



DRIFTLESS ORGANICS CSA NEWSLETTER

News from the Fields of Driftless Organics • Issue 12 • August 22-25, 2018

Week 12: Hooray, the tomatoes are finally here! We're happy to see them and thank you all for your patience. We should have a number of good tomato weeks here as we continue to bring in those romas, red slicers and fun heirloom varieties. This wild and wacky weather continues, and we go from hot and humid last week to cloudy and cool this week. Mother nature is keeping us on our toes, to say the least! Happy Eating
~Rachael

Did You Know?

Did you know that tomatoes originate from South America? They were brought to Europe by the Spanish Conquistadors. There have been many misconceptions about tomatoes over the years. In the early days, many thought them to have hallucinogenic or aphrodisiac properties. There are some legit concerns about this, as they are part of the nightshade family. It took a long time to discover that although the plant (leaves and roots) are poisonous, the fruit is not. In the 1500s, the Spanish government started encouraging the production of tomatoes and when tomatoes were first introduced in Italy, they were used as a tabletop decoration for Italian nobility. Because they were so beautiful, selective breeding was started to try and cultivate different shapes and colors for decoration. It wasn't until the late 1700s that tomatoes finally were looked at as food. In America, tomatoes didn't gain momentum until Alexander Livingston, an American botanist and scientist, bred a variety known as "Paragon" in the 1870s. This variety helped kick-start America's love affair with tomatoes. Today the USDA calculates that each of us consume approximately 24 pounds of fresh tomatoes EVERY year. We're going to do our best to see that you get close to that amount this year!

Tomatoes are the most common reason anyone even attempts gardening. 93% of American gardening households grow tomatoes - making it the most popular vegetable in the US. Nothing in a grocery store comes

close to a homegrown tomato. Tomatoes are fairly easy to grow, but the biggest problem is, which kind to choose!? One of the seed catalogs I look at each winter has at least 200 different varieties of tomatoes to choose from. There are many subtypes: slicers, beefsteak, oxheart, plum/paste, cherry, etc...plus then you have your indeterminate (produces fruit and ripens throughout the season) and determinate (ripens all around the same time and then is done). You can have pretty much any color you choose: green, yellow, orange, red, pink, purple, black, and even blue! I saw various numbers of speculated varieties from 7,500-25,000! It is pretty mind boggling to think about all of the different tomatoes out there.

***We hand pick your tomatoes ever so slightly unripe with the intention that they will ripen up for you over the course of the week. But how do you tell when your tomatoes are ready to eat? It's not by color (we grow a variety of colors) but by touch! You know a tomato is ready to eat when it is slightly soft to the touch. ***

What the Heck Do I Do With Cipollini Onions?

So these little beauties are a chef's delight, "Cipollini" translates to "little onion" in Italian. They are known by their shape: a flattened onion, about golf ball size. They contain more residual sugar than an average onion which makes them perfect for grilling (kabobs), roasting or caramelizing. They say you haven't had real caramelized onions until you've had them made with cipollini onions.

WHAT'S IN THE BOX
Carrots
Cilantro
Cippolini Onion
Cucumbers
Dragon Tongue Beans
Garlic
Jalapeño Peppers
Mini Peppers
Roaster Peppers
Salad Mix
Sungold Tomatoes
Sweet Corn
Swiss Chard
Tomatillos
Tomatoes: Mix

Crop	What's it look like?	Storage?	How do I use it?
Carrots	A couple pounds of our signature carrots	If stored in a plastic bag, these carrots should last for a month or more.	Try prepping carrot sticks on Sunday night for weekly midday snacks at work.
Cilantro	A bunch of fresh cut cilantro plants with frilly green leaves.	Keep in the fridge in a plastic bag for up to a week.	Think Mexican or Indian - always add at the end of cooking as a flavorful garnish.
Cipollini Onions	Looks like a flattened yellow onion.	Store on the counter.	Best roasted, grilled or caramelized.
Dragon Tongue Beans	Yellow flat romano-style beans with purple striations on them.	Store in plastic bag in fridge.	Wonderful when steamed and drizzled with olive oil, lemon juice, salt & peppers.
Jalapeño Pepper (Spicy!)	Small, dark green peppers. There will be 2 of them in your box. Spicy.	Store in your fridge.	It's not a sweet pepper, so remember it's a little spicy. Best in fresh salsa!
Mini Peppers (Sweet)	Look for the small red, yellow and orange peppers in a green pulp pint. These are SWEET.	Keep in the fridge in a plastic bag for up to a week.	These may seem like a lot of work to prep, but we just cut the whole thing up, seeds and all. There are so few of them, that you won't even notice them.
Roaster Peppers (Sweet)	Look for the big dark yellow and/or red peppers that are pointy on one end.	Store all of your peppers together, in a plastic bag, in your fridge.	These sweet peppers are a great substitute for red or yellow bell peppers. They are so sweet and tasty!
Salad Mix	Mixed bag of salad greens.	Store in the plastic bag it comes in and try to use up in a week.	Use a simple salad with dressing to top your pizza!
Sungold Tomatoes	Little orange cherry tomatoes in a green pulp pint (that you can compost!)	Store on the counter and wait until they are a deep orange.	I love popping them in my mouth like candy.
Sweet Corn	Duh.	Store in your fridge.	Try making some homemade cornbread or check out the recipe below.
Swiss Chard	Look for the bunch of dark green leaves with multi-colored stems and a blue twist tie.	Store in a plastic bag in refrigerator for up to a week.	A light sauté makes this a great side or add a fried egg for a healthy breakfast.
Tomatillos	Look for the green tomato-looking things with papery husks.	Store them in a paper bag in your fridge for no more than 10 days.	Check out last week's news to learn more about the infamous tomatillo.
Tomatoes: Mix	A bag of mixed varieties (and colors) of tomatoes.	Store on the counter - check their ripeness every day and use when ripe.	Marinara sauce, Margherita pizza, soup, salads or lasagna!

Corn, Tomato and Basil Chowder

6 ears of corn, shucked
 2 Tbsp butter
 1 lg onion, chopped
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 4 c. chicken broth
 1 ½ tsp kosher salt
 1 pound waxy potatoes (red or yukon gold) cut into ½" cubes
 1 pint cherry tomatoes
 ½ tsp fresh ground black pepper
 ¼ c chopped fresh basil
 Juice of ½ lime
 Creme fraiche or sour cream (optional)

Slice corn kernels off cob and place in bowl. Run back of knife along each cob to remove additional corn pulp (the creamy stuff). Add pulp to bowl; reserve cobs. In a medium soup pot or dutch oven - melt butter over medium heat. Stir in onion, shallot and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until softened (about 5 min). Add broth, reserved cobs, 1 c. water and 1 tsp salt to pot. Bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and simmer for 10 min. Add potatoes and simmer until potatoes are tender (about 15 min). Remove cobs and discard. Stir in corn kernels and pulp, tomatoes and remaining ½ tsp salt and pepper. Simmer for 20 more min. Stir in the basil and lime juice. Turn off heat and let soup cool for at least 15 min before serving. Serve warm with a dollop of creme fraiche or sour cream, if using. ***Submitted by CSA Member Liz Amundson***

Salad Pizza

1 Pizza Dough (homemade or bought)
 1 Tbsp. Olive Oil
 Optional Toppings:
 Sweet Pepper (optional), thinly sliced OR Roaster Pepper - roast before using as a topping
 Basil (optional)
 Tomato (optional), thinly sliced
 Zucchini (optional), thinly sliced
 Salad Mix/Spinach
 Mozzarella, Feta and Parmesan Cheese

Salad Dressing - pick an option: Lemon Apple Cider Vinegar dressing, White wine vinegar dressing or Balsamic Vinegar Dressing.

Spread a pizza dough into a 14" round on parchment. Drizzle olive oil over crust, lay out toppings. Add mozzarella cheese and bake in a 425 degree oven on a pizza stone for about 12 minutes. Mix any and all greens you have in a bowl. Top with feta and dressing. Mix to coat salad. Dump the salad on the hot pizza and cut as desired. Top with fresh Parmesan.

Modified slightly, recipe submitted by CSA Member Peter Blake