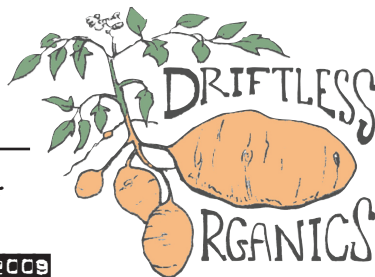


ONE POTATO



TWO

NEWS FROM THE FIELDS OF
DRIFTLESS ORGANICS

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THE BOX

WEEK #20... potatoes, potatoes and more potatoes... that's this week's theme in the fields as we harvest away with the hope of getting them up and out of the ground before we see another one of those 19° nights. We are feeling pretty good about our progress though, as all of the carrots, parsnips and sweet potatoes are harvested and in storage. According to my records, that puts us about three weeks ahead of last year's schedule. Excellent. I'm feeling good about this last box and I hope that you will too. Thanks to you all for a great season!

It's a sad, yet triumphant day, as we complete week 20's boxes. It has been a great, albeit cold, year with its share of ups and downs. Spring saw some amazing broccoli and pitiful peas; summer came and gave us a tornado, tomato blight and some wonderful carrots. Noah got married and we all celebrated. This fall kicked off with a rocking barn party and we are pulling in a wonderful sweet potato and cabbage harvest. Out in the field sits what appears to be a mighty nice looking crop of spuds.

With the end of the year comes reflection and the 'what ifs' and 'wish there could've's'. I would've loved to have seen more edamame and sweet corn in your boxes. It is always tough to know what and how much to put into your box

and we're constantly struggling to find that balance. It is doubly hard when nature doesn't cooperate.

And where the heck was the fall broccoli? Well, one planting was a failure due to some weird black spots and another just didn't grow fast enough to produce heads in time. This is one of the big bummers of an otherwise wonderful fall bounty - no broccoli. We hope to avoid this next year and offer broccoli through the end of the season.

With winter approaching, the obvious question gets asked us over and over: what do you guys do during the "off" months? Well, we stay pretty darn busy with filling orders for the Twin Cities' Co-ops every week. We also go to the farmers market in Madison every Saturday for the majority of the winter. There is also the two CSA storage boxes to wash, pack and deliver. (They are still available for order!)

Between all of this, we tackle the enormous mountain of harvest and yield data (office work). Plus, there's always a million little tractor repairs and of course, maintenance of the multitude of machines and motors.

Once January hits, we start the whole process over again, starting with seed ordering, field planning and then the greenhouse work begins in February. The cycle continues...

BUTTERNUT SQUASH
CARNIVAL SQUASH
CARROTS
CHIOGGIA BEETS
FENNEL
GARLIC
JALAPENO PEPPERS
LEEKs
ONIONS
PARSNIPS
RED CABBAGE
RED OR GREEN LEAF
LETTUCE
RED POTATOES
SWEET POTATOES

Winter is also the time for CSA recruitment and this is where (hopefully) all of you fit in. We did it last year and we will no doubt do it this year once again - offer to all returning members a reduced subscription rate if you sign up before a designated time (usually by the end of January). There will be plenty more about that in the months to come.

And what's the plan for next year? More of the same, for the most part, just better!

There are a few things that we would like to try growing next year to continue adding diversity to the boxes. Purple cauliflower, brussel sprouts and cantaloupe to name a few. Raspberries are at the top of the list though, as this is a treat sorely missed. We'd also like to extend the season by at least a week to be able to offer more goodness for longer in the year.

We hope you are around to see these improvements and additions. We love what we do and it is because of you that we are able to do it and for that we are forever grateful. So, THANK YOU for such a wonderful season and for all of your support throughout the year. We hope to be able to grow again for you next season!

--Mike



Our giant potato harvester, ready for action.

YOUR BOX

BUTTERNUT SQUASH - a moist yellow fleshed classic squash. Best to cut in half, scoop out seeds, place cut-side down on a baking sheet, & bake at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes, until soft but not collapsed. Flip over so cut side is up, place a pat of butter & a sprinkling of brown sugar on top, & bake for another 5 minutes.

BABY LEAF LETTUCE - we've managed to keep a nice looking, albeit small, crop of lettuce alive and we're happy that you have something fresh and green for your box!

CARNIVAL SQUASH - a creamy-orange fleshed cross between Acorn & Delicata squashes. Best to cut in half, scoop out seeds, & bake cut side down.

CHIOGGIA BEETS - an Italian heirloom striped squash. Bleeds less than red varieties; grates pink on salads. Boil, steam, or bake whole & then slice to preserve pretty red stripes. Store in plastic in fridge or they will get soft. Try using these beets in the fabulous recipe from last week!

CARROTS - super sweet this time of year. Also store in plastic in fridge.

RED CABBAGE - makes gorgeous coleslaw or additions to green salad or stir-fries.

LEEKS - a relative of the onion, leeks will sweeten as they cook. Make sure you wash thoroughly, as dirt likes to hide in between the layers of the your leeks. Try adding steamed leeks to a batch of mashed potatoes.

LACINATO KALE - nice & sweet after a few frosts! Easy to add to soups, stir-fries, sauces, egg dishes, etc. or steam or braise all by itself. Best to remove the tough stems before chopping up the leaves. Store in plastic in fridge & use within a week.

FENNEL - is used a lot in Greek and Italian cooking and has a wonderful licorice-type flavor. This fennel was slightly frost damaged & will be best cooked rather than raw & used up within a few days. Also delicious in

Thai stir-fries, soups, & curries.

PARSNIPS - these sweet, creamy fleshed relatives of carrots & parsley have been cultivated for centuries in Europe. Try sauteing them in butter with a dash of salt and pepper. Or add them to a nice beef or venison roast with onions, potatoes, & carrots. They store well in a plastic bag in the fridge.

JALAPENO PEPPERS - Try making 'Cowboy Candy' by chopping all of your jalapenos, add about 1/4 - 1/2 cup of sugar and a 1/8 - 1/4 cup of water - boil it all together until it gets a bit thick - pour it into a small mason jar and stick in the fridge. Goes great with cream cheese on a cracker. Honest!

RED BEETS - Try the super easy & delicious fresh beet salad recipe - Mike loves it even though he thinks he hates beets! It's especially good made with Driftless sunflower oil! Or toss them with other root veggies & roast them. You can or can not peel them, as you wish (I usually don't bother). Beets will keep for several weeks in your fridge so don't feel pressured to use them up right away.

RED POTATOES - You should probably be peeling these potatoes (or scrub the heck out of them), as the skins are pretty ugly. But the potato inside is creamy and delicious and well worth the extra work. This is your standard white fleshed potato for boiling, steaming, skin-on mashed potatoes or potato salad, or soups, like the Potato Leek Soup recipe, below.

SWEET POTATOES - what a fantastic looking crop this year! Sweet potatoes are the same vegetable as what is commonly, but mistakenly, referred to as a "yam" in grocery stores & recipes. The sweet potato is native to South America & was cultivated by Native Americans in South & Central America. The true yam, on the other hand, is a large starchy tuber native to Africa. Sweet potatoes are chocked full of nutrients like vitamins A & C & lots of minerals & fiber. Roast & mash them, add them to soups & chili, or make them into the best dang oven fries. Store at room temperature (they don't like moist, cold conditions).

SWEET POTATO APPLE SAUSAGE BAKE

Try this incredibly easy & comforting dish from Noah's mother-in-law.
3 parts sweet potatoes, peeled & cut into 1" cubes
2 part apples, cubed a bit smaller
1 part Italian sausage, rolled into small balls
1 part onions, cut into thick pieces (optional)
salt & pepper to taste
Mix all ingredients into a single layer in a cast iron pan or baking dish. Bake at 350 for about 45 minutes or 400 degrees for about 30 minutes. No need for oil, the grease from the sausage & juice from the apples suffice for moisture.

CREAMY PARSNIPS AND PEARS

2 pounds parsnips, peeled and cut into 2-inch pieces
1 large pear, (Bartlett or Anjou), peeled, cored and halved
4 cloves garlic, peeled
1 tablespoon butter
2 teaspoons lemon juice, juice
1/4 teaspoon salt, or to taste
Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Place parsnips, pear and garlic in a large saucepan and cover with lightly salted water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover and simmer until the parsnips are tender and can be easily pierced with a knife, 20 to 25 minutes.

Drain and transfer to a food processor. Add butter, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Process until completely smooth. Scrape into a serving bowl and serve hot. (To keep puree hot for up to 1 hour, cover with parchment or wax paper and set the bowl in a pan of barely simmering water.)

Makes 8 servings