



August 3, 2005

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Fair Share Farm CSA Newsletter

This Week's Share:

Full Share:

Golden Girl tomatoes
Heirloom tomatoes
'Silver Queen' sweet corn
'Mars' red onion
Carrots
Beets
Okra
Salsa fixin's
Rosemary, tarragon, or purple basil

Partial Share:

Tomatoes
Cherry tomatoes or sweet peppers
'Silver Queen' sweet corn
'Mars' red onion
Carrots or beets
Rosemary, tarragon, or purple basil

Next week: beans, tomatoes, potatoes, garlic, carrots

Calendar

August 10th— Distribution, Wednesdays

August 13th — Distribution, Saturday

Veggie update

With summer in full swing, we thought it might be a good time to give an update on the harvest.

TOMATOES

You've already got the email from Tom about our tomato surplus. We are canning, freezing, and drying as fast as we can, but there's a limit to how many tomatoes two people need over the winter. For the most part, we only eat vegetables from our farm regardless of season. The tomatoes we are putting up now will go into pastas, soups, and pizzas in the wintertime allowing us to eat locally all year round. Contact us if you'd like to "extend the season" by preserving some of the farm's surplus.

CORN

What a difference a year makes. Last season, as our 2nd year members can attest, the shares had very nice corn for 3 weeks. This Spring we planted over twice as much, with the hopes that we would have sweet corn in the shares for 4 weeks. We were excited about trying the first ever organically-raised hybrid sweet corn seed also. Well, the organic seed failed to come up at all. Then the raccoons were craftier than we were for a

couple of weeks and managed to eat two more weeks worth. So, that leaves us with this week—the first, and last time you will be getting sweet corn. On the bright side, the corn you are getting is a very nice white variety, Silver Queen. Eat it soon and enjoy. Saturday folks: you got your corn last week, so that's it.

MELONS

I've already mentioned that we might be "melonless" and it turns out there is not even one good melon out there. We sincerely apologize for this. We love to eat them as much as you do and plan to make sure we have a melon crop next season.

ONIONS

Tom's talking a bit about the onions on the back page. Make sure to try the red onion salad, the onions are really sweet and tasty. I never would have thought to make onion salad, but it would have been my loss. Thanks, Tom! So, last year we had a horrible onion crop most of which rotted in the ground. This year is the complete opposite. The upper barn is wall to wall onions right now and we still have around 400 feet of onions in the field that need to come in somewhere. We beseech you, don't buy onions in the store, we will provide. We plan to hand out onions every other week, or

more, until the end of October. If you need more, order them on the bulk list. A quart is about 2 pounds.

FALL CROPS

This time of year, many gardeners are nearing the end of their growing season. Without irrigation, vegetables quickly dry up during these hot & dry summer days. Our pond and drip irrigation system allow us to extend the season into the fall. We have begun planting the last of the crops for our season. Turnips, beets, and carrots. A last round of cucumbers, squash, and beans. Broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, greens, kohlrabi, and lettuce are growing in the greenhouse. Soon we will begin transplanting the greenhouse crops into the fields. Last year we were very pleased with our fall crops and hope for a repeat. This time last year it was cooler and rainier, so we'll see how a more typical hot & dry summer treats the plants.

SURVEY

There are more vegetables I could mention, but before I go I want to encourage you all to send in those surveys! Email it back to me or print it out and bring them to distribution. We need, and desire, your comments & suggestions!

Recipes

Red Onion Salad

At Fair Share Farm, we feel that it is nice to occasionally have a very simple dish that focuses on not just a particular vegetable, but a particular variety. If you are ever going to make a salad heavy on the onion, we think that the time is now, with a Mars red onion. They are mild and sweet, leaving little if any "onion breath".

- ◇ 1 large Mars red onion, cut into thin rounds
- ◇ 1 small heirloom tomato (about 1/2 cup)
- ◇ 1 small garlic clove, chopped or pressed
- ◇ 3 tbsp olive oil
- ◇ 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ◇ Salt and pepper to taste
- ◇ 2 tbsp chopped basil
- ◇ 1/3 cup fresh grated cheese, like Parmesan or Romano or goat cheese

Put the onion in a serving bowl. Mix separately the chopped tomato, oil, garlic and vinegar. Pour over the onions, top with basil and grated cheese. Salt and pepper to taste.

Tom's Tomato Sauce

While we make no secret of the fact that we want to encourage people to preserve the bounty of a good harvest, we also want to give you good recipes. One recipe that serves both purposes is Tom's Tomato Sauce.

The trick with giving out this recipe

is that I usually start with a bushel of tomatoes. I think the minimum you want to use is 3 pounds to make it worth your while. You will get a basic tomato sauce that you can then embellish as you wish, or use as a base for other dishes. You do need to have a food mill or other type sieve to process the sauce in the end. I don't use a food processor, because it whips too much air into the sauce (and doesn't separate out the skins).

- ◇ 4 pound tomatoes
- ◇ 2 tbsp olive oil
- ◇ 1 medium onion
- ◇ 2 medium carrots
- ◇ 1 sprig basil
- ◇ 2 clove garlic
- ◇ 1 tsp salt

Cut out the core of the tomato and any bad spots. Cut or tear the tomato into large pieces, shake out the seeds, and put the tomatoes into a bowl.

Chop the onion and carrots and sauté in the olive oil in a large saucepan. Add the tomatoes, garlic, basil salt and pepper. Stir well and cover. Bring to a boil, uncover and simmer about 45 minutes.

When done, run the mixture through a food mill to remove the tomato skins, etc. and create sauce. If the sauce is too thin, put it back into the pot and cook down to desired thickness. Makes about 1 quart.

Frozen Whole Tomatoes

Perhaps the simplest way to preserve tomatoes is to freeze them. But before you freeze them, you need to boil them. **Blanching** is a process used often when cooking or preserving vegetables. It consists of dunking vegetables in boiling water for a prescribed amount of time, and then cooling them quickly. Blanching stops the activity of the enzymes in vegetables, thus keeping their quality from deteriorating. It can also help to loosen a vegetable's skin, and pre-cook or soften it up.

To freeze whole tomatoes, you must first blanch them. Bring a large pot of water to a rolling boil. Drop the whole tomatoes into the boiling water, cover, and leave on high heat for 1 minute. Remove and cool with cold water for a couple minutes. Core tomatoes and peel off skins. Pack in freezer bags and freeze.



Your Share Items

Potential

One thing that we are curious about as we build the soils here on the farm is—what is the potential for each crop? Over these first 2-1/2 years we have had some very nice crops come in, and have established our own benchmarks. We are pleased to see this year's onion crop, and know that this farm's soil has the ability to produce such a nice harvest. Last year's corn and this year's broccoli and tomatoes are other examples of the quality of produce we will be working to provide to you. We hope that everyone is enjoying what's growing well and in season right now, as such enjoyment is fleeting with fall approaching.

Mars Onions

This is the third year we have grown **Mars** red onions. When we were in Upstate New York we were at a farm in Ithaca that grew them, and were impressed with their size and beautiful look. This is the first year that they compare to the ones in NY. They have an interesting urn-type shape and are crunchy and sweet. We still need to see how well they store.

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