



CSA News

July 5-11, 2021

CSA Week 9

Volume 18, No. 21



Log in to your CSA account online to find a customized list, photos and descriptions for your share.

Farm Share Storage & Use Tips:

- Beets, carrots, salad radishes, hakurei turnips: Remove greens from roots. Keep the greens refrigerated in a separate plastic bag. Store the roots, unwashed, in a plastic bag in the crisper bin of your refrigerator. The roots will last longer than the greens.
- Cucumbers, zucchini & summer squash: Store unwashed in a perforated plastic bag in your fridge's vegetable bin.
- Edible flowers: Store in fridge in their clamshell container or air-filled bag. The flowers are fragile, so use as soon as possible.
- Fennel, kohlrabi: Separate the stems from the bulb, and store each in plastic bags in the fridge.
- Fresh Garlic: Just harvested, this garlic is not cured, so refrigerate it until use, and use within a week.
- Leafy greens, bok choy, tatsoi, cabbage: Store in your fridge in perforated plastic bags.
- Microgreens: Keep microgreens in the fridge in their plastic clamshell container. Wash when you're ready to use them.
- Raspberries: Refrigerate or eat right away.
- Tomatoes: The very first tomatoes are coming in and will be more plentiful in the coming weeks. Store tomatoes at room temperature, not in the fridge. Ripen in a paper bag.

Early Summer Crop Report

With the warm weather crops well on their way, we have a sense of how the season is shaping up. We want to keep you as informed as we can, to manage expectations, if you will.

With 18 years of CSA experience under our belt, the list of crops we focus on has matured, taking the longer view of what is good for you and the farm, both. Eating fresh salads and leafy greens is good for your microbiome, and for you, by extension, so we learned how to provide them to our members 52 weeks per year.

Alternatively, tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, and green and yellow squashes, are seasonal, with a little bit of wiggle room on the margins, and not financially feasible to produce all year long. Raspberries are finicky in our climate with the erratic weather conditions that we associate with climate change. Organic sweet corn is a risky crop, but we give it an honest try every year.

Tomatoes are the royal court of the produce world, and they command a lot of attention. We do our best to get early tomato transplants into a high tunnel in April, well before last frost, to have tomatoes ready for you ASAP. This year you may remember—we certainly do—April and May were overall cooler than normal. Since tomatoes love hot weather, they did get a head start in the high tunnel, albeit less than in some years. We are starting to see some fruits coloring up. The first planting of field tomatoes is showing a nice fruit set, happy to have warm nights for a change. You will be the first to know when they ripen enough to pick. The second setting has been trellised (staked and strung, as we call it), and the third group was recently transplanted, in time for them to produce in September into October, until the first frost. For reference, the local tomatoes you may be seeing at farmers markets were most likely started in greenhouses and/or high tunnels with supplemental heat with the intent of having the very first tomatoes at market.

Summer squashes are in their prime. Our farm chef was excited to see her first zucchini a few weeks back, and I was, too. Root crops, like radishes, hakurei turnips, carrots, beets and purple-top turnips are coming along nicely.

Another crop we're asked about a lot is melons, and this is another that's hard to grow in an organic system. We have a few melon

plants under insect netting in conjunction with a UK research project, and with the hoops and sandbags and flags and variety markers out there, it sure looks like we are pulling out all the stops.

The potatoes—in a rainbow of colors—have vigorous vines. They bloomed a few weeks back, so we are tempted to go after some, but we would rather give you more yield by giving them more time to size up. Peppers and eggplants look better than last year's crops, as the crop rotation moved them to a field with different soil conditions. Onions, being the staple they are, is a crop where we are continually upping our game, trying various strategies to provide all we can for as long as we can. Sweet potatoes are up and running. Celery and Brussels sprouts have been transplanted, and believe it or not, it is time to plant fall squash.

There is some chatter in the CSA Member Facebook Group about raspberries, so here's the lowdown on them: Brambles—raspberries and blackberries—are expensive to establish, most varieties require trellising, and they all require lots of consistent watering over a long period, which is why you don't see many at markets. We really like berries, so a few years back we invested in an acre or so of vines, experimenting with a dozen or so types of raspberries to see which ones perform well. Some are black, some are red, others have a purply look with whitish margins. Some are bigger than others. No matter their appearance, they are extremely delicate, which translates to extremely perishable. We try to pick at the peak of ripeness (they cling to the vine until ripe), directly into the containers to minimize handling. We take them straight to the walk-in cooler for next-day delivery. A paper bag may protect them in transport but should be opened upon arrival, kept in the fridge, and consumed by the next day, if not immediately. That's just the way it is with fresh berries.

This season's rains have been frequent enough to help the farm overall—nothing like the crop-drowning monsoons of a few years ago. It was a cool start, as I said, and other than the hot, humid weather last week, it's still overall cooler than most summers.

When all is said and done for 2021, our intent is to provide you wholesome, organic veggies for your well-being, with some treats like berries and sweet corn when they come together. We pull out all the stops in growing to meet your expectations. Thanks for giving us the opportunity to learn something every year. Eat up. —
Mac Stone

Recipes

Swiss Chard with Fennel & Lentils

Adapted from My Body My Kitchen

1 bag Swiss chard	4 cloves garlic, minced
1½ T. olive oil	1 red onion, sliced
8 oz. portobello mushrooms, sliced	1½ c. cooked black, green or brown lentils
salt & pepper, to taste	1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
1 fennel bulb, sliced	1/2 tsp. cumin

Separate Swiss chard stems and leaves. Chop each. Set aside.

In a large non-stick skillet (with a lid), heat half of the oil over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, and cook for 5 to 8 minutes, until golden brown. Let mushrooms cook undisturbed for the first 3 minutes before stirring so they begin to get a nice golden color, then stir. Season with salt and pepper. Remove from skillet, and return skillet to heat.

Add remaining oil to the skillet with fennel, garlic and onions; cook and stir occasionally until fennel is tender, about 5 minutes. Add chard stems, and cook 2 minutes. Add chard leaves, lentils, mushrooms and 2 tablespoons water. Cover and cook until leaves are wilted, about 2 minutes. Season with salt, pepper, red pepper flakes and cumin.

Serve warm.

Baked Summer Squash Fries

Adapted from Damn Delicious

2 lb. summer squash, quartered lengthwise	1/4 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 c. grated Parmesan	salt & pepper, to taste
1½ tsp. dried herbs	2 T. olive oil

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Coat a cooling rack with nonstick spray and place on a baking sheet; set aside.

In a small bowl, combine Parmesan, dried herbs, garlic powder, and salt and pepper.

Place squash onto prepared rack and baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, and sprinkle with seasoning mixture. Bake until tender, about 15 minutes, depending on size of squash. Then broil 2-3 minutes, until crisp and golden brown.

Serve alongside your favorite grilled meats and a green salad.