



DRIFTLESS ORGANICS CSA NEWSLETTER

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Week 1: *Hello and welcome to the first CSA box of the spring! All is well and slightly crazy on the farm. We love this time of year for all the chaos it brings. We are so happy to be outside, in the dirt, and working with live plants again. The farm is full of possibilities and it is so fun to watch the fields fill up with wee veggie plants! It is time to get excited for this week's box because it is full of some amazing spring veggies like asparagus and rhubarb. Spring is here and it's time to start eating fresh, local Driftless Organics' veggies once again. Thanks for joining us this year - we're happy to have you aboard!*

-- Mike

WHAT'S IN THE BOX
Asparagus
Black Spanish Radishes
Bok Choy
Chives
Green Garlic
Red Chili Beans
Red Potatoes
Red Radishes
Rhubarb

Did you know?

Did you know that asparagus is a perennial vegetable? Wait, wait... let's back up. Do you know what a "perennial" vegetable is? It's any vegetable that comes back year after year. Asparagus and rhubarb are two good examples of perennials. It takes a few years of nurturing after you plant an asparagus "crown" (root ball) before you can start harvesting from that plant. Back in 2013, we planted a whole bunch of crowns and now we have been reaping the benefits for the last two springs. Asparagus plants can survive for a really long time. I've heard that there's a commercial patch in New Zealand that's over 50 years old?! Most patches will last for about 20 years of good production, as long as you feed the roots and keep them relatively weed free. We harvest from our asparagus patch 3 days a week for about 4 weeks. After that, we let the remaining spears grow up tall and leaf out, sending vital energy from the sun back into the crowns to keep them strong through the winter and into the next season.

What the Heck Do I Do With Red Chili Beans?

We're so excited to be offering you all a food staple that you wouldn't typically think of as

being grown on a Midwestern vegetable farm like ours. Enter: Red Chili Beans! Farmer Josh, who is responsible for growing the sunflowers for our signature sunflower oil has been experimenting with some other non-vegetable crops like dry beans. These little beans are from last years harvest and have been sorted and cleaned by us this winter. First, be sure to rinse your beans in a colander.

Like any dry bean, you will need to soften your red chili beans by either soaking them overnight and then simmer for 2-3 hours or just pressure cook without soaking for 25-30 minutes.

Look for any stones or dirt we might have missed. Then soak overnight (at least 8 hours), then drain and add fresh water and boil for a couple minutes. Then simmer for 2 + hours (or until tender). Don't add salt until the very end. There is a pound and a half of beans in your box - which should make about 5-6 cups of cooked beans. Try some red beans and rice or how about some red bean chili? Nachos? Huevos Rancheros? The possibilities are endless! It's easiest just to cook up all the beans at once and then use what you need for a meal and store the rest for the next meal.

Just be sure to use the cooked

beans up within a week.

Crop	What's it look like?	Storage?	How do I use it?
Asparagus	Light green and purple spears about 8-10" in length.	Ideally: store them in your fridge. standing up in a glass jar, in about an inch of water. Or - in a plastic bag works too!	Our favorite thing is to simply steam asparagus for a minute or two (until tender, but not too soft) and then squeeze lemon, add olive oil, salt & pepper
Black Spanish Radishes	Look for 2-3 spherical roots that are a beautiful matte black color.	Store in a plastic bag in your fridge.	Thinly slice and add to tacos, salads, burgers, or coleslaws.
Bok Choy	Kind of like a head of lettuce, but with thick white stems.	Gently take your bok choy out of your box and place in a plastic bag.	In dishes like a stir fry, it's best to remove stems and cook them a bit longer than the leaves. Or, check out the recipe below.
Chives	Look for the small bunch of fragrant "grassy" looking leaves.	Store in a small plastic bag or ziploc.	Chop up and add to an egg scramble or potato dish. Add at the very end before serving.
Green Garlic	Look for a bunch of green leaves and white bottoms that sort of look like scallions (green onions).	Store in a plastic bag with your chives.	You can use all of the white and even some of the green that is closest to the white. Chop up and sauté in place of garlic.
Red Chili Beans	There will be a small paper bag with a clear window and red beans inside!	Store in their bag, in the fridge or in a jar in the pantry.	Check out page 1 to learn more about using your beans.
Red Potatoes	Look for the brown paper bag with 4 pounds of red potatoes	These potatoes were harvested last November and will want to sprout, so I would recommend keeping them in your fridge.	These red potatoes are wonderful for mashing roasting or making into hash browns. How about this: asparagus omelette and red potato hash browns for Sunday brunch?
Red Radishes/ Salad Turnips	There will be a nice bunch of red roots plus a surprise white salad turnip or two in the bunch.	Remove leaves from roots and store in separate plastic bags.	The radishes & turnips are best eaten raw: thinly slice and use a garnish, or eat whole with salt. I like to put them on crackers with cheese.
Rhubarb	There will be 2 pounds of greenish red celery-looking stalks in your box.	Store in the fridge, in a plastic bag.	Best used in desserts like muffins or cake (see recipe below), but there is also some wonderful savory recipes out there on the interwebs.

Rhubarb Coffee Cake

1/2 cup butter
 1 1/2 cups sugar
 2 eggs
 1 cup sour cream
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 2 cups flour
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 2 cups chopped rhubarb
Topping Ingredients:
 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
 1 tablespoon flour
 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 1 tablespoon butter, softened

Preheat oven to 350°F. Cream butter and sugar together in mixing bowl. Beat in eggs one at a time. Stir in sour cream and vanilla. Mix flour and baking soda together and fold into batter. Stir in rhubarb. Turn into greased 9x13-inch pan. Topping: Mix all ingredients together until crumbly. Sprinkle over top. Bake 30-40 minutes until done.

Asparagus & Bok Choy Frittata

5 sprigs of green garlic
 1/2 bunch chives
 Your head of bok choy, stems chopped into 1/2" segments and greens loosely chopped
 3/4 lb. asparagus (about half on what you have in your box)
 2 tbsp. Olive or Driftless Organics Sunflower Oil
 3/4 tsp. Salt
 9 eggs
 1/4 tsp. fresh-ground black pepper
 1 tsp. toasted sesame oil

Heat the oven to 325°. In a medium cast-iron or ovenproof nonstick frying pan, heat the cooking oil over moderate heat. Add the green garlic and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the bok choy and cook, stirring, until the leaves wilt, about 2 minutes. Add the asparagus and 1/2 teaspoon of the salt and continue to cook, until the vegetables are almost tender, about 3 minutes more. Evenly distribute the vegetables in the pan and then add the eggs, pepper, and the remaining 1/4 teaspoon of salt. Cook the frittata, without stirring, until the edges start to set, about 2 minutes. Put the frittata in the oven and bake until firm, about 25 minutes. Remove from oven and sprinkle with the chives.