



# ONE POTATO TWO

NEWS FROM THE FIELDS OF DRIFTLESS ORGANICS

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*Week THREE! Happy Summer to you all! I don't know about you, but around here, we LOVE summer. Summer, for us, is long, hot days and hard work; it is a cold beer or lemonade on the porch with your feet up at the end of that long day. Summer is the smell of hay and the sound of the cicadas buzzing in the trees as we pick pint after pint of strawberries. Summer is canoeing on the Kickapoo and ping pong nights every Wednesday in our barn. But most of all, summer is about incredible vegetable bounty!*

*One thing that summer has meant in the last 4 years is LOTS of rain. Hard to believe, but we are going on our fifth wet year here on the farm - and our fourth in the last five that we've seen some sort of flooding or rain damage. In some respects, we would rather have the moisture than have to worry about irrigating the crops ourselves; but we could certainly do without the destruction that these heavy rains bring.*

*But, we've learned a lot from that first big flood of 2007 and with more and more of our veggies planted on higher ground, we hope to take this latest flooding in stride....*

*I have to admit that the following article originally appeared in a 2009 newsletter. But, we have a lot of new members and some of you may still be asking yourselves...*

## What the Heck Does "Driftless Organics" Mean?

As many of you may already know, Josh and Noah started growing potatoes a long time ago and over the years the name of their farm has changed a couple of times. From "Rainbow Potatoes" to "Engel Bros Organics", the two eventually decided on "Driftless Organics". You see, they wanted a name that somehow expressed their commitment to the area in which they live and farm in. They wanted a name that embodied a connection to the land. And Driftless Organics was born.

We all know what "Organics" means, but what the heck does Driftless mean? At first glance it seems to be a term that describes some sort of wayfaring stranger "drifting" about. To make matters even more complicated, the word "driftless"

is a bit difficult to say and understand (over the phone, especially). You wouldn't believe the variations on "driftless" that we have heard over the years. We have endured everything from "Dirt-less Organics" to "Driftwood Organics". I think my favorite rendition, from a governmental farm agency, was "Shirtless Organics".

If you are familiar with this region, or by chance majored in geology in school, than you would know the word and it's geological reference. Here's "Wikipedia's" definition: *"The Driftless Area or Paleozoic Plateau is a region in the American Midwest noted mainly for its deeply carved river valleys. While primarily in southwest Wisconsin, it includes areas of southeast Minnesota, northeast Iowa and northwest Illinois. This region's peculiar terrain is due to its having escaped glaciation in the last glacial period. The term "driftless" indicates a lack of glacial drift, the material left behind by retreating continental glaciers."*

Basically the glaciers didn't plow through this area like they did north and east of us and therefore we are left with this beautifully rolling hill and valley landscape. Most of the slopes are too steep to farm and therefore you are often surrounded by forested hills with the fields laying in the valleys, like what is shown in the picture below (or most any picture of our farm).

There are multitude of streams and creeks that meander through the valleys that make the area even more picturesque and a hotspot for trout fishing and canoeing as well. Unfortunately, these streams don't

## THIS WEEK'S BOX

- Baby Turnips
- French Breakfast Radishes
- Garlic Scapes
- Kohlrabi
- Italian Parsley
- Napa Cabbage
- Rainbow Chard
- Red Butterhead Lettuce
- and/or -
- Red Leaf Lettuce
- Scallions
- Strawberries

have the capacity to hold much water and therefore you all too often see flooding, as we've experienced the last few seasons. But when they aren't causing havoc, the streams and rivers of the region are a wonderful place to escape too after a hot day in the sun.

I feel it is more than just a desire to reference geology that so many organizations have adopted the word Driftless for their name (there's "Driftless Radio", "The Driftless Cafe", "Driftless Folk School" to name a few...). For those who live here or have spent time here, the name is synonymous with a region of the world that is chock full of good people, organic pioneers, musicians, back-to-the-landers, farmers, entrepreneurs, artists and conservationists. I suppose there may be a few wayfaring strangers "drifting" about as well.

We are proud to be among those who call this place home and we are doubly happy to be farming here. From the Driftless Area to you, I hope you enjoy this week's box!

--Mike



*A cultivating tractor out in one of our fields...*

## Fried Rice with Napa Cabbage and Greens

4 tablespoons high-heat oil (peanut, sesame, safflower, etc.)  
3 Tbsp. garlic scapes, minced  
4 green onions, chopped, white & green parts separated  
1 Tbsp ginger, grated  
1/2 small head napa cabbage, core removed & finely sliced (about 4 cups)  
2 c. finely sliced cooking greens (such as kohlrabi leaves, kale, collards, etc.)  
salt & pepper to taste  
3 large eggs, lightly beaten  
4 cups cooked long-grain white rice  
3 tablespoons soy sauce  
pinch of 5 spice powder (optional)  
1/2 cup chopped peanuts or cashews

Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a wok or a large nonstick/cast iron skillet over medium-high flame. When hot, add the garlic scapes, white parts of green onions, & ginger & stir-fry for 1 minute until fragrant. Add the cabbage and stir-fry until the cabbage is wilted and soft, about 5 minutes, then add cooking greens & stir fry for another couple of minutes. Season with salt & pepper to taste. Remove the vegetables to a serving bowl & wipe out the pan with a paper towel.

Put the pan back on the stove & heat with remaining 2 tablespoons of oil. When hot, crack eggs into the center. Scramble lightly, then let it set without stirring so it stays in big pieces. Fold in the rice & toss with the egg until well combined, breaking up the rice clumps with the back of a spatula. Return the stir-fried vegetables to the pan & season with soy sauce, & more salt, pepper, 5 spice powder (if desired). Toss everything together to heat through. Garnish with reserved scallion greens & peanuts. Serves 4-6.

THIS WEEK'S BOX

**Baby Turnips** - look for the small white globes that are in bunches with their tops cut off. These turnips are sweet and tasty and can be eaten raw on salads, or cooked in stir fries. Try the recipe from last week's newsletter (which you can find online at our website). Store in the fridge in plastic.

**French Breakfast Radishes** - these are the prettiest of radishes in my book. Mild flavored & super crisp, eat them out of hand, halved lengthwise on a veggie platter, or thinly sliced in salads or as garnish. The leaves are packed full of nutrients but don't keep well - wash carefully & add to a salad or stir-fry within a day or two. The radishes themselves will keep for a week or two in plastic in the fridge.

**Garlic Scapes** - the first of the scapes! Garlic is a truly amazing plant - most people only think of garlic as the cured bulbs, but the plant is wholly edible at different stages. You had green garlic the last two weeks - which is simply a whole, young garlic plant - & now the scapes, which are the flowering stems of the garlic plants that will be harvested for the bulbs in another few weeks. The scapes need to be removed to allow the plant to really focus on bulb growth, so the fact that they are not only edible but a super tasty & easy alternative to cloves of garlic is just a bonus! The whole scape from stem to flower head is edible except the pointy tip beyond the

flower head - it's too tough. Chop it up & use as you would garlic in any recipe. Store in plastic in the fridge for up to 2 weeks, or better yet in a vase of water on your kitchen table (change the water daily & use them within a week).

**Italian Parsley** - is tastier & more delicate than curly. Full of minerals! Add whole leaves to salads, or chop for dressings, soups, pasta, casseroles, garnish, etc. The stems are edible, too, & add nice crunch & flavor to anything when chopped up. Store in plastic in the fridge.

**Kohlrabi** - the weirdo alien spawn of a Brassica (like broccoli) & a turnip. You have one purple and one green in your box. The leaves (discard tough stems) can be cooked like any other cooking green & are tasty & good for you, but the bulb is what you really want to eat. Peel it with a sharp paring knife & slice, chop, or grate it onto veggie trays, salads, or coleslaw. It is also delicious cooked in soups or anywhere you would otherwise add a potato or turnip. Remove leaves from bulbs to store separately in plastic in the fridge.

**Napa Cabbage** - a delicious & very versatile cabbage. Check out the napa fried rice recipe above, or add napa to stir-fries, soups, or steam blanch individual leaves to use as a wrapper for Vietnamese meatballs... Don't overcook it - it cooks quicker than normal cabbage. Also: there is a bit of dirt within the leaves that splashed up from the hard rains on Saturday. We

hesitated washing the cabbage because it is so darn delicate and we hated to handle it too much. Simply give your cabbage leaves a rinse before preparing. Store in plastic in fridge.

**Rainbow Chard** - young, tender chard can be eaten chopped up in salads or cooked as you would spinach (just barely cooked is best!). Chard is super high in vitamins A, C, & K as well as minerals like calcium, magnesium, & iron in a form that is easily digestible.

**Red Lettuce** - A couple heads of some very nice looking lettuce for you to enjoy. Store in plastic in the fridge. Heads should last up to 2 weeks in the fridge. Try using the outer, larger leaves of the head as wrappers for burrito fillings like cheese, tomatoes and beans.

**Scallions** - also called green onions. Delicious in salads or stir-fries. When cooking with them, best to use the white parts first & add the green parts right at the end, like chives. You can also grill them whole.

**Strawberries** - We would like to thank fellow CSA farmers of Ridgeland Harvest for helping us get enough berries for everyone this week. I don't need to tell you to eat them up quick (you probably already ate them all in the car on the way home from pick-up), but do - the wet weather makes these not keep well.