

THIS WEEK'S BOX:

Carrots
Cilantro
Cucumbers
Fresh Garlic
Fresh Yellow Onion
Garlic Chives
Green Beans
Green or Red
Iceberg Lettuce
Green Zucchini
Napa Cabbage
New Red Potatoes
Patty Pan Squash
Rainbow Chard
Red Mustard



News from the Fields of Driftless Organics

Week #6! We've had a number of days of sun this week, and it is starting resemble a normal summer here on the farm. Some fields are looking better than others, and some, like 2 plantings of broccoli, just will not be able to recover from a month of continuously soggy ground. The plants are tiny and weak- which is a sure sign of nutrient deficiency. This can be chalked up to the excess rain, which does a great job of leaching nutrients out of the soil when you need them the most. Missing this broccoli is taking it's toll on the box, but we hope that our fifth planting of broccoli, which is looking superb, will get us back on track.

Fields are drying out and we are, with great excitement and gusto, getting back into them to get things prepped for fall plantings. Yesterday marked the beginning of the fall seeding, starting with 550,000 carrot seeds put into the ground! Next comes fall beets, winter radishes, and everyone's favorite, turnips! With it being only week #6 of the CSA season, it is hard for me to wrap my mind around the idea that we are already thinking fall and end-of-the-year storage crops.

As the sun continues to shine, the Driftless Organics team continues to work super hard to get the jobs done. I say this every year, and my opinion still hasn't changed: a hard working crew, like the one we have this year, is the key to a vegetable farm's success. We've had a fun year so far, and I feel like the this year's crew is more than just that: we are a team. We all work really well together, whether it be harvesting kale, digging potatoes, washing beets, or playing ball in the local softball tournament. All in all, Driftless Organics is incredibly lucky to have such an amazing crew working it.

One such amazing crew member is Chana Puig, and she's here this week to share some thoughts about working at Driftless.

I have been watching Driftless Organics grow and develop as a business since its infancy. I distinctly remember peering into small wooden bins at the Viroqua Food Coop one afternoon, prompting my mother who was passing by to say, "Do you know whose potatoes those are? They're Noah's potatoes!" At the age of nine, Noah was then a classmate of my sister's and only a year older than I. Seventeen years later, upon having developed a strong interest in agriculture myself, I returned home this past May to work for and learn from Noah, who is now my brother-in-law.

As a Harvest Team crew member,



Chana, getting ready to bin up your napa cabbage.

my week is divided between fieldwork and rockin' out with Adrian in the pack shed. Several of my favorite field tasks thus far include harvesting strawberries in the most peaceful field on the farm, pulling beets and bunching rainbow chard. It is rare that I don't stop to think about how much I appreciate working outside in what I consider to be the most beautiful region in the Midwest.

However, I often find myself washing and packing vegetables in doors in preparation for their arrival on your counter, and it is work I find satisfying because I enjoy being responsible for selecting the best of what we grow to pack into your CSA boxes and put in our display at the farmers market each Saturday.

Beyond the satisfaction I take from my work here, it is also rewarding to be working for people I care about. Because of my closeness with Noah I am privileged to see firsthand the day-to-day life of a young farmer striving to make sustainable agriculture work and to produce high quality food for the community in which we live. It's a pleasure to work alongside Noah, Josh, Mike, and our hardworking and honest crew.

--Chana Puig

Bread & Butter Refrigerator Pickles

3-4 cucumbers, thinly sliced (NOT peeled)
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
1 1/3 c. cider or white vinegar
1 2/3 c. sugar
3 Tbsp. pickling or non-iodized sea salt (the minerals in the sea salt might make the pickles slightly cloudy but will not impair them any other way)
1/2 tsp. celery seed
1/2 tsp. mustard seed
1/4 tsp. tumeric

Mix sliced cukes & onions in a large bowl. Dissolve sugar in vinegar & mix in salt, celery & mustard seeds, & tumeric. Pour over cukes/onions, stir gently, & pour into clean jars (make sure liquid covers vegetables). Store in refrigerator, keeps for many many months.

Garlic Chives for Dinner

This recipe was submitted by CSA member Jacqueline Alfonso, who teaches whole food cookery in Community ed., in Minneapolis.

This is a classic Chinese method to use up every bit of edibles. It is fast, easy and tastes great.

Cut a good "brush" of garlic chives and mince them at 1/4-1/2 inch pieces.

In a small bowl, put 1 Tbsp salted black beans, 1 Tbsp sesame oil and 1 Tbsp good soy sauce.

Start the rice cooking – I like this with brown basmati.

Heat a wok or skillet until nearly smoking. Stir in the chives (if it is really hot, they will jump, so have a lid handy) stir quickly, making sure to get to the bottom of the pan, then dole out into bowls and enjoy. A bit of red pepper is a good addition, as is a trace of minced ginger.

Toasted Sesame Napa Salad

6 c. shredded Napa cabbage (or combination of Napa, red cabbage, carrots, fennel, etc.)
1/4 c. sliced green onion or fresh onion stems
1/4 c. orange juice
2 Tbsp. toasted sesame oil
2 Tbsp. tamari
2 Tbsp. rice vinegar
1 tsp. fresh ginger, minced
1/4 tsp. 5-spice powder
3 Tbsp. sesame seeds
3 Tbsp. cilantro, minced (optional)

In serving bowl, combine shredded vegetables & green onions. In small bowl, whisk together next 6 ingredients & toss into vegetables.. Toast sesame seeds in a small pan until they start to pop. Pour onto top of salad with cilantro if using. Serves 4-6.

THIS WEEK'S BOX by Dani Lind

Carrots – beautiful & crunchy! Store in plastic in the fridge to prevent them from getting limp.

Cilantro – You either love cilantro, or ya hate it. Let's hope you all love it!. Store in plastic, in your fridge.

Cucumbers – delicious dipped in hummus or sliced on salads. Store on counter for a couple days or in the fridge for a week or less. Try the recipe above, which is one of my mom's favorites from the 2008 season.

Fresh Garlic – easy to peel, doesn't store forever, but use as you would regular cured garlic.

Garlic Chives – can also be used like green onion tops, either cooked into dishes (like the recipe above) or used fresh. I like to snip them with kitchen scissors right onto steamed new potatoes... mmm...

Green Beans – delicious fresh when eaten within a few days, or lightly steamed & topped with lemon juice or

stir-fried with fresh garlic & a bit of hot sauce.

Green Zucchini/Yellow Patty Pan Squash – In an attempt to not inundate you with zucchini (like last year), we ended up not planting enough. I think we may be the only farm or garden on the planet that doesn't have enough zucchini right now. The good news is, there's another, larger planting on its way!

Napa Cabbage – is great in stir fries or added to salads, especially ones with an Asian flair.

New Red Potatoes – oh, it's that special time of year to taste the first new potatoes of the year! We just cooked some up for potato salad for Josh's wedding this weekend, & boy were they sweet! The absolute best thing to do with the first ones of the year, though, is to simply steam or boil them & top with butter, salt & pepper, & a dollop of sour cream & a generous sprinkling of chives.

Green or Red Iceberg Lettuce – now don't stick your nose up to the iceberg

until you try this truly fresh, organically grown iceberg. It's nothing like the pale old iceberg we grew up with, I promise! This stuff is crunchy & sweet & is one of the only lettuces that grows well this time of year. Give it a try! It's very delicate, though, so eat it up quick.

Fresh Yellow Onion – This is the beginning of what we hope will be at least 1 to 2 onions a week in every box. These onions have yet to be cured, so are milder and won't keep as long. Store in your refrigerator.

Rainbow Chard – these beautiful gems are full of nutrients & flavor! I like to cook the greens & stems as separate vegetables, personally, or at least saute the stems for a few minutes before adding the greens so they're not too crunchy. I also like these with butter. If you're not so crazy about the flavor all by themselves, try adding them at the end of soups or sauces instead.

Red Mustard – a very small bunch that can be used to spice up your salad. Keeps in plastic in the fridge for a few days.