



**THIS WEEK'S BOX:**

- Bunched Arugula
- Broccoli
- Cilantro
- Collard Greens
- Cucumber
- Edamame
- Eggplant
- Garlic
- Green Zucchini or Patty Pan Squash
- Jalapeno Peppers
- Mixed Tomatoes
- Red and Yellow Onion
- Red Potatoes
- Sungold Tomatoes
- Sweet Peppers
- Tomatillos
- Watermelon

**News from the Fields of Driftless Organics**

*Week #10! A sweltering week here at Driftless as we reach the half way point of the CSA season. It is HOT. On my way to lunch today I saw a dog chasing a cat, and they were both walking!*

*I was talking to my dad the other day (Happy Birthday, Pop!), and he said that in his 66 years, he does not remember a rainier summer than this one. I'd like to know where this summer's rainfall totals stand in the record books. It makes me wish we were better at keeping weather journals like a lot of the old time farmers used to do. This would be a season to remember for sure...*

**The World According to Broccoli**

**B**roccoli is back! And it is sure nice to see it again. We love to grow broccoli - and most people love to eat it. According to Dani, it is one of the most popular veggies she sells at the food co-op, and we nearly always sell out at the Farmer's Market. It seems to be well-liked amongst the CSA members as well.

It is because of its popularity that we plant 8 plantings for a whopping total of 2.5 acres of broccoli each year. We stagger these plantings every 2 weeks, in hopes of being able to provide broccoli for the majority of your CSA boxes. This year, with one and a half plantings all but lost to the rain, we haven't been as successful as we had hoped. But, we have had some great crops, like

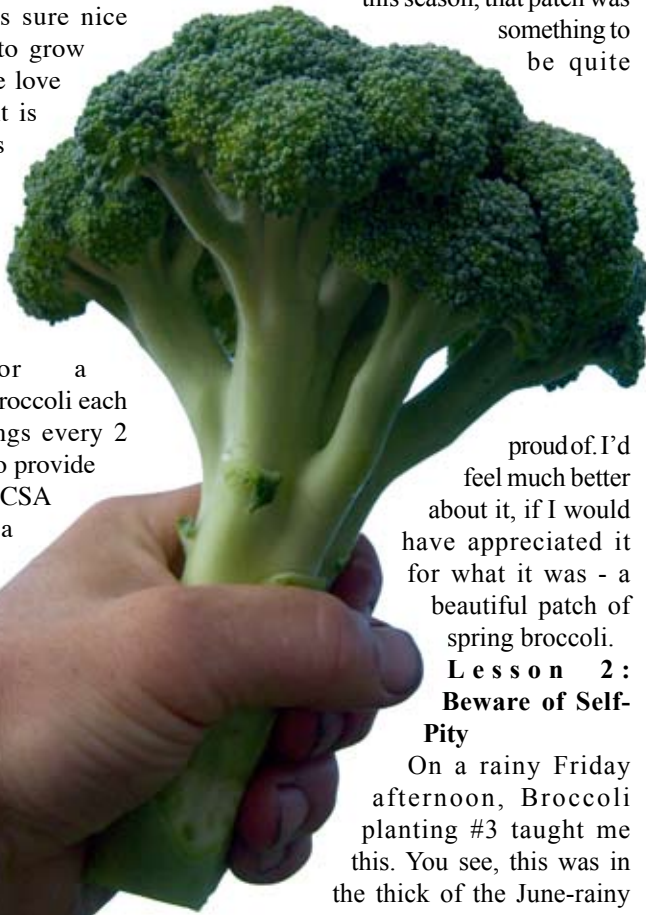
this current one, broccoli planting #5.

As we navigate through this tumultuous season and experience the good, the bad and the wet, broccoli has been there throughout it all - teaching us some pretty important lessons. Here's an overview:

**Lesson 1: Don't Take Things for Granted**

After a near perfect spring, where the sun and rain were in perfect harmony, we were feeling mighty optimistic about everything. As we began harvesting the very first broccoli planting of the year (which looked pretty darn amazing in retrospect), we were a bit upset when those first harvests didn't blow us away like we thought they should have. Now, looking back I realize that after some of the broccoli-heartbreaks we've experienced this season, that patch was

something to be quite



proud of. I'd feel much better about it, if I would have appreciated it for what it was - a beautiful patch of spring broccoli.

**Lesson 2: Beware of Self-Pity**

On a rainy Friday afternoon, Broccoli planting #3 taught me this. You see, this was in the thick of the June-rainy

season, where we helplessly watched a few of our fields turn into swamps. One such field was our broccoli #3 planting. The poor plants looked so pathetic, and I had all but given up on them. I was too wrapped up in my own woe - thinking 'poor me' and 'poor farm' to realize that there were some pretty nice heads in the patch after all. The worst part was, we lost a bit of it that grew too big and got too leggy. Lesson learned.

**Lesson 3: Be Flexible**

There is a lot of planning involved in growing vegetables - what goes where and when and how much. As this year has demonstrated - sometimes the best laid plans just won't work out due to unforeseen (wet) circumstances. Broccoli #5 was supposed to go into Field 62 (the aforementioned 'swamp'). With some quick thinking and swapping and shifting of fields and crops, we put it in a different, drier field and what a crop it has turned out to be!

**Lesson 4: Enjoy the Moment**

Broccoli #5 is teaching me this one - we are swimming in broccoli and loving every second of it. Sometimes you have to take these little joys and run with them as far as they will take you.

**Lesson 5: The Power of Positive Thinking**

Broccoli #6, 7 & 8?? All planted into less than stellar fields (we're running out of good, dry land to plant into). Hope, prayer and blind faith will be much needed to get these plantings to produce.

Well, that is about all of the preaching I have in me for today. I am not saying that these are lessons to live by per se. But I do believe they are lessons to farm by! All the best everyone and I hope you enjoy your box!

--Mike

## THIS WEEK'S BOX *by Dani Lind*

**Bunched Arugula** – A big spicy bunch of arugula best used as a cooking green. Or better yet, try substituting basil with arugula for a quick pesto. Trust me, it's good!

**Broccoli** – we're lucky to have it in this heat. Store in the fridge in plastic & use within 5 days or so.

**Cilantro** – A small bunch, perfect for a batch of salsa verde.

**Collard Greens** – are in the same family as cabbage & kale, & are similarly super healthy for you! 1 cup of boiled collards contains almost 900% of your RDA of vitamin K, 120% of your vitamin A, almost 60% of your vitamin C, & over 20% of your calcium. It's easy to add collards into soups, stir-fries, pasta sauces, bean dishes, eggs, or sauteed with garlic. Best to strip the leaves off the stem, as it's rather tough. Store in plastic in the fridge for about 5 days.

**Cucumber** – Store in your fridge's crisper drawer.

**Edamame** – healthiest snack around! Japanese bar food at it's best. Simply boil in salted water for about 5 minutes, drain, cool, sprinkle with a bit more salt, & snack away (squeeze the beans out of the pods with your teeth. Discard the pods).

**Eggplant** – you will either be getting an Italian type (purple-black and bulbous), or an Asian type (light purple and elongated). They're rather small, so best to combine it with other veggies in pasta sauce or curry, or try the Ratatouille recipe, right (Monique Hooker, a delightful chef in our area, helped developed a program for the Viroqua Public Schools called 5th Season Harvest, that takes local veggies during harvest season & puts them up for the schools to feed to the kids all winter. The first dish they put up was ratatouille because it freezes easy & it's versatile - you can serve it on pasta or pizza, or in soups or calzones. Try it!).

**Garlic** – Now pretty much cured, your garlic can be stored on the counter or in the pantry.

**Mixed Tomatoes** – You will be getting an assortment of different tomatoes in a brown bag. As for the heirlooms: the purple ones are Cherokee purple or black prince, the green and yellow stripeys are green zebra and the pale yellow fuzzy ones are garden peach. Never store tomatoes in the fridge for prolonged periods of time, as it will ruin their texture.

**Red Onion** – Still curing, these onions should be kept in the fridge. Great in salads or on sandwiches.

**Red Potatoes** – You can go ahead and store these in their paper bag on the counter. Great breakfast potatoes: grated as hashbrowns or parboiled and the roasted. That, some eggs and bacon and you have yourself the perfect breakfast.

**Sungold Tomatoes** – the orange 'cherry' tomatoes in your box - can be frozen whole in zip-locks if you really can't eat them now... Store on your counter and NOT in the fridge.

**Sweet Corn** – We are giving you what we've got - which isn't much I am afraid. Can be used for making the salsa in last week's newsletter. Next week, we hope to have something to be proud of.

**Sweet Peppers** – There'll be a little orange (yummy is the name and the taste), and a red squat pepper called a pimiento. Both are very nice peppers.

**Tomatillos** – can be eaten raw, blanched, roasted, or grilled. Below is a recipe for my favorite salsa verde that is easy to freeze & a blessing to pull out & make enchiladas with in the middle of winter... or dice them up raw in salads, salsas, or guacamole or cook them into some chili or black beans. Store them in a paper bag on the counter.

**Watermelon** – Best when cold - these mini red beauties are a treat on a hot summer day.

**Yellow Onion** – the classic yellow storage onion - great in just about anything. Can store on the counter, or in the fridge.

## Ratatouille *by Monique Hooker*

2 Tbsp. olive oil  
1 cup onion, sliced  
2 sweet peppers, cut in half & thinly sliced  
1 patty pan squash or zucchini, cut in half & cut in 1/4" sliced  
All of your eggplant, cut into 1" pieces  
4 tomatoes, quartered  
3 Tbsp. fresh rosemary & thyme (or 3 tsp. dried)  
1/2 cup basil, chopped  
4 cloves garlic, minced  
salt & pepper to taste

Heat olive oil in large skillet. Saute onion & garlic for a minute or two. Add peppers & saute another minute. Add squash/zucchini, & eggplant, salt, & pepper, cover & cook for 10 minutes on medium-low heat. Add tomatoes, herbs, & basil. Cover & cook for another 20 minutes or so, until vegetables are tender. Adjust seasoning & serve with pasta. Delicious as pizza topping! Makes 4-6 servings.

## Salsa Verde

1 lb. tomatillos, hulls & stems removed  
1 medium yellow onion, quartered  
2-3 cloves garlic, peeled  
3 jalapeno peppers, stems removed & cut in half the lengthwise (remove seeds if you don't like heat)  
1/4 c. cilantro, chopped  
1/2 lime, juiced (optional)  
1 Tbsp. salt

Roast tomatillos, quartered onion, whole cloves of garlic, & halved jalapenos in baking pan at 450 degrees for 6-8 minutes, stirring once or twice, until tomatillos are soft & everything is starting to char. (You can do this in tin-foil on the grill if you've got the grill going, too.) Cool roasted veggies a bit & throw them, the cilantro, & salt in a food processor & pulse until smooth. Stores in fridge for about a week. Freezes super well.