool and peel. Bring 1/2 cup sweet vermouth, 2/3 cup red wine, 1/4 cup cider vinegar, 1/4 cup honey, 1 tsp whole cloves, 1 stick cinnamon, 1 sprig rosemary, and 2 orange slices (seeds removed) to a boil, simmer 3 minutes and pour over beets. Cool to room temp, cover, and refrigerate up to 1 month.
- **Roasted** in a salad with goat or blue **cheese** and walnuts or pine nuts.
- **Roasted** beets, cooled with raw carrots and/or apples in **tangy vinaigrettes** made with apple cider vinegar, raspberry vinegar, sherry vinegar, and/or orange juice. Add curry powder, caraway seeds, dill, tarragon, horseradish, or mustard for complimentary flavor combinations.
- **Roasted** with other root vegetables (carrots, potatoes, turnip, rutabaga, etc.) in balsamic vinaigrette and chopped rosemary, served **hot**.
- **Glazed:** Roast or steam beets. Cut in slices or wedges. Simmer 3.5 oz sugar, 1/2 oz white or red wine vinegar, 1.5 oz orange juice, 8 oz chicken or vegetable stock, and 1.5 oz butter until syrupy, about 15 minutes. Toss beets in glaze and season with salt and pepper. Serve hot. (courtesy of The Culinary Institute of America)
- You can even use raw shredded beets in **cake** recipes, as their sweetness is an ideal natural component. Check out p. 29 of *From Asparagus to Zucchini*.

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there waiting for me to become desperate enough to eat them. Because they keep so well, I never feel pressure to use them up.

Garlic too is another good keeper. Some CSA members tell me that they are able to get through the winter on garlic they get in their weekly summer and fall shares just by leaving it sit on their counters. I am guessing they are not heavy garlic users, so the extreme storability of the garlic is perfect for them! You will see garlic in your share every week from here to the end, so you too will have a chance to build up a little stockpile.

It is a similar situation with the herbs, all of which are easily dried for winter storage. Just hang the bunch upside down from a string strung under your kitchen counter. It will take a few days up to a week to dry completely. Then pack the dried herbs into glass jars or plastic ziplock bags. When you use the dried herbs, take a moment to rub them between your hands as you add them to your dishes. Crushing the herbs in that way will release their fragrance and flavor. Now is a good time to diversify you weekly herb selections so that by the time the CSA shares are done for the season you will have a nice collection of dried herbs.

That leaves only the romas and peppers as must-use vegetables for this week. I would recommend pizza! What follows is my favorite recipe for pizza crust. It is from *Artisan Bread in Five Minutes a Day* which is a book I find to be accurately named and which does not require using a bread machine! Mix 1 1/2 Tbs. yeast, 1 1/2 Tbs. salt, 1 Tbs. sugar, and 1/4 cup olive oil with 2 2/3 cups lukewarm water in a bowl. Mix in 6 1/2 cups unbleached flour using a spoon. Do not knead. Cover (not airtight) with a lid or plastic and allow to rest a room temperature for approximately 2 hours. Dough can be used immediately after this initial rise or it can be stored in the fridge for up to 12 days in a covered (not airtight) container to be used at any time. This recipe makes 4 to 6 pizzas, but it is easily halved if you don't want that much pizza over the course of 2 weeks! Once you have the dough, take a grapefruit-sized piece from the bowl and roll it into a crust using flour to keep it from sticking. Spread the dough on and corn meal covered pizza peel. Top with sauce, peppers, romas, olives, cheese, etc. Slide the pizza off of the peel onto a hot pizza stone in your pre-heated 550-degree oven and bake for 10 to 15 minutes. Use peel to remove pizza from the oven and serve. We just had this pizza last night. It was great!

Next week: Spaghetti squash, scallions, carrots, red peppers, and salsa.

Troy Community Farm

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