



News FROM THE FIELDS of
Driftless Organics!
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ONE POTATO TWO

Hello and Happy New Year! Things are still trucking along at the farm. Is it ever going to slow down? Probably not, but that's OK, because we are having tons

of fun and keeping ourselves out of trouble. After this week's box - there are TWO more deliveries: Jan 18th and Feb 1st. Stay warm!
--Mike

THIS WEEK'S BOX

Carrots
Parsnips
Red Cylinder Beets
Red Potatoes
Rutabaga
Yellow Onions
Sweet Potatoes
Winter Squash



Our new packing shed (center) with the office & crew trailer on the left and big walk-in cooler poking up behind.

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that we are building a new pack shed on the farm? Probably, considering that's about all I've been talking about lately. What's a pack shed, you ask? Well, a pack shed, or packing shed, or pack house, is a fancy warehouse type building that houses various washing and packing equipment used on a vegetable farm. It also houses or is adjacent to the area where the vegetables are stored. This area is called the cooler, or walk-in cooler.

For the past 6 or years we have been washing and packing your vegetables out of a rented building that was once a small, local cheese factory. We've retrofitted this building, built in the early 1900s, to suit our needs and it has served us well over the years. But in all reality, it has never been exactly the kind of building we need to do the job right. From the moment we moved into that cheese factory, we knew (or at least, hoped) it would just be a temporary stay.

So, after years and years of dreaming and scheming, we are finally about to make our dreams a reality! Ground on our new dream building was broken in 2012, but the real progress didn't begin until this fall. And then, it all happened up so fast! The concrete was poured, the lines dug, the steel frame assembled and before we knew it the building was up! Our fancy new pack shed is a steel structure with radiant floor heating, super efficient lighting, crazy awesome insulation and a huge loading dock. And it is BEAUTIFUL!

I can't explain to you how amazingly huge of an event this really is. To small scale vegetable farmers like us, a new pack shed is such a gigantic expense that it oftentimes never materializes. We all start out so small and "primitive" - usually washing veggies outside in a dunk tank and a hose. As a business grows, so does its infrastructure, but it is just so darn difficult (and expensive) to get the kind of packing shed that is needed. But we are doing it! And do you know that one of the main reasons that we are able to do this? Because of all of you! Because of your Community Support in Local Agriculture, we've been able to keep on keeping on, creating local jobs that keep the money in the community, keeping farm land in organic production, bolstering the local economy and most importantly, growing good wholesome nutritious food for good folks like you. Can you kind of see now why this is so much more than just a fancy new building?

2014 CSA SIGN-UP HAS BEGUN!

Take advantage of our EARLY BIRD DISCOUNTS and sign up for the new season today:

www.driftlessorganics.csasignup.com

THIS WEEK'S BOX

Carrots - another 3lb pack of carrot goodness. There are a number of really awesome recipes using carrots on our website at: www.driftlessorganics.com/recipes/carrots/. My favorite is the Ginger Glazed Carrots. Store your carrots in the plastic bag they came in and they should keep for a few weeks.

Yellow Onions - these onions are so tasty that we like to simply quarter them and add to our roasted vegetable dishes. Simply cut up with your potatoes, parsnips, sweet potatoes, etc; coat with oil, salt and pepper and place on a cookie sheet in the oven. Store in your pantry or somewhere else that is dry.

Parsnips - Did you know that you can mash parsnips? Yep - we like to mash them up with potatoes for an interesting twist on your regular old mashed potatoes. Store in a plastic bag in your fridge.

Red Cylinder Beets - What do you think of these guys? This is our first year growing "cylinder" beets and we are trying to decide if we want to grow them again. The taste isn't that much different (maybe a touch sweeter) and the only thing we see different is the shape. What do you think?

Red Potatoes - Red potatoes are my favorite for cubing up reeeeeeally small with parsnips and sweet potatoes and some corned beef

(cubed up small as well) and then simmering for 20 minutes or so in oil and some water. This makes for an awesome and easy corned beef hash. Add a poached egg on top for a truly out of this world brunch. Store in the paper bag they came in.

Sweet Potatoes - Mike's favorite thing to do with sweet potatoes is to make fries out of them! It's super easy: peel and cut into fry-like shapes. Toss with oil (we use Driftless Sunflower Oil, of course), salt and pepper. If you like 'em spicy, throw some cayenne, chili powder or chipotle powder in with the mix. Mix around in a bowl and spread out on a greased cookie sheet. Bake for 30-40 minutes or until browned and tender. Make sure to stir them a couple times while cooking. Serve with ketchup. Better make extra in case Mike show's up!

Winter Squash - You will be receiving a combination of Butternut, Acorn and/or Carnival squash. Our squash is starting to not keep for that long, so try to use this up as soon as you can. Probably the last box with winter squash for the season (unless we can find some from another organic farm to purchase). What to do with your remaining squash? Just plain ol' roasting in the oven face down and then adding butter, salt and pepper is my favorite! Check out the website for tons more awesome recipes...

Root Veggie Gratin with Horseradish Crust

- 2 ½ lbs. mixed root vegetables (rutabaga, parsnip, sweet potato, etc.)
- 4 ounces grated cheddar cheese
- 3 Tbsp. flour
- ½ cup rye bread crumbs
- 2 cups whole milk, heated
- 1-2 Tbsp. Driftless sunflower oil
- 3 Tbsp. butter
- 1/3 cup apple cider or wine
- 1 Tbsp. minced garlic
- 1/8 tsp. nutmeg
- Salt & pepper
- 2 Tbsp. prepared horseradish

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Spread vegetables & garlic in large baking dish, drizzle with oil & cider or wine. Season to taste with salt & pepper, & toss well. Cover dish tightly with aluminum foil & bake 20 minutes. Remove foil & continue to roast until vegetables are brown-tipped & tender 20-25 min. Meanwhile, start make a white sauce by melting the butter in a saucepan. Stir in flour & cook over low heat several minutes. Whisk in milk, bring to simmer, & cook gently 10 minutes, stirring often. Season with salt, pepper, & nutmeg. Gently fold the sauce into the roasted vegetables. Mix horseradish, cheddar, & bread crumbs with your fingers. Scatter the mixture evenly over the vegetables. Continue to bake until bubbly, 20- 30 minutes.

Red Beet Hummus

- 1 pound beets (about 6 medium sized beets), scrubbed clean, cooked, peeled, and cubed*
- 4 Tbsp tahini sesame seed paste
- 5 Tbsp lemon juice
- 2 small clove garlic, chopped
- 2 Tbsp ground cumin
- 2 Tbsp lemon zest (zest from approx. 2 lemons)
- Generous pinch of sea salt or Kosher salt
- Fresh ground pepper to taste

* To cook the beets, cover with water in a saucepan and simmer until tender, about 20 minutes. Peel once they have cooled. Place all ingredients in a food processor (or blender) and pulse until smooth. Taste and adjust seasonings and ingredients as desired. Chill and store in the refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze for longer storage. Eat with pita chips, carrot sticks, or on a crostini with some sort of spreadable cheese.