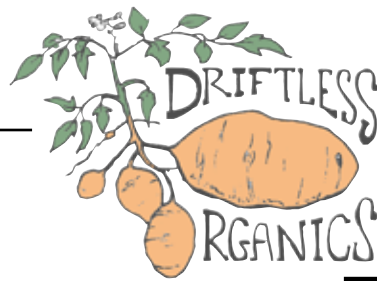


ONE POTATO

NEWS FROM THE FIELDS OF
DRIFTLESS ORGANICS
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TWO

THE BOX

Happy Independence Day! The hot days of last week are a distant memory as we dig out our sweatshirts to keep us warm during this week's chilly mornings. I'm kicking myself for bemoaning the heat, as this is what really makes crops like watermelon and sweet potatoes grow well. But, its early still and I'm sure we'll see more of the hot summer days in the months to come. In the meantime, bowl of soup anyone?

The Power of a Seed...

It is a somewhat cliché idea, I know - the vegetable seed portrayed as this miraculous vessel that produces something out of nothing. Yet, not a spring goes by where I don't reflect in wonder the life cycle of an annual vegetable on our farm.

It is a sight to behold - watching seedlings pop up from the soil just days after they were gently placed in. Given the right amount of warmth, sunlight, water and nutrients, a seed can do some pretty mind-blowing things.

What gets me, maybe more than anything else, is the *size* of some these seeds. I mean, they are so *tiny!* Look at the picture below. It baffles my mind how something the size of a pin head (like broccoli seed) has, stuffed inside of it, the instructions and know-how to turn sunlight, nutrients and water into a beautiful head of broccoli. This amazes me each and every year.

The time that it takes each seed to work its magic differs depending on the crop. In your box this week: That pin head broccoli seed was placed in a warm, moist plug of potting soil in the middle of March. The garlic scapes were in the ground the longest, as their seed (which is just, simply, a clove

of garlic), was planted back in October of last year! The quickest? The cilantro - planted the 12th of May.

We get our seeds from a variety of different seed companies that are based in places all around the country. Each winter we pour over the different seed catalogs to find just the right crops.

- ALL RED POTATOES
- BROCCOLI
- CHARD
- CILANTRO
- FENNEL
- GARLIC SCAPES
- GREEN ZUCCHINI
- PARSLEY, FLAT LEAF
- ROMAINE LETTUCE
- SNAP PEAS
- SNOW PEAS
- STRAWBERRIES
- YELLOW SUMMER SQUASH

Nearly all of the seed companies that we order from are finally offering a wide(r) range of organic seed which, up until a couple of years ago, was extremely expensive and hard to find.

Growing good vegetables has a LOT to do with variety selection. We strive to find at least one, if not two varieties of each and every crop we grow that both do well in our climate and also fulfill our specific farm needs. You can't even imagine how many varieties of each vegetable are out there. There are over a thousand varieties of tomatoes alone!

Having said that, there is a lingering danger among some types of vegetables of varietal decline. Luckily, there are seed companies out there like Seed Savers Exchange and Baker Creek that are dedicated to preserving unique and endangered varieties of heirloom vegetables and flowers.

This year we are attempting to grow some of our own seed. This includes mostly cover crop seeds, like rye, vetch and field peas. We feel the more stuff we can produce on-farm, the less transportation costs we have, not to mention, less resources used.

Seed: Awesome Vessel of Power. Hooray to that!

THE BOX (in seed form)



CILANTRO & GARLIC SCAPE PESTO

1 c. scapes, cut into 1" pieces (6-8 scapes)
1 bunch cilantro, coarsely chopped (leaves & stems)
1/2 c. raw pumpkin or sunflower seeds, toasted & cooled
1/3 c. oil (sunflower, olive, etc.)
1/2 tsp. salt

Combine all in food processor & pulse until smooth. Use within a week in the fridge or freeze. Makes a fantastic dip with sour cream or spread with cream cheese. Delicious tossed with pasta. Or jazz up a basic vinaigrette dressing with a couple of spoonfuls.

SAVORY CHARD PIE

1 Tbsp oil
2/3 c. chopped onions, scallions, and/or garlic scapes
1 bunch Swiss chard, stems & leaves separated & coarsely chopped
3 large eggs
1 c. milk or 1/2 & 1/2
salt & pepper to taste
1 pie crust (unbaked)
1 c. cheese, grated (Swiss, Gruyere, Cheddar, Gouda, etc.)
1 Tbsp. fresh herbs (parsley, dill, thyme, etc.)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Saute onion/garlic in oil for a minute. Add chard stems & saute for a few minutes, until softened. Add chard leaves & saute while stirring until just wilted. Remove from heat. Beat eggs, milk, salt, & herbs. Spread chard mixture on bottom of crust. Top with grated cheese. Pour egg mixture over the top. Bake for 30-40 minutes until top is slightly browned & center is firm. *Serve hot or cold.*

YOUR BOX

ALL RED POTATOES - are lovely red on the outside & pink on the inside. Pink mashed potatoes, anyone?? Like the all-blue potatoes, they're great fried or roasted to keep their color more vivid. There is absolutely no need to peel organic potatoes - the skin is loaded with minerals! Store in a cool, dark place or they will sprout fast!

BROCCOLI - is best stored in a plastic bag in the fridge & should be used up within a few days for optimum freshness. The stalks will last a bit longer (& really shouldn't just be composted as they contain all the same good stuff the florets do) if you want to keep them for soup or grating into coleslaw).

CHARD - is a gorgeous leafy green closely related to beets. They are obscenely high in vitamin K (over 700% of your RDA) and contain over 100% of your RDA of vitamin A & over 50% of vitamin C, as well as good amounts of magnesium, potassium, & iron. Both the stems & leaves are delicious & nutritious, although the stems take a bit longer to cook so you can chop them up separately if you wish. Chard can replace spinach in any cooked recipe. For a lovely side dish, you can steam chard leaves whole (for 3-4 minutes) & drizzle with olive oil, lemon juice, salt & pepper. Or check out the yummy Chard Pie recipe, below.

CILANTRO - is one of those herbs some (crazy) people hate. If you're one of them, be sure to try the Cilantro Pesto recipe, below. Cilantro is key in many cuisines, from Mexican to Thai to Indian. It doesn't keep long, so use it up quick - the Pesto recipe is a great way to preserve cilantro's piquant flavor for later use.

FENNEL - is such a stunning and versatile vegetable, raw or cooked. The entire thing is edible. The bulb is delicious sliced & eaten by itself or in salads or slaws. It can be roasted or sauteed or boiled in soups with the chopped stems. The leaves are best used (within a few days - they don't keep long) fresh

or added at the very end of cooking to preserve their delicate flavor. The bulbs & stems will last up to a week in a plastic bag in the fridge.

GARLIC SCAPE - are the super cool looking flowering stems of the garlic plant. They make an unusual bouquet in a jar of water on the kitchen table, & will keep quite nicely that way for about a week. They'll last a bit longer in the fridge. They have a nice mild garlic flavor and can be used in place of garlic in almost any recipe. To use, cut off the tough tip just above the flower bud & discard. The rest of the bud & stem is the part you eat. Try them out in the Cilantro Pesto recipe, below!

GREEN ZUCCHINI / YELLOW SUMMER SQUASH - The first of much more to come. A great addition to your backyard BBQ. Cut into large slices, drizzle with olive oil, salt & pepper and throw them on the grill. Should store in the fridge for at least a week.

PARSLEY - should be stored in plastic in the fridge & used up within a week or so. It can be added to just about anything & is at its most nutritious when fresh.

ROMAINE LETTUCE - Caesar salad! A slightly immature head of romaine, but still full of flavor. Store in your fridge in a plastic bag.

SNAP PEAS - are so crunchy & sugary - they're fantastic eating fresh or lightly blanched or steamed (no longer than a couple of minutes). Store in the fridge & try to eat them up within a few days.

SNOW PEAS - are the classic stir-fry pea. They're not quite as sweet or crunchy as snap peas for fresh eating. Store in plastic in fridge & eat within a week.

STRAWBERRIES - well folks, it's been a horrible strawberry year & this will be the last of them. Eat them immediately.