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Box #6  
**Even Week**  
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## Contents

Basil  
Cucumbers: Burpless  
Kale: Red Curly or Red Russian  
Kohlrabi: Kossak  
Lettuce: Mixed Varieties  
Onions: Walla Walla  
Radishes  
Zucchini: Green and Yellow Zephyr

**New Stuff:** kale, kohlrabi, Walla Walla onions

**Choice Box:** lettuce

Kale is highly nutritious, loaded with vitamins A, B, C, calcium and many minerals, and has the highest protein content of any cultivated vegetable. It keeps for a long time in the fridge, but you'll get the most nutrition from it if you use it soon, and eat it raw. Check online for a "green drink" or smoothie incorporating kale.

Kale will stay hydrated best inside a plastic bag with just a little water on it. To prepare kale, cut out most of the center rib (rather fibrous), then chop up as your recipe indicates. Depending on the size of the pieces, kale will cook in 10-20 minutes. You want it soft, just a little chewy but still green in color.

We grow 5 kinds of kale: green curly (the most common), red curly, lacinato/dinosaur, red Russian and white Russian. Most of you have seen green curly kale: it's the kind used to decorate salad bars since it's attractive and stays looking good for a long time. Red curly kale is the same shape as green, but has purple stems and a reddish cast to the leaves, especially the frilly ends. After the first frost, red curly kale turns a dark red overall. Lacinato, or dinosaur kale has a long, dark green leaf with a rounded end and bumpy surface. Red and white Russian kale have an oak leaf shape to their leaves. Red Russian has purple-red veins and green leaves while white Russian has pale green veins. The curly kale tends to be a bit on the bitter side (good for the heart), with lacinato a bit milder and red Russian the most mild. If a little bitterness is not to your taste, moderate that flavor by blanching the leaves in boiling water for 2 minutes, then proceed with whatever recipe you wish. Marinating kale, as in the

recipe below, also makes the flavor milder. Frost tends to sweeten the taste of kale, or, in the case of the curly ones, make it less bitter. Altho, in some years, one type of kale will be considerably milder than another, for no discernible reason. Young kale leaves are much sweeter and milder than older ones.

It's always nice when trendy meets delicious:

## Kale Chips

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Cut out the stems & center veins of a large bunch of kale. Chop the kale roughly into 1"-1½" pieces, wash and spin them as dry as you can. (You may have to do that step in batches.)

In a large bowl, stir together:

2 Tbsp. olive oil  
Kosher salt or sea salt  
freshly ground pepper

Toss the kale pieces in the mixture until all are coated. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil or parchment paper. Spread the kale out on the baking sheet as evenly as possible. Bake for 10-15 minutes, or until the leaves are very crispy. They will shrink some. Remove from oven, cool for 10 minutes, and enjoy.

Basil is abundant right now, and your bunches reflect that. Seems a good time to give you this recipe:

## Basil & Kale Pesto

In a food processor, put:

2 cups washed & packed basil leaves  
10-12 leaves (1 bunch with stems removed) of kale, blanched 2-3 minutes to bright green in boiling water  
½ c. extra virgin olive oil  
¼ c. pine nuts (toast in pan if you like)  
2-4 garlic cloves, minced  
Sea Salt

-Process until you have a uniform, creamy consistency.

Transfer the mixture to a bowl and fold in:

½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated  
2 Tbsp. Romano cheese, grated  
3 Tbsp. softened butter

-If not using immediately, wait to fold in butter. When using over pasta, dilute the pesto with 1-2 Tbsp. of hot pasta water.

I made a version of this without nuts or butter, and the blanched kale added a very fresh flavor to it. If you don't have pine nuts, try almonds or walnuts.

Biiiiigg kohlrabi! Kossak is a kohlrabi cultivar that was bred to grow very large but still remain tender and delicious. So, don't let its size bother you. Kossak also stores for months, uncut, with no loss of flavor for much of that time. If you were raised in this part of the state, you probably know and love kohlrabi. It has a juicy, mild flavor, and is excellent eaten raw. To keep

kohlrabi from drying out, put it in a plastic bag in your crisper drawer. To use kohlrabi, trim off the leaves (if any) and peel it with a paring knife. Start by cutting off the bottom: you'll see a ring of small, white "hairs". Cut just inside the hairs, underneath the kohlrabi's skin and work your way around it like you would peel an apple. With the skin removed, cut it up any way you like. I favor julienned pieces in a salad. It's great shredded and added to coleslaw, or in chunks on a veggie and dip tray. Many of our farmer's market customers prefer it raw with a little salt. You can also cook it, but more about that later.

Walla Walla is a "sweet" onion variety. It was developed in Walla Walla Washington by Italian immigrants, selected as an early market onion, and named "Walla Walla Sweet" when it gained popularity. Walla Walla's have a high moisture content and shorter storage life than other varieties. These have been harvested early to give the rest of the crop more room to grow. It's best to use the greens within 4-5 days, and the bulb within a month. Store Walla Walla onions in a plastic bag in your frig. You may receive a cucumber or zucchini that has what looks like scratches on the outside. Most of this damage is caused by the thorny stems and leaves zucchini and cucumber produce. When the wind blows, it catches the leaves, which moves the stems, both of which can brush against the tender skins of the fruit, especially the thinner-skinned cucumbers. It's easy to nick zucchini skin with a fingernail when you harvest it, so you can imagine what kind of damage those thorny stems can do. The fruit responds by scarring over, thus toughening its skin and preventing further damage. The flesh underneath this scar is not affected, so simply cut off the skin.

### **Field Notes**

It's been awhile since our last rain, and the ground is dry. They predict some for tonight, but the chances are not high, so any significant moisture is unlikely. The way we water our crops is thru drip tape. Drip tape is a flat, black tube that contains a special hole every foot or so. This hole, called an "emitter", is carefully engineered to allow a small but even amount of water to ooze thru it. We lay the drip tape along the base of a row of plants so the water oozes out near the roots—the most efficient way to water, since it minimizes evaporation.

The sweet corn has tops and developing ears. On Monday, the grass around the cornfield was cut very low, and an electric fence set up. We do this to discourage marauding raccoons, who LOVE sweet corn, but are picky eaters. They'll go along a row of sweet corn, tear off an ear and taste it. If they don't



like that ear, they move on to the next, and the next, and the next. Raccoons can do a lot of damage to a field of sweet corn in a short amount of time looking for that perfect ear. Depending on the rain, we're a week or 2 from having sweet corn for your boxes. I am happy to report that the death of our eggplant has been greatly exaggerated. The plants are very much alive, flowering, and producing fruit. The mistake is mine. Chuck was bemoaning the fact that they had caught a disease he couldn't identify, and would all have to be "torn up". I assumed their demise was imminent, and reported same. Well, Chuck didn't tear them up, they seem to have fought off the disease, and are presently doing fine. We will not have to forgo grilled eggplant or *baba ghanoush* this year. These lettuce beds are so pretty, I just had to take a



picture. I took this near the end of the day, and it turned out rather blue.

Do you have a vegetable storage tip that works great? Let us know! Enjoy the summer weather!

Terry & Chuck