



NEWS FROM THE FIELDS OF  
 DRIFTLESS ORGANICS  
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*Week #8! Well, we are certainly into the swing of this CSA season and I do hope that you are all enjoying your veggie boxes.*

*With this whole drought thing going on, I feel like I've been a bit of a Debbie-Downer these past couple of weeks. I apologize for this; and I do think what I really need to do is just chill the heck out. After all, life is most certainly what you make of it, right? I am a wholehearted believer in the idea that you create your own reality and I need to look on the bright side of things more often these days. It has been so easy for us to slip into this poor-me drought-depression mindset because we are so surrounded by it everyday. But all it takes is one CSA member commenting how nice the boxes look, or even something as seemingly insignificant as that first bite of sweet corn for me to remember that life is just fine. And you know what, we are doing pretty darn good overall. All is not doom and gloom out there. Let me elaborate on some examples:*

in the greenhouse being babied more than any other veggie we grow. We plant them out in late May and hope to have ripe and colored peppers by the beginning to middle of August. This year we are growing about 12-13 varieties of peppers: mostly sweet, with a few spicy ones to keep things interesting.

**Our Onions:** I attribute our nice looking onions to that warm and early spring we had this year. We were able to get our onions in the ground early and they have been cruising ever since. Like our peppers, we grow onions on plastic mulch, which helps to conserve water, deter pests and help the onions grow bigger. We grow 8 different types of onions, including the red variety you have in your box this week.

**Our Tomatoes:** Another heat loving crop - our tomatoes look beautiful. Tomatoes are so labor intensive what with the seeding and the transplanting and the trellising and the pruning and so on. But it is well worth it and

## this week's box!

- Basil
- Carrots
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Garlic
- Green Beans
- Green Bell Peppers
- Green Savoy Cabbage
- Green Zucchini
- New Red Potatoes
- Red Onions
- Sweet Corn
- Yellow Summer Squash

carrots for you all to enjoy. The mid summer carrots are always the trickiest because the weeds can get so bad. I am happy to report that due to some very well timed waterings and the hard work of our weeding crew, our mid season carrots look phenomenal. And an added bonus: there is a purple carrot variety amongst this planting. I can't wait!



peppers!



carrots

**Our peppers:** Peppers are tricky to grow because they really are a heat loving crop that take a lot of time to mature and produce fruit. They are obviously loving this year, but on cool, wet years (like we had in 2010), they really struggle. We start our peppers in early April and they spend nearly 2 months

we are hoping for a great crop this year. In a wet year, tomatoes are VERY susceptible to disease so I am happy to report that thus far this year, the tomatoes are disease free!

**Our mid-summer Carrots:** We plant carrots 4 times in a season in hopes that we will have a constant supply of green top

*So, these are examples of the bountiful reality that we are creating here on the farm. We remain vigilant in both mind and body; we will continue to work hard and stay passionate about what we do; and most importantly we will continue to remain positive, rain or no rain.*

--Mike

**Celery** - local celery is a lot more pungent, green, & less tender than the California celery we're all used to. So use a bit less of it, & chop it into smaller pieces than you normally would. The fresh green leaves are delicious in salads (green, potato, egg, tuna, chicken, etc.) & sandwiches or used as garnish on top of grilled meats, fish, or vegetables. Store in plastic in the fridge & use up within a week.

**Cucumbers** - the cucumbers are wrapping up for a while. We should have more in a couple of weeks.

**Eggplant** - you will be getting 2 types of eggplant: an "Italian" type (the purple-black variety we are all familiar with) and an "Asian" type (long and slender and white/pink in color). Both taste pretty much the same. My favorite way to eat eggplant for sur. I LOVE grilled eggplant. I don't bother with the whole tossing slices in salt & letting them drain - just brush 1/3" thick slices of the large Italian eggplant with oil & salt & pepper & grill on a nice hot grill, flipping once it starts to look opaque, about 2 minutes. Serve as is, on sandwiches with grilled summer squash, provolone, & aioli (garlic mayo), or on burgers with harissa (middle eastern hot sauce), aioli, & red onions. The asian type can also be grilled, but cut into long strips lengthwise, or

are delicious in stir-fries or simmered in curries.

**Green Beans** - delicious raw, blanched (cook 2-3 minutes in boiling, salted water, drain, & plunge in ice water bath to cool), sautéed, steamed, stir-fried, or roasted with garlic.

**Green Kale** - cook in stir-fries, sauté, steam, simmer in soups, sauces, or curries, or blanch chopped leaves for 1 minute, drain & cool, then toss with onions, cucumbers, & dressing for a mid-summer salad.

**Green Savoy Cabbage** - steam, sauté, stir-fry, braise, or use raw in salads & coleslaws. Also makes a great wrapper - separate out largest leaves, cut out thick rib, & steam blanch for a few minutes then soak in ice water. Fill with anything - tuna or chicken salad, or the rice mixture in the recipe below.

**Green Zucchini** - the filling for the cabbage dolmas recipe is equally delicious stuffed in zucchini - simply cut the zuke in half lengthwise, scoop out the middle with a spoon (add that to the rice instead of the chopped inner cabbage leaves), & roast or grill it cut side down until just tender. Flip over & fill with rice filling, top with parmesan or crumbled feta, & put back in the oven/grill for a couple minutes to melt the cheese

**New Red Potatoes** - Yea!!!! Take these & steam or boil them whole & eat them with butter, salt & pepper - yum! Also make fantastic potato salad, but I always like to eat the first ones of the season as simply as possible...

**Red Onions** - slightly sweeter than yellow onions, but much more pungent than sweet onions.

**Sweet Corn** - This corn is an example of sweet corn grown in a drought: very small but sweet ears. I would recommend reading last week's newsletter if you haven't already! You may want to cut off the tips of your ears before shucking to remove a possible worm and worm damage. Just eat it simply with those new potatoes. Add a steak & you'll know you're in the sweet Midwest in July.

**Sweet Peppers** - 2 green bells plus one small red or orange sweet pepper - throw it on the grill with the eggplant & summer squash, or eat raw with dip or in salads or sandwiches.

**Tomatoes** - just a teaser to start the season off. You will be getting either a half pint of sungolds or a slicer of some sort. Don't worry: there's much more to come!

**Yellow Summer Squash** - Stir-fry, roast, steam, sauté, or grill... Or grate & add to baked goods.

### Savoy Cabbage Dolmas

- 1 head savoy cabbage, cored & leaves separated
- 1 2/3 cups water
- 2 Tbsp. olive or Driftless sunflower oil
- 1 cup white basmati rice
- ¼ cup red onions, chopped
- 2 Tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 tsp. dried thyme, minced (or 2 tsp fresh)
- 1 tsp. dried (or 1 Tbsp. fresh) dill
- ½ tsp. each salt & pepper
- Juice & zest of 1 lemon

• Trim the ribs off the largest leaves of the cabbage, reserving the smallest inner leaves. Steam the large leaves for about 4 minutes, until tender, soak in ice water until cool, & drain. Chop the inner leaves. Rinse rice in fine mesh strainer until water runs clear. Bring water to a boil. In a heavy bottomed medium sauce pan with lid, heat oil. Add onions & sauté for a couple minutes. Add chopped inner cabbage leaves & garlic. Add thyme, dried dill (if using fresh dill, add it at the end instead), salt & pepper & rinsed rice. Stir for a couple minutes. Add boiling water, cover, turn down heat, & cook until rice is tender & all of water is absorbed. Let cool for about 10 minutes, then fold in lemon juice & zest (& fresh dill, if using). Lay out a blanched cabbage leaf & put in enough filling to be able to roll it up like a cigar, or burrito. Place seam side down on a platter & repeat with remaining leaves. To serve, drizzle with a bit more oil & garnish with a sprinkling of thyme, dill, or parsley, if you wish. Eat warm or cold. Keeps for several days.

### Zucchini Basil Soup

• *This recipe, from epicurious.com, was sent to us from a fellow CSA member. We tried it and loved it. It is simple and delicious. The whole "julienned" part is optional. We did it, but it is a little extra work that may or may not be worth it.*

- 2 pounds zucchini/summer squash (about as much as you have in your box), trimmed and cut crosswise into thirds
- 3/4 cup chopped onion
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 4 cups water, divided
- 1/3 cup packed basil leaves

• Julienne skin (only) from half of zucchini with slicer; toss with 1/2 teaspoon salt and drain in a sieve until wilted, at least 20 minutes. Coarsely chop remaining zucchini.

• Cook onion and garlic in oil in a 3- to 4-quarts heavy saucepan over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 5 minutes. Add chopped zucchini and 1 teaspoon salt and cook, stirring occasionally, 5 minutes. Add 3 cups water and simmer, partially covered, until tender, about 15 minutes.

• Purée soup with basil in 2 batches in a blender (use caution when blending hot liquids).

• Bring remaining cup water to a boil in a small saucepan and blanch julienned zucchini 1 minute. Drain in a sieve set over a bowl (use liquid to thin soup if necessary).

• Season soup with salt and pepper. Serve in shallow bowls with julienned zucchini mounded on top.