



News FROM THE FIELDS of
 Driftless Organics!
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ONE POTATO TWO

Hello and Happy Fall! We're so glad that you ordered one of these wonderful storage boxes and hope that you are as excited as we are about the delicious contents inside.

The November (and December) storage boxes are by far my favorite boxes of the year to pack. Perhaps it is because all of the work of harvesting is already complete and the veggies are safely stored in our coolers. Or maybe it's because of all the beautiful colors inside the boxes. Most likely it is because I just love to eat these types of vegetables, which can so easily and successfully be transformed into comfort dishes of all types.

Plus, I just love the idea of all you folks buying a whole huge box of veggies at a discounted "bulk" price and cooking up gigantic feasts with friends and family. I can picture it already: kitchens filled with the sounds and smells of the ensuing feast, dinner tables cluttered with steaming plates of roasted vegetables and heaping bowls of Driftless Organics mashed potatoes. Laughter, shouting and smiles abound. I love it. This is what life is all about!!!

The vegetables in these boxes were grown, harvested, washed and packed with a tremendous amount of intention and love. The contents truly represent a year on the farm at Driftless Organics. From the garlic that was planted all the way back in November 2012, to all the seeds being ordered in January, to the days and months of planning, planting, weeding, weeding, and more weeding; to the harvesting, storing, washing, packing and finally, to the delivering this week (phew, we did it!).

I just know that you-all will continue this awesome cycle with the best part of the equation: eating the veggies inside. I give thanks to our wonderful CSA members and wish a Happy Thanksgiving to you all!

--Mike

THIS WEEK'S BOX

- Acorn Squash
- Beauty Heart Radishes
- Butternut Squash
- Carrots
- Celeriac
- Garlic
- Green or Red Cabbage
- Green Kale Tops
- Leeks
- Onions
- Parsnips
- Red Beets
- Red Potatoes
- Rutabaga
- Scarlet Turnips
- Sweet Potatoes
- Yellow Potatoes

DID YOU KNOW?

Speaking of "storage" boxes, did you know that people have been preserving and storing food since the beginning of mankind? This seems pretty obvious I know, but it is kind of mind boggling to think that people preserved food WITHOUT refrigeration for thousands of years! Once we all pick up our CSA boxes, we'll most likely stick the majority of our box into the fridge (NOT the sweet potatoes, duh...) but check out all the other methods people have used to keep their food fresh throughout the ages:

Drying - Middle Eastern and Asian cultures actively dried foods as early as 12,000 B.C. in the hot sun.

Fermenting - Grains fermented into beer, fruits fermented into wine, cabbage into Kim chi or sauerkraut, and so on. Some anthropologists believe that mankind settled down from nomadic wanderers into farmers to grow barley to make beer in roughly 10,000 B.C.

Pickling - is preserving foods in vinegar (or other acid). There was a spectacular increase in pickling in the sixteenth century owing to the arrival in Europe of new foods from Asia. Spices were added to pickling sauces to make clever things like chutneys, relishes, piccalillis, mustards, and ketchups. "Quick Pickles" can be made from things like Beauty Heart Radishes, turnips and even Kale. We have recipes on our website!

Curing - Food curing dates back to ancient times, both in the form of smoked meat and as salt-cured meat. The Plains Indians hung their meat at the top of their teepees to increase the amount of smoke coming into contact with the food. Although curing is primarily for meat, we do cure a few veggies before we send them to you, including sweet potatoes and winter squash (this type of curing is basically storing them at a certain temperature and humidity for a given length of time).

Root Cellars - Records indicate that over 40,000 years ago Native Australians were growing large amounts of yams and developing techniques of burying their produce in order to preserve it for future use. The actual use of walk-in root cellars as a means to prolong the freshness of fruit and vegetable crops was probably an invention that occurred in 17th century England.



Rachael & James: Driftless Gothic

Hi there CSA folks – Don't forget: all of the following information and many, many more recipes are online on our website at: www.driftlessorganics.com/recipes. We have amassed over SEVEN years worth of CSA newsletter recipes for you to peruse. So, check it out, it's an invaluable resource for making the most of your CSA boxes. I've found the best way to use up a lot of veggies quick is by roasting them. You can roast just about ANY vegetable, and I've found the more you mix together, the better tasting your dish will be. It's really simple to roast vegetables: simply chop up into bite-sized cubes, toss in oil, salt, pepper and any other spices you like and lay out on a cookie sheet. Bake at 400 for 20-30 minutes (stir a few times and check for doneness).

Acorn Squash - a nice squash for cutting in half, roasting, & mashing with butter & brown sugar or maple syrup. If you pierce the sides with a knife, you could even bake it whole! Or cream it with roasted garlic & Parmesan. It's definitely easy to get acorn squash into your belly! Store the same as butternuts.

Beauty Heart Radish - Look for 2-3 round balls that are white and green with pinkish roots coming out of the bottom. They are a vibrant pink on the inside. This winter radish is nice sliced with dip, or cooked in stir-fries, roasts, curries, or soups. I usually only peel them later in the season, after storage has made their skin thicker. The skin, just so you know, is where a lot of the bite is stored. The longer you keep these radishes, the milder they will become. Will keep in plastic in the fridge for months.

Butternut Squash - I think the best all-purpose winter squash: perfect smooth texture, not too dry or too wet, and they have a nice earthy sweet squash flavor. the most versatile of winter squashes, as it can be roasted whole/ cut in half or easily peeled & cut up for soups, curries, mixed roasted veggies, etc. Leftover roasted squash freezes really well. Did you know most commercially canned "Pumpkin" is actually butternut squash? Store at room temperature or a little cooler – it should keep for several weeks.

Carrots - speaking of juicing... Seriously, though, we're really proud of our carrots this year – they're big & crisp & sweet & beautiful. Eat them raw or steamed, stir-fried, braised,

or roasted. I've been making a really nice spicy pureed soup with roasted carrots & pears this fall – check out the recipe, below. No need to peel these carrots – the skin is very nutritious & they're organic! They'll keep for many weeks in plastic in the fridge.

Celeriac - Look for the crazy knobbily looking root that might have come out of Pans Labyrinth. Historically, celeriac, or celery root, was how we ate celery; it's only in the last couple hundred years that we have been eating the stalks. And Wisconsin celeriac is distinct for its celery-intense flavor, combined with sweetness (which you won't find in the temperate climates). A happy marriage indeed! Makes an amazing addition to pureed soups (like potato leek or sweet potato bisque), adding both creamy body & rich celery flavor. Stored in plastic in the fridge it will keep for weeks.

Green OR Red Cabbage - use raw in slaws or on tacos, or steam, sauté, stir-fry, braise, roast, or even grill it! It's also surprisingly nice in mixed fruit/vegetable juices. Will keep best out of plastic in the crisper drawer of your fridge. If the outer leaves get wilted, simply peel them off. If you don't use the whole cabbage at once, store the rest in plastic in the fridge.

Green Kale Tops - it's so nice that we still have kale! Sauté, stir-fry, or simmer it in soups or sauces. Lightly steam whole and serve with olive oil (or our very own Driftless Sunflower Oil!) with a bit of lemon juice and/or shaved aged cheese. Or toss it in oil & bake for kale chips. Keep in plastic in the fridge & use in a week.

Leeks - a mild member of the onion family. Most folks toss the green part, but I love to wash them well & use them in soup stocks (save your roasted turkey carcass this Thanksgiving & make some killer turkey stock with it, leek tops & all your other veggie trimmings – see the method, below).

Parsnips - roast or braise them on their own or with other root veggies. I also like to boil them with potatoes & mash them all together. Delicious in pot-roasts or braised with dark beer or apple cider. Only peel them if their skin has started to brown.

Stored in plastic in the fridge, they should keep for a few weeks.

Red Beets - grate them raw on salads or in slaws, or roast them whole or cut up (no need to peel) & tossed in oil. Will keep for weeks/months in plastic in the fridge.

Red Onions - nicest to use red onions where you can appreciate their color, namely in raw applications like salads or salsas or cooked ones like pizza or nacho toppings, or in dark caramelized onions. Store in a dark cool place loose or in paper, not plastic.

Red Potatoes - waxier than the yellow potatoes, these are nice for boiled/steamed potatoes, potato salads, skin-on mashed potatoes, or roasts/soups where you want your potato to hold its shape. Unless you must, please don't peel them – it's extra work, you lose nutrients, & they're organic! Store in a dark cool place in paper, not plastic.

Rutabaga - Look for the big whitish roots with purple on them. Also called "Swedes", these root vegetables are a bit sweeter than their close relative the turnip. Like parsnips, I like to add them to potatoes for mashing, but also love them in pot roasts or mixed root vegetable roasts or hash. You can also eat them raw in coleslaw. They'll keep in plastic in the fridge for months. Their skin is rather thick, so I usually peel it.

Scarlet Turnips - a lovely mild turnip with white flesh streaked with magenta. Delicious raw or cooked as you would rutabaga. Like the beauty heart radishes, I usually only peel them if they've been stored for a while. Store in plastic in the fridge.

Sweet Potatoes - Try topping your sweet potatoes with caramelized onions & maple candied pecans instead of marshmallows for Thanksgiving this year – the recipe's below. Should keep for a couple weeks or more at room temperature loose or in paper, never in plastic or in the fridge.

Yellow Potatoes - starchier than red potatoes but not as starchy as a Russet, our yellow potatoes are very all-purpose. Use them in gratins, mashes, soups, stews, roasts, or whole as a baked potato. Ditto on the red potatoes for peeling & storing.

Sweet Potatoes with Caramelized Onions & Maple Pecans

2 lb. sweet potatoes, whole
1 Tbsp. butter
3 Tbsp. heavy cream
1 Tbsp. oil
3 medium red onions, sliced
Water, wine, or balsamic vinegar for deglazing onions
½ c. pecan pieces
1 Tbsp. maple syrup
Salt & pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Prick sweet potatoes in a couple places with a fork or knife & roast whole on a baking sheet until soft, about 30-40 minutes (while they're roasting, get going on the caramelized onions & candied pecans). Remove from oven & let cool enough to handle, then scoop out flesh into an oiled casserole dish & mash with butter, cream, salt, & pepper. Set aside.

Heat oil over medium-high heat in a large, heavy bottomed skillet (preferably not non-stick) & add onions. Spread them out evenly over the pan & let cook, stirring occasionally & reducing the heat to medium or medium low to prevent the onions from burning or drying out. Sprinkle some salt over the onions & let cook for 30-45 minutes, stirring frequently. Add a little water or wine to the pan whenever they really start to stick (you want them to brown as that's how their sugars caramelize, but not burn). As the onions cook down, you may have to scrape the pan more frequently. Continue to cook & scrape until the onions are a rich, browned color. At the end of the cooking process add a little wine or balsamic vinegar to deglaze the pan. Spread over the prepared sweet potatoes in the casserole dish. At this point you can reheat it or refrigerate & save for later (will store for a few days in the fridge). Cover with tinfoil & reheat at 350 degrees to serve (about 10 minutes if it's still warm, or 30 minutes if you've refrigerated it).

While you're roasting the sweet potatoes, toss pecans, maple syrup, & some salt in a bowl & spread out in a single layer on a greased, rimmed baking sheet. Roast in the 400 degree oven (with the sweet potatoes is fine) for 8-12 minutes, stirring once or twice, until toasty brown. Let cool on a rack. Sprinkle over hot casserole right before serving. Serves 6-8.

Spicy Roasted Carrot & Pear Soup

Spicy Roasted Carrot & Pear Soup
6 cups diced carrots
Oil, salt, & pepper
1 medium yellow onion, diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1-3 fresh hot red chiles (stemmed, seeded, & chopped), OR 1-3 tsp. dried chile flakes, or 1/4-1 tsp. cayenne pepper, to taste
2 large pears, diced
1 quart veggie, chicken (or turkey!) stock or water
Salt & pepper to taste
Cream, half & half, condensed milk, or crème fraiche (optional)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Toss carrots with about 1 Tbsp. of oil, spread in a single layer on a baking sheet, & sprinkle with salt & pepper. Roast, turning them once or twice, until starting to brown, about 20-30 minutes. About 10 minutes before carrots are done, heat another Tbsp. of oil in a heavy bottomed soup pot. Add onions & sauté until golden. Add garlic & chiles & sauté another minute or so so. Add pears, stock/water & carrots as soon as they've started to brown in the oven. Simmer until pears & carrots are very soft, about 15 minutes. Puree well with an immersion blender or in batches in a food processor/blender & return to pot. Add cream if using, return to a simmer, adjust seasoning as desired, & serve. Serves 4-6.

Best Damn Mashed Potatoes (or: How to get the kids to eat parsnips)

4 pounds potatoes, quartered
1 pound parsnips, (about half of what's in your box),
peeled and cut into large chunks
1 tablespoon salt
1 cup milk
6 to 8 tablespoons unsalted butter
Freshly ground pepper

We prefer to leave our potatoes with their skin on because that's where most of its nutrients lie. This makes for a more "rustic" mashed potato dish, but otherwise doesn't affect the flavor of the dish.

Place potatoes and parsnips in a large pot, cover with water, and add 1 tablespoon salt. Bring to a simmer and cook for 20 to 25 minutes, or until potatoes are very tender. Drain, return to pot, and mash until almost smooth (or leave slightly chunky, if you prefer). Heat milk with 6 tablespoons of butter until scalding and then add in slowly, mashing or stirring into potatoes until smooth. Season with pepper. Dot with remaining butter, if desired. Serves 4-6.

Kale & Potato Gratin

1 1/2 pounds red or yellow potatoes
1/4 cup olive oil or Driftless sunflower oil
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoon coarse salt
1 teaspoon pepper
1/3 cup bread crumbs
1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
2 kale tops

Preheat oven to 350° F.

Get a pot of water boiling large enough to accommodate the potatoes.

Meanwhile, slice the potatoes 1/4"-thick. Set aside. Remove and discard the spines from the kale then chop the remaining leaves in 1/2"-thick ribbons by stacking the leaves and slicing in the direction of the veins. This doesn't need to be exact, as long as you end up with a pile of roughly 1/2"-thick shreds of kale.

When the water is boiling, add a dash of salt and gently drop in the potatoes, cooking for about 2-3 minutes, until tender, but not cooked through. Drain and rinse with cold water until cooled. Drain again and dump onto a dish towel and blot.

In a large bowl, combine the olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper. Add the kale and rub the olive oil mixture aggressively into the leaves. Layer the kale and potatoes alternately with a sprinkling of bread crumbs and Parmesan in a 9"x12" rectangular casserole or glass or ceramic baking dish.

Cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil and bake another 15 minutes, until top is crispy.

Serves 8.

Root Vegetable Quick Pickles

1 quart jar w/ lid
2 cups white distilled vinegar
1 tsp. sugar
1 Tbsp. black peppercorns
1 Tbsp minced garlic
1 Tbsp mustard seed
1 tsp salt
1 lb of root carrots, beauty heart radishes, turnips, etc, thinly sliced (use a mandolin for best results)

Combine first six ingredients in a pot, and bring to a boil. Once it boils, dump in vegetables. Turn off the heat, so the vegetables stay crisp. Ladle immediately into your clean canning jar. Cover with lid. Let them sit in the fridge for at least three days before opening, and up to three weeks.

Once opened, enjoy the pickles soon while they're still fresh.

Note: This recipe makes for some powerful, tangy pickles. If you prefer a milder mix, I'd recommend swapping in half water-half vinegar, and adding a touch of honey.

Turkey Stock

This is a great way to make the most of your turkey & vegetables this Thanksgiving: After the Thanksgiving meal, I remove any roasted meat that may still be lurking on the bones & then place the rest of the carcass in a large stock pot just barely covered with cold water. Bring this just to a boil & turn the heat down to maintain a very gentle simmer for 2 to 3 hours, skimming off any scum that may foam up. Then add your vegetable trimmings, making sure they include plenty of onions, leek tops, carrots, & leeks (I usually avoid anything in the cabbage family), any fresh herbs or herb stems you may have lying around (parsley, rosemary, sage, & thyme especially), a couple bay leaves, & some whole peppercorns. Keep that same super gentle simmer (never a rolling boil) going for another hour or so. Strain & pour into a couple heat-proof containers so it can cool down quickly in the fridge. After it's cool, you can spoon off the fat that's solidified on the surface & discard it if you wish. Use the stock to make turkey soup with Thanksgiving leftovers or portion into freezer-safe containers for winter soups.

This Ain't Grandma's Sweet Potato Casserole (vegan)

adapted from *Fat Free Vegan blog*.

4 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cooked
2 tablespoons vegan butter (I used Earth Balance)
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
5 tbs pure maple syrup
1/2 teaspoon fine grain salt
3/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
3/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup Earth Balance
1/2 cup Sucanat (or brown sugar)
1/3 cup white or spelt flour (or gluten-free)
3/4 cups chopped pecans (I didn't have- optional)

Directions: Preheat the oven to 350 F and lightly grease a 2 quart casserole dish with canola oil. I wipe a bit on with a paper towel. Peel and then boil sweet potatoes until tender. Mash the sweet potatoes with the margarine until smooth. Add the vanilla, maple syrup, sea salt, nutmeg and cinnamon. Pour into casserole dish. Next, mix the topping ingredients together until well-combined. Sprinkle topping mixture over the casserole and bake for approx. 50 minutes, checking it every so often. Serves 10.