

Wise Acres Farm CSA Newsletter

Week 7 – August 16, 2017

Why have you chosen to be a CSA member? The answer is likely a little bit different for each of you, but the two most common reasons we hear are:

- a) You want to support us as local farmers and farm workers. (Thanks!)
- b) You want food that is fresher and tastes better than what you can get at the supermarket!

I came across a video this week that is a great primer on the distribution system for fresh produce in the USA; it's on the YouTube channel "How to Make Everything" and it's titled "[The Challenge of Fresh Food.](#)" It's definitely worth a watch the next time you have 16 free minutes! Our food system is an amazing technological achievement, but for me, the video really drove home why what our farm has to offer is special: almost all of what we put in your weekly boxes was harvested within two days of when you receive it. The store can bring you any produce item you want in almost any season, but with few exceptions, you're getting that produce at least 5 to 7 days from when it was harvested, and in the meantime it has also undergone much more handling and transport. Since all fresh produce continues to respire, the sooner you can eat it after it is harvested, the more nutrients and flavor you get out of it.

There are also a couple of theories as to why *organic* produce specifically can have better flavor than conventional produce. As organic farmers, we manage our soil as a living system that contains much more biological activity than many soils managed conventionally, which makes a wider array of soil nutrients available to the veggie plants at any given time. There is also research showing that since organic plants are not supported by frequent applications of conventional pesticides, they produce more antioxidants to defend themselves against pests and diseases. These antioxidants can also improve flavor and texture.

I hope these notes about nutrition and flavor ring true to you after eating our produce for the past six weeks (or more)! We recognize that deciding to join our CSA requires some extra planning and a willingness to work with what is seasonally available, but the reward is flavorful, nutritious food that you just can't get from anywhere but your local organic farm.

- Brittany

Recipes and Veggie Notes

Everything in the share this week **except tomatoes** will do best stored in the fridge, in a closed plastic bag. Keep your tomatoes in open air at cool room temperature.

Tomatoes

Finally, they're here!! We grow dozens of different varieties of tomatoes, so you may find a good old red one in your box, or you might discover a pink, purple, orange, or yellow one! Orange and yellow varieties tend to be slightly less acidic, but all colors can be used interchangeably for cooking (or sliced thick onto a piece of hearty bread with mayo, salt, pepper, and maybe some greens, which is my favorite way to devour them!).

What's in the box?

Carrots

Cucumber

Eggplant

Lettuce Mix

Mini Lettuce

Rainbow Chard

Rattlesnake Pole Beans

Tomatoes!

**Remember to return
your box next week!**

Ratatouille

Adapted from Vegan Planet by Robin Robertson

Thanks, France, for this quintessential way to use all the high-summer veggies at once! This recipe is pretty forgiving if you don't have all the veggies listed—at least three out of five will do it (adjust quantities accordingly). To make a complete meal, add cooked beans/chickpeas and serve over a cooked grain or pasta.

- 2 T olive oil
- 1 small onion
- 1-2 cups pole or snap beans, cut into 1" pieces
- 1 small pepper, diced
- 1 eggplant, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 medium zucchini or summer squash, diced
- 2-4 ripe tomatoes, diced (some recipes recommend peeling and dicing these...I don't bother)
- 1 tablespoon minced thyme, oregano, parsley, or other fresh herbs

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Cook onion until soft. Add all remaining vegetables except tomatoes and salt and pepper to taste. Cook covered until vegetables are mostly soft (about 10 minutes). Stir in tomatoes and herbs and cook until everything is fully tender.

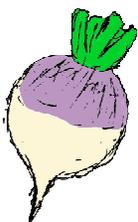
Carrot-Cucumber Ribbon Salad

Laura introduced us to this way of making ribbons out of carrots and cucumbers with a vegetable peeler. This method will also work with small zucchini!

- About 6 medium carrots
- 1 slicing cucumber
- 2-4 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon fresh ginger, grated and peeled (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon salt

Using a vegetable peeler, peel off strips of the carrots and cucumber, turning a quarter-turn after every other stroke to keep the ribbons a similar width. Toss with rice vinegar, sugar, ginger, and salt.

With or without the rice vinegar dressing, these veggie ribbons make a great crunchy addition to a leafy salad, sandwich, or wrap. They don't fall to the bottom or slip out the sides like thicker slices of these crunchy vegetables have a way of doing!



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