

# ONE POTATO



# TWO

NEWS FROM THE FIELDS OF  
DRIFTLESS ORGANICS

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## THE BOX

**W** eek #11! It has been a great week on the farm! A perfect amount of rain and sun; and we continue forth. It's at this point where we have to bid farewell to some very hard working and valuable coworkers who are headed back to college. We will miss them and all that they contribute to the farm. We hope to see Lauren, Forest and Luke next season!

Amidst a truly wonderful season that has brought forth some amazing veggies, we have had a couple of bumper crops. One being the sweet corn - a crop that critters have decided to NOT share with us. Despite our efforts to keep them out of our patch, they have nearly decimated an entire crop! Another slightly depressing spot on the farm is the tomato field. July's record low temperatures and damp mornings have proved to be ideal conditions to a disease that has hit our tomato plants pretty hard. So, although this week's box is chock full of some wonderful tomatoes - it may be short

lived until our second planting comes on. The good news is by separating our two plantings of tomatoes by a couple of miles, we have been successful in preventing disease in the new planting (so far). I guess if that's the only bad news I have to report, than we are sitting pretty darn good. One thing is for sure, our early potato crop is mighty beautiful!

### YOU SAY POTATO, I SAY DRIFTLESS ORGANICS!!

**P**otatoes. It is the crop that so many people think of when they think Driftless Organics. It is the crop that made Josh and Noah famous. They spent their formative years growing these red, brown, yellow and even blue tubers, spending long hours in the fields while most kids played video games.

It is a wonderful day when the first of the season's potatoes are unearthed, pungent with the rich smell of soil. When they are freshly washed, they gleam like exotic jewels. That day came this week and we celebrate with some fun facts about our specialty crop.

Josh and Noah started growing potatoes at the ages of 9 and 11. At first they grew about a 1/4 acre of spuds, which they planted, weeded, harvested and washed all by hand. From there, when Noah was still too young to drive, they purchased their first of what would soon become a long, illustrious and somewhat rusty line of different pieces of equipment.

Today, that line includes a piece of equipment for nearly every step of the process. There's an automated seed cutter and 4 row potato seed planter for the first steps of the

- ARUGULA
- BROCCOLI
- CILANTRO
- CUCUMBERS
- GARLIC
- GREEN ZUCCHINI
- JALAPENOS
- MINI RED WATERMELON
- PURPLE BEANS
- SWEET CORN
- SWEET PEPPERS
- RED OR YELLOW ONION
- RED POTATOES
- HEIRLOOM TOMATO MIX
- RED TOMATOES
- ROMA TOMATOES
- YELLOW SUMMER SQUASH
- BONUS: BASIL

process. Then, we have a few different types of cultivators (for getting rid of weeds) and hillers (you have to hill potatoes so that they grow bigger and remain underground), and most importantly a couple of different harvesters that are pulled by a big tractor.

For new potatoes (the first potatoes of the season - like the ones in your box which generally have much thinner skins), we use an old ginseng digger that digs into the earth and pulls out the taters, shaking the dirt off and then gently placing them on the ground. The crew follows with trays to pick up the potatoes. Our other, more gigantically-enormous harvester, doesn't get brought out until the fall harvest, where it, along with a crew of 8 can make quick work of acres of potatoes.

The final steps in the process of getting you your potatoes have to do with washing and packing. Yep, you guessed it, we have some pretty cool pieces of equipment to help us with that too.

From planting to packing, we have gotten pretty good at growing potatoes. I hope that the quality of the new red potatoes in your box can attest to that!



The harvester in action.

# YOUR BOX

**ARUGULA** - for all of you non-arugula fans, sorry about the prevalence of it in the boxes lately - it's one of the only salad greens that grows well in high summer. Looking for something new to do with it? Try substituting it for basil in your favorite pesto recipe.

**CILANTRO** - Use it to make some killer pico de gallo salsa (recipe below) with the roma or slicer tomatoes!

**CUCUMBERS** - are a great addition to gazpacho (cold tomato soup).

**GARLIC** - it's cured now, so go ahead & store it on the counter or cupboard - someplace relatively cool & dark is best, though, if you're not going to eat it for awhile.

**LACINATO KALE** - in my opinion is the best. This calcium-rich dark green-leafed heirloom from Italy is tender & sweet & easily added to all sorts of dishes. Or you can steam or flash-braise it by itself & drizzle with tamari or olive oil & lemon juice. Don't overcook it to preserve its high levels of vitamins A, B6, C, & K as well as several antioxidant phytonutrients.

**MINI WATERMELON** - Tastes the best when chilled.

**PURPLE BEANS** - are oh-so-lovely! If you want to keep their color, eat them raw - cooking will turn them into a plain old green bean. They look gorgeous chopped up in a salad or served whole on a fresh veggie platter.

**JALAPENO PEPPERS** - there will be three of these in your box. They are a darker green with some cracking and potentially a bit of reddening on the tip. A must for any type of salsa. Store in fridge.

**SWEET CORN** - please don't laugh or get upset at the site of only one ear of corn in your box. It's been a tough corn year! Besides, one ear is perfect for the salsa recipe below

## RED OR YELLOW ONION

**RED POTATOES** - are still classified as "new" potatoes as their skins haven't set. My favorite way to eat these is the simplest way: Steam them whole, split

them open, & dab them with butter, sour cream, chives, & fresh pepper. Heaven. Store them in a dark, cool place.

**HEIRLOOM TOMATOES** - You will be getting 4 different heirlooms this week: Nebraska Wedding' - (round, yellow, less acidic); a 'Cherokee Purple' (dark brownish-purple with green shoulders, bold tasting - my favorite tomato); a 'Pruden's Purple or Brandywine' - (reddish/pink, nice flavor) and a 'Red or Green Zebra' - (small, red or green and yellow stripes). They're best stored at room temperature (not in the fridge, where they will turn mealy). They are best eaten sliced on a plate all by themselves (or maybe with a bit of basil & olive oil & salt).

**ROMA TOMATOES** - are your standard paste tomato, which means they're really meaty with not many seeds. They'll work in pico de gallo, but they work even better for roasted salsa.

**SUNGOLD TOMATOES** are delicious & pretty in pico de gallo, adding some nice sweetness. But aren't they just great to eat out of hand?

**RED SLICER TOMATOES** - are your standard fair BLT tomato. Store them on the counter, not the fridge! Great in pico de gallo or a classic Greek salad (if you have any cukes leftover from last week, that is).

**SWEET PEPPERS** - There's about 3/4 # of minis rolling around your box again - they are the colored ones. Use in salads or sauces. There is also one red or yellow sweet pepper that can be treated the same. Store in the fridge.

**YELLOW SUMMER SQUASH AND GREEN ZUCCHINI** - is probably another thing you might be getting sick of - but hey! It's summer in the Midwest - there's going to be lots of summer squash! While you've got the grill going, be sure to roast some sliced, oiled & salted squash. It freezes great after roasting to toss into winter pastas & soups. This later season yellow squash doesn't keep as well as the earlier stuff, so please use it up within a day or two, either out of the fridge or on the counter.

## PICO DE GALLO (FRESH TOMATO SALSA)

2 medium slicer tomatoes or  
4 roma tomatoes  
1/2 medium yellow onion,  
coarsely chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 - 3 jalapeno peppers, finely  
chopped  
(seeds removed if you don't like  
it hot)  
3 Tbsp. cilantro, chopped  
1 lime, juiced  
salt to taste

Mix all ingredients & let sit for an hour for flavors to marry.

## ROASTED SALSA ON THE GRILL

1 onion, quartered  
2 or 3 cloves of garlic, left whole  
1 or two jalapeno peppers, left  
whole  
4-5 roma tomatoes, left whole  
1/2 a bunch of cilantro, chopped  
juice of a lime or two  
salt to taste  
one ear roasted corn

On a hot grill, place onions, garlic, & jalapeno(s). After a minute or two (check for scorching - you want a bit of blackness, but not total charring), turn all of the above & add romas. After another minute, turn anything that's getting black & carefully turn the tomatoes. With a spatula, remove all ingredients to a heat-proof bowl & let them sit until cooled a bit. Stem & de-seed the jalapeno(s) (you might want to wear gloves) & throw it all in your food processor with the cilantro, lime juice, & salt. Pulse to desired consistency. Stir in corn if desired. Over the summer, make this often as it freezes super well.