



Full Harvest Farm, LLC
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Box #7
Odd Week
10 August 2016

Contents

Basil
Broccoli
Eggplant
Lettuce: French Crisp or Green Romaine
Onions: Red
Peppers: Green Bell, Jalapeño
Swiss Chard
Zucchini

New Stuff: eggplant, bell and Jalapeño peppers

Altho eggplant is low in calories and high in fiber, it does not contain large amounts of vitamins or minerals. It is available in many, different cultivars, from the pear-shaped, Italian variety, the long slender Asian, the small white “chicken egg”, to others that are pink, green, lavender, striped and so on. We find the pear-shaped Italian to be a good, all-round eggplant. These will be on the small side.

Always cook eggplant before eating as it contains a toxic substance called solanine. This is the same, bitter material that makes green potatoes taste so bad.

Cooking eggplant changes the solanine chemically so it's safe to eat. Store eggplant in the vegetable drawer in your fridge, but use it within a week.

Having an Italian mother, I grew up with Eggplant Parmesan. When my mother taught me to cook, she gave me the putzy, repetitious jobs. I remember adding seemingly endless glugs of oil to the skillet when cooking eggplant slices for Parmesan—the stuff sucked it up like a sponge and the Parmesan tasted greasy. Years later, I tried a vegetarian sandwich that contained grilled eggplant and was amazed. What a delicious revelation! Grilled until soft, that purple vegetable tasted completely different, rather like beef. This is the sauce the restaurant brushed on their eggplant before grilling (it works great for zucchini and summer squash, too):

Grilling Sauce for Eggplant

In a small bowl, whisk together:

¼ cup olive oil
1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
1 Tbsp. soy sauce
salt & freshly ground pepper

Soy sauce helps to emulsify the vinegar and oil. Wash the eggplant(s), and cut off the tops, no need to peel. Slice them into lengthwise slabs, ½” thick. Brush both sides with the grilling sauce. Grease your grate, and grill the slices over the coals, turning as needed.

They're done when you can't see any whitish streaks, and the slabs are moist and limp. Once you taste these, you'll want to buy several eggplants at your next farmer's market and grill a bunch. They are especially good in sandwiches, salads and hors d'oeuvres.

When you feel like using your oven again, you can brush your eggplant slabs with this same sauce, and lay them on an aluminum-lined sheet pan (something with sides so the oil won't drip off and cause a fire). Bake in a 400 degree oven until the slabs are about ¾ done, turn and bake until the slabs are transparent-looking. Grilled/baked eggplant is what I'd use for Eggplant Parmesan.

Peppers contain high levels of vitamins A, C and E, as well as iron and potassium. To get the greatest benefit, eat them raw. Store peppers in your crisper drawer with the other vegetables. They should keep for about a week.

When young, most peppers are green with thin walls and a sharp, bitter taste. As they grow and mature, the walls thicken, green changes to red, orange or yellow, and they sweeten up. This color change takes an extra 10 days for most varieties. Some of the peppers we picked are starting to change color, but not many.

Our pepper crop is early this year—not that I'm complaining. The bees have been busy among the white, pepper flowers, giving us lots of fruit, in various stages of ripeness. Our Jalapeños are especially early, so we're able to put those in this week as well.

Jalapeño peppers also start out green and turn red. You'll likely get some more mature ones in later boxes. Chuck's trying a new cultivar this year, one that doesn't produce many, if any, stretch marks. They're pretty spicy raw, but milder when cooked. I always remove both the ribs and the seeds—the seeds because they're too hard, and the ribs because they have the most heat. I play it safe.

CSA member Mary Mirasola sent me this recipe last week, and it couldn't be more appropriate:

Mediterranean Ratatouille Chicken

1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast, cut into large strips

1 clove garlic, crushed and minced

1 cup eggplant, cut into ½ inch cubes

1 small zucchini, thinly sliced

1 medium onion, sliced

1 small green pepper

1 14 ½ oz. can diced tomatoes

2 tsp. capers, drained
4 tsp. Parmesan cheese
12 oil-cured olives
8 leaves fresh basil, chopped (or ½ tsp. dried)
2 Tbsp. olive oil or olive oil cooking spray
Spray a 10 inch frying pan with cooking spray (or use the 2 Tbsp. olive oil). Heat to medium hot and put chicken strips in frying pan. Add garlic. Turn chicken once when lightly browned.
Add all other ingredients, except Parmesan cheese. Cover and simmer for 15 min or until vegetables are tender. Sprinkle cheese on top and serve immediately over pasta or with bread sticks.

Field Notes

This week, we harvested broccoli from the first, second and third broccoli plantings for your boxes.



Most of it came from the 2nd patch, which gave us a variety of sizes. Our 3rd patch is producing big, beautiful heads of broccoli, the kind we always try to grow. Here's a picture of a very large head we harvested on

Monday. This one weighed over a pound. It's likely you'll be getting broccoli next week as well.

The bush green bean plants are about 6" tall and growing slowly. I haven't seen any flowers yet, but those should appear soon.

We have a planting of pole beans in part of our hoophouse that are starting to grow up the twine we have hanging from the ceiling. They're flowering and have even produced a few beans. Green beans for your boxes will probably come from the hoophouses first.

We're having a problem in the watermelon patch with fusarium wilt. This is a fungal disease that causes the leaves to turn yellow, then brown, and can kill the entire plant. Fungal diseases are difficult to treat in an organic system because we cannot use the petrochemical-based fungicides available to commercial growers. Our best choice is only somewhat effective, so we pull diseased plants out of the ground and burn them whenever we find the problem in our fields. Sometimes we get lucky, and it doesn't spread. Often, we're able to slow down the spread long enough to get some fruit from the bed before the remaining plants show many signs of infection.

We're also not seeing many fruit on the winter squash and in the cantaloupe patch. There will be some, but not as many as we had hoped. Ah, well, the challenges of farming.

We hope you have a chance to go to the State Fair this year.

Stay Cool,

Terry & Chuck