

THIS WEEK'S BOX:

- Acorn Squash
- Baby Red Bok Choi
- Banana Peppers
- Beauty Heart Radish
- Broccoli
- Brussel Sprouts
- Cilantro
- Frisee Endive
- Garlic
- Green Top Carrots
- Heart of Gold Squash
- Jalapeno Peppers
- Rutabaga
- Sweet Potatoes
- Yellow Onions
- Yellow Potatoes



News from the Fields of Driftless Organics

Week #19! It is hard for me to believe that, for many of you, this is the final week of the CSA season. And so soon! What a ride it has been this year and just like any season, we have had our share of challenges and triumphs. This growing year will always be known as the rainy summer of 2010. But, we are ending it on such a great note here and I hope you all agree that it has been a fun, educational and fruitful season filled with delicious and healthy meals. I just want to express how honored we are to have been your farmers and we hope to continue to be in the years to come.

This year, we tried something new out in the fields and added a harvest coordinator to our management team. We were finding that we just weren't out there enough, working alongside the crew and overseeing some of the more difficult harvests that we do here at Driftless. So, we needed someone who was a team leader, somebody who was familiar with our operation and our needs. Most importantly, we needed a person who understood how utterly important it is to maintain a high standard of quality and consistency out in the fields. The multi-talented Keefe Keeley was up to the task at hand and all season long he has been instrumental in keeping those veggies coming in and looking good. He has more than surpassed our expectations and we can't thank him enough. Thanks Keefe! Here he is to talk a bit about his experiences..

Keefe Says...

Harvesting for you this season has been a pleasure. It's rarely easy, but the joys of working outdoors for a good purpose with the camaraderie of a dedicated crew make the challenges well worth it.

Being out of doors in a place such as this is no small pleasure. As we harvested your cilantro earlier this week, a blue heron flew

low along one of the wooded hillsides that cradle our fields. Bald eagles, woodpeckers, kingfishers, and all sorts of song birds often grace us with their presence. Spiders scamper out of the scallions; tree frogs hug chard stems. There is a giant cottonwood near one field that rustles insistently with just the slightest breeze. And there is the sky, always above us as we work, which they say the ancients looked to for nourishment. Often my stronger sentiment is looking forward to lunch by about quarter to ten, but when the sun comes out from hiding on a cool morning in May, or when we're soothed on a scorching June afternoon as the sun returns to hiding, there's little doubt that our earthen bodies are profoundly responsive to the playful heavens. Oh heavens, I've gotten carried away. Where was I? Picking sweet peas?

Picking, pulling, weeding, washing, clipping, cutting, bunching, bagging: whatever the herb, fruit or vegetable may be, this is the good work we do for you. Each crop, be it stately sweet corn or humble spuds, has a precise protocol for harvesting and handling. Tomatoes, once inspected and liberated from their vine, lie shoulders down in collapsible trays lined with paper. Kale, properly bunched with twisties tight, fits 24 per tote – six layers of four in alternating directions – and is topped with a scoop of ice upon return to the pack shed. Fennel, cut less than a centimeter under the bulb, requires two quick diagonal strokes of the field knife to trim its frills. It's a dance of details, and each choreographed step of the harvest exists so that when you pick up your box, each and every bit inside is as fresh as possible.

This is our good purpose: providing you nourishment. Or, rather, gathering and sharing what sky, soil, and seed have provided for our nourishment.

I cannot say enough about how I value sharing this purpose with the Driftless folks. They are friends; they are family. They are some of the most inspiring people I have known: principled and generous, genuine and hard-working. Let me say that again. Hard-working. And dare I say then: good-looking? You saw the crew photo a few weeks back... So, thanks. It's been a pleasure.

--Keefe



Keefe, reveling in the radishes.

THIS WEEK'S BOX by Dani Lind

Acorn Squash – can be baked whole pierce the sides with a knife, or cut in half. Or try steaming it! Then, add a pat of butter, some fried or caramelized onions, salt and pepper to taste.

Baby Red Bok Choi – there are two of these in your box. They are delicious chopped up in stir-fries or miso soup or braised whole. Store in plastic in the fridge for several days.

Banana Peppers – two of these medium-heat peppers to spice up a stir fry.

Beauty Heart Radish – These are green and beige with a red tinge. On the inside, they are simply stunning. They are a mild winter radish that would be lovely grated in salads or try in the root slaw below.

Broccoli we understand that there has been a ton of broccoli in the boxes this year and if you are indeed getting sick of it, just remember, it freezes super well! Just cut into 1 inch segments, blanch (plunge in boiling water for 2 minutes), immediately dunk into ice water, drain and put into a freezer bag. It can be added, frozen, to stir fries and soups this winter.

Brussel Sprouts – Many people don't like Brussel sprouts because they're all too often served over-cooked, which makes them stinky and slimy. If you're one of those people, please try the super simple roasted Brussel sprouts recipe below - no hint of sliminess & roasting brings out all of their latent sweetness. We love them roasted just like that or boiled or steamed until just tender. Store in plastic & use up within a week or two. If the outer leaves get yellowed, simply trim the stem & peel them off.

Cilantro – the last of the cilantro for the year. Great in any Thai or Mexican dish. Store up to a week in a plastic bag in the fridge.

Frisee Endive – is the leafy green head in your box. It is from the chicory family that claims dandelions, escarole, & radicchio. It is a classic winter salad green as it thrives in cool weather. It is bitter, so pair it with sweet-tart dressings and something fatty like cheese or bacon. Try the salad recipe, below.

Gold Turnips – this is the root vegetable with a pale green top half and a pale yellow bottom half. Gold turnips are my favorite turnip - I think it's the sweetest, & the golden colored flesh makes me think of butter.

Green Top Carrots – cut the tops off and store in a plastic bag in the fridge. If you are getting your fill on carrots, they store very well in the fridge, in plastic.

Heart of Gold Squash - This squash has a sweet rich flavor and can be baked, mashed or steamed. Store in a cool dry place for up to 4 months.

Jalapeno Peppers – just a couple to add to some huevos rancheros.

Rutabaga – they are the large purple and beige roots in your box. They have a nice dark yellow-orange flesh and a very unique flavor. You'll want to peel these guys. They go great in the recipe below or in a roasted root vegetable recipe. Store in your fridge for up to 2 months.

Sweet Potatoes – Sweet potato pie? It is a fair amount of work (like any good pie), but well worth it. Sweet Potatoes store very well in a cool (not cold) and dry place.

Yellow Potatoes – We all know what to do with potatoes - and if you are feeling that you are getting inundated with them, just remember - they store! Make sure they are in a COOL & DARK place and they should keep for a couple of weeks at least. With proper storage, you'll have spuds into November.

Try roasting those roots: a great way to use up those roots like turnip, rutabaga, parsnip, and carrots: simply cube, coat with olive or sunflower oil, add whole cloves of garlic, salt and pepper (and herbs like rosemary or thyme) and spread out on a cookie sheet. Bake in a 425 degree oven until tender and golden brown (about 35-40 minutes).

Frisee Endive Salad

1/2 head of frisee
1/4 c. blue cheese, crumbled
1/4 c. dried cranberries
1/3 c. walnuts, broken into pieces
1 Tbsp. maple syrup
pinch of salt

Dressing:

1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
2 tsp. finely minced yellow onion
1 tsp. each grainy mustard & honey
1 1/2 Tbsp. sunflower, or olive oil
salt & pepper to taste

Wash endive & spin dry. Coarsely chop or rip leaves & place in serving bowl. In a small frying pan, toast walnuts for about a minute over high heat, stirring. Add maple syrup & pinch of salt & remove from heat. Set aside. In a small bowl, whisk together dressing ingredients. Pour over salad, toss to coat, top with cheese, raisins, & maple nuts. Serves 3-4

Roasted Brussel Sprouts

4 c. (1 lb.) brussel sprouts, trimmed & cut in half (large ones can be quartered)
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1/2 tsp. each coarse salt & pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Toss brussel sprouts with oil, salt, & pepper & pour onto a cookie sheet. Roast for 30-35 minutes, stirring a couple times, until starting to brown. Sprinkle with more salt if desired & serve immediately. Serves 3-4.

Sauce: drizzle with a mixture of honey, grainy mustard, minced yellow onions, & beer.

Root Vegetable Slaw

5 c. mixed root vegetables (like turnips, beauty heart radishes, carrots, celeriac, rutabaga, beets, etc.)
juice & zest of 1/2 lemon
1 egg yolk
1 tsp. apple cider vinegar
1 tsp. grainy mustard
1 tsp. honey
1/4 tsp. dried marjoram
1/8 tsp. chipotle powder
1/2 tsp. cumin seed, toasted (optional)
1/2 c. Driftless sunflower oil or olive oil
salt & pepper to taste

Grate vegetables & stir into lemon juice & zest in a bowl. In another bowl, whisk together remaining ingredients except oil. While whisking briskly, add oil in a slow stream until emulsified. Fold into vegetables and serve. Serves 4-6.