



• NEWS FROM THE FIELDS OF •  
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*Week #17! Well, that frost I was grumbling about in last week's newsletter did eventually come, but only to our low lying fields. The good news is our tomatoes and peppers were spared!*

*This year, we have had the great pleasure of working with Joey Gaines who has spent the season coordinating the harvest of virtually every vegetable appearing in your boxes. Here she is to write this week's news...*

**G**reetings Members! The names? Gaines... Joey Gaines. I have been the Harvest Coordinator this year at Driftless, and let me tell you, I am honored and proud to be out there harvesting for you with our unbelievable crew. Really.

So, let me switch it up and tell you a little about me to give you an idea of how one person ended up on an organic produce farm in rural southwestern Wisconsin. Not just any farm... by the way.

I was born and raised just outside Chicago, where I grew up listening to hip hop and dancing semi-professionally; I'd take a local bus to Gus Giordano's studio in Evanston after school and took classes until 10 at night. Eventually, I transferred to the Chicago Arts Academy high school to really focus on the essential forms of dance: ballet, modern, jazz. I'm from a family of artists, and I've always been an artist.

Like many youngens, I went to college far away from home—all the way to Sunny Santa Barbara. I started as a double major in biology and dance and quickly quit them both. I ended up with a B.A. in Environmental Studies, the most vague yet somehow satisfying major out there. I found out about two very important things in college that have become much more important than any degree or drinking game: New Orleans and Agriculture. I started volunteering in New Orleans three months after Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and went back many times, eventually living there for a year and a half. Also,

near the end of my time at UCSB, I found an incredible professor who taught several horribly enlightening agriculture classes, focusing on the current food situation in this country and abroad. Since 2005, I have dreamt of (putting those two things together and) moving back to New Orleans to start an urban farm in the city. I moved directly out of New Orleans to Gays Mills, WI to work at Driftless Organics because I knew for years that I needed to work on a farm. Mike hired me on the phone, with promises/threats of picking edamame all season. I can't tell you how great it has been for me. I don't know exactly where I'll end up, but my time at Driftless has been absolutely invaluable.

I want to officially and publicly express my extreme gratitude and admiration for Mike, Noah and Josh for teaching me, relying on me and allowing me to work beside them on this unbelievably beautiful farm. And none of it would be possible without our humble crew of organic warriors, whom include a former mechanic, a classical guitarist, a former employee

## this week's box!

- Bok Choy •
- Broccoli or Orange Cauliflower or •
- Romanesco •
- Butternut Squash •
- Edamame •
- Purple Carrots •
- Mixed Bag 'o Tomatoes •
- Poblano Peppers •
- Salad Turnips •
- Sungold Cherry Tomatoes •
- Sweet Potatoes •
- Sweet Red & Yellow Italian •
- Frying Peppers •
- Yellow Finn Potatoes •

of McDonalds and a pharmaceutical lab, a Lutheran volunteer extraordinaire, a carpenter, a cyclist, and a bunch of us jacks of many valuable trades. I thought I knew how to work hard; I've been a construction worker, exterior painter, horse wrangler/guide, guest ranch manager, dance teacher/choreographer, native plant nursery manager, etc. But I had no idea until I learned from the Driftless crew. And after repeated questions from family and friends when I tell them that I'm working on a farm, like "So, you work in the office?" or "So, you grow corn?" or "So, you run a crew of Mexicans?", I've realized that many people don't know that organic farming is one of the hardest professions out there. If you haven't worked on a working farm, you have no idea how hard (AND rewarding) it is to produce edible food. Most people don't even think about it, and yet it sustains each and every one of us every moment of the day. Last but not least, allow me to please thank each and every one of our CSA Members for supporting and enjoying what we do. You're creating necessary change by voting with your voice and dollars. And we respect that, more than you'll ever know.



Joey, harvesting mini peppers!

*With Love,  
 Joey Gaines*

**Bok Choy** - such a great veggie! It's like a 2-for-1: the stems are so crunchy & sweet & the greens are so tender, slightly mustardy, & well, green! If you stir-fry or use it in soups, just add the stem first so it can cook a bit longer & save the greens for the end of cooking. Or you can braise or grill it whole, or cut in half/quarters lengthwise for pretty presentation. Store in plastic in the fridge & use within a week.

**Broccoli or Orange Cauliflower or Romanesco** - the brassicas are finally coming in! Romanesco is the bright green spirally looking veggie. Treat it like cauliflower - it is very similar, only nuttier and slightly creamier.

**Butternut Squash** - the chill in the air is definitely making me crave squash! Like any other winter squash, the easiest way to prepare it is to cut it in half lengthwise, scoop out the seeds, & roast it cut-side down for 40-50 minutes. Unlike most other squash, though, butternuts have really smooth skin that's easy to peel, making it the go-to squash for when you want to make soup without having to roast the squash first. Check out the soup recipe, below.

**Celery** - local celery is packed full of intense celery flavor. The ribs are best

cooked rather than raw. The outer leaves are great in soup stock, the inner leaves are milder & can be tossed in salads or sliced up & used as garnish. California celery has a longer growing season & is 'blanched' with soil, making the stems fatter, lighter in color, & milder. Keeps in plastic in the fridge for a week or two.

**Chives** - so nice sprinkled on potatoes or squash!

**Edamame** - such a treat. Boil them in their pods in salted water for a few minutes, drain, sprinkle with a bit more salt & eat warm or at room temperature as a delicious, healthy snack. Just pop the beans from the soft salty pod into your mouth. Store in plastic in the fridge.

**Mixed Tomatoes** - once they're ripe, try cutting them in half lengthwise & roast on a baking sheet, cut side up, drizzled with a little oil/salt/pepper at 425 degrees until starting to blacken a bit on top. After that, cut them up for pasta sauces, salads, spreads, or soups or pack them into a ziplock & freeze.

**Purple Carrots** - so pretty! Remember, the purple color is only skin deep, so try not to peel these!

**Salad Turnips** - salad turnips are varieties that have been selected for sweet flavor

& crunchy texture. They're picked young so they have thinner skins than storage turnips. They're quite nice sliced on a raw veggie platter, used as a gluten-free 'cracker' with spreads or cheese, or grated onto salads. They're also delicious cooked in stir-fries or roasted with other vegetables. Stores in plastic in the fridge for a week or two.

**Sweet Potatoes** - yea!! What we've been waiting for! Sweet potatoes are such a treat that we go through a lot of trouble to grow them for you. We'll talk more about that next week. For this week, try the great recipe below. Make sure **you DO NOT store your sweet potatoes in the fridge!** Store them like you would your potatoes - out of light and somewhere in the pantry or in a cupboard.

**Sweet Red & Yellow Italian Frying Peppers** - thanks to remay, the lightweight row cover fabric we blanketed cold-sensitive crops with before the frosts this & last week, we still have peppers & tomatoes for you! I've been roasting & peeling a lot of these for use in spreads, salads, pastas, & as a vessel for stuffing with cheese, rice/quinoa, & beans. Or if you're getting sick of them, you can simply chop them up raw & pack in a ziplock bag for the freezer to pull out for winter soups, stir-fries, or chilis.

**Yellow Finn Potatoes** - A great potato for mashing or roasting! Store in their paper bag with your sweet potatoes.

## Squash Soup

- 3 Tbsp. butter or oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 3-4 ribs celery, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 Tbsp. fresh ginger, minced (optional)
- 1 butternut squash, peeled & cubed
- 1 quart veggie or chicken stock
- 3 Tbsp. heavy cream (optional)
- ½ cup orange juice or apple cider (optional)
- ½ - 1 tsp. 5 spice powder or garam masala (optional)
- Salt & pepper to taste

In a heavy bottomed soup pot, heat butter/oil & sauté onions & celery for 4-5 minutes. Add garlic & ginger (if using) & stir for a couple minutes. Add cubed squash & stock, bring to a boil, reduce heat & simmer until squash is soft, about 20-30 minutes. Puree until smooth. Add cream/juice/cider if you wish & whatever seasonings you care to add, tasting as you go. Return to a simmer & serve. Serves 5-7

## Roasted Sweet Potatoes with Sesame & Chive Dipping Sauce

- 2 large or 3 medium sweet potatoes
- 4 Tbsp. tamari
- 3 Tbsp. sake, mirin, or white wine
- 2 Tbsp. rice vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- 3 Tbsp. chives, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp. ginger, minced
- 2 Tbsp. toasted sesame seeds

Preheat oven to 400 degrees (or a grill). Place sweet potatoes directly on the oven/grill grate (put a pie tin on the rack under them to catch drippings in the oven) & roast until soft when squeezed, 30-40 minutes. In the meantime, whisk together remaining ingredients until sugar is dissolved. Cool sweet potatoes just enough to handle & cut each one in half cross-wise. Serve with individual bowls of dipping sauce. Serves 4-5.