



The Beanstalk

Easy Bean Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Easy Bean Farm

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WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

Dinosaur Kale: *These are the bouquets of pebbly green leaves. Dini Kale is a great way to get kids to eat kale... as they tend to like the name and texture. This is also known as Lacinated Kale and it has a nice sturdy leaf and the dimples hold sauces well. You can use this as you would any other kale or cooking green. We love sautéed kale with garlic and fried eggs.*



Panisse Head Lettuces: *The head lettuces have LOVED all of this rain and some of them have grown to an amazing size. This variety has a lovely ruffled leaf and a great silky texture. These heads were among the first crops we set out into the field in early May and they have been through a lot over the last 6 weeks. Lettuces like cool even temperatures and these guys have lived through some serious ups and downs. The lettuces should keep getting larger each week. If you will not be using them in the near future I suggest that you loosely wrap them in a plastic bag and store them in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator.*

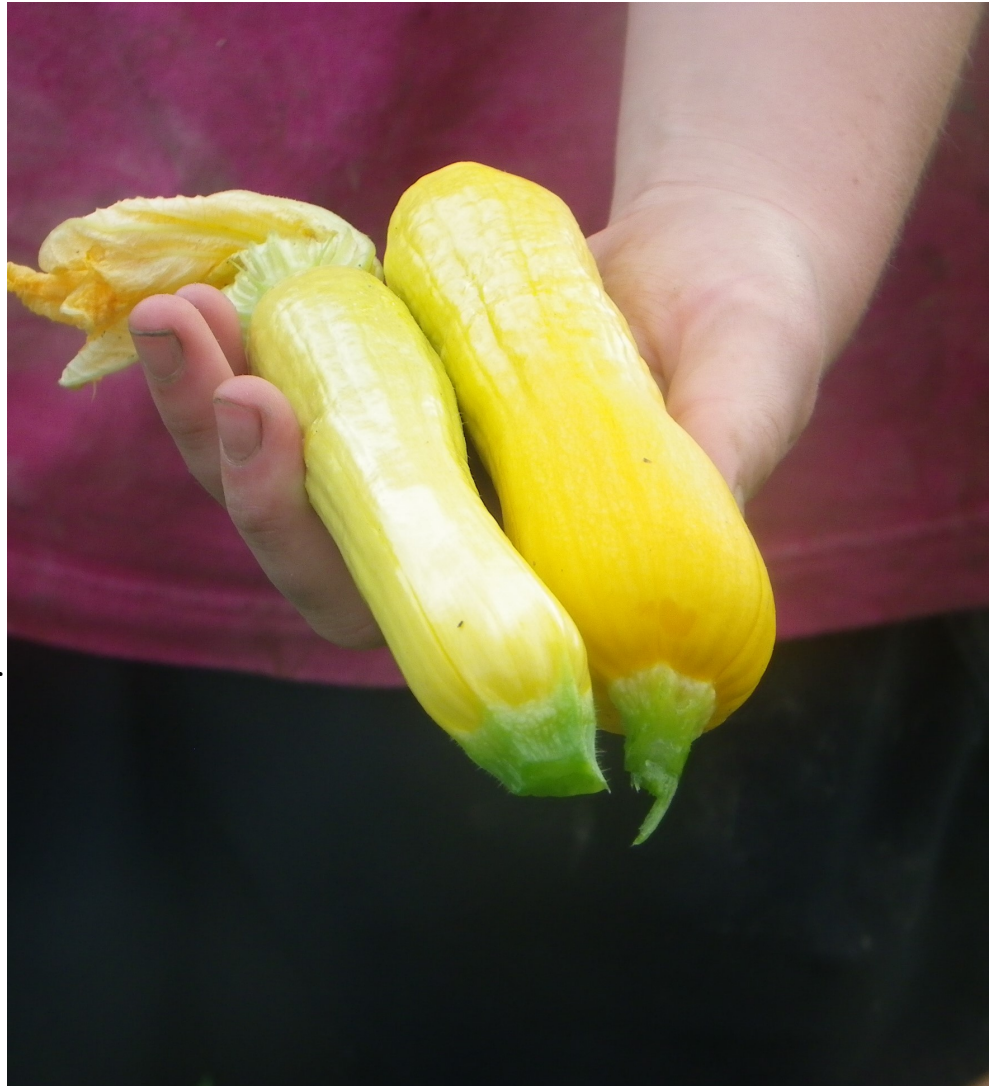
Winner Kohlrabi: *I am hoping to do for Kohlrabi what Dr. Oz has done for kale. The kohlrabi, for those of you that are not familiar with it, are the odd looking vegetable with the big light-green bulbs at the bottom. They are a close relative of the cabbage and are among my favorite members of the Brassica clan. While the leaves are tender and can be used as you would collards or kale, the prize-winning part of the kohlrabi is the bulb and it is delicious raw or lightly cooked. Remove the leaves*



and peel the skin from the bulbs. The heart of the 'rabi is crisp and sweet and is great cut into matchsticks in a salad, grated into a slaw, battered and fried, pickled in the refrigerator, chopped into soups and stir-fry; it is exceptionally versatile and kids seem to love how crunchy it is. If you plan on using the leaves you should remove them (so that the 'rabis stay crisp) and store them loosely wrapped.

Black Summer Pac

Choi: Some say Bok some say Pac but it all brings me great Choi. The Pac Choi is the vegetable with the nearly white stems and green leaves and it is also known, locally, as a form of Chinese Cabbage. It is a mainstay of a variety of Asian cuisines and both the stalks and the leaves are edible.... Though the stalk is the "choice" part. The Stem of the choi is often chopped like celery and used in stir-fry's. You should be careful not to overcook Choi because



the crisp texture is what makes it great. We made some great ramen with sautéed pac choi, scallions and the cilantro.

Collard Greens: These are the bouquets of flat round leaves. Collards are a close relative of cabbage. I find collards to be the very best of the cooking greens. They are more tender than Kale and have a nice sweetness to them. A staple of Southern Cooking, I really like them gently cooked with a little butter, onions, garlic and cider vinegar served with rice and red beans.

Scallion: Scallions are one of the foods that embody the flavor of spring-time for



me. They are oniony, yes, but they also taste very “green” to me, as well. There are few things that are not made better with ample amounts of fresh chopped scallion

D ’Avignon French Breakfast Radishes: Of all of the radishes we grow I find these the prettiest. Both the root and the greens are edible and, while most people eat the radishes raw, they are also good lightly cooked. TO keep the roots crisp, separate the greens from them and store both, loosely wrapped, in your refrigerator.



SlikPik Summer Squash and/or Yellow Zucchini(Full): The Zucchini/Summer Squash crop has done exceptionally well this year and has begun producing early. We just have a few small ones for Full Shares this week... but there should be LOTS for everyone next week. Summer Squash varieties are very similar to Zucchini and can be used in the same way.

Cilantro: The cilantro is just getting started but we thought we would pinch it back to encourage growth and give you all a little taste of it. I can’t eat a taco without chopped cilantro. We make a great salsa with chopped radishes, cilantro and lime juice that is great on fish tacos.

Snow Peas (Full): The peas are just beginning to come in and so there are only peas for Full Shares this week. Snow peas are fully edible and are great either raw or lightly cooked. Remove the stems and crunch away! Hopefully, by next week, there will be peas for all!

From the Fields

Folks,

This morning started out a little crazy! I like to walk around the fields before my crew started work and so, just after the sun came up, I put on a sweat-shirt and started to make my way down to the lower field. I heard a splash and, when I looked up, I saw a wet cow emerging from our pond and headed up into our yard. My mind immediately ran all sorts of disaster sequences



where the cattle, having escaped from our pasture, had trampled all of our fields. In an effort not to scare the cow I gently called for Malena who came outside and, seconds later, was dialing the number for our neighbor who runs cattle on our pasture. We slowly worked the cow up towards the paddocks and we were pleased to see that most of the cattle appeared to still be happily grazing. The cow looked sad to be separated from the rest of the herd and they all congregated along the fence line bellowing to one another. While all of this was going on we sent our crew to look for more cattle in our fields and we were very glad when they reported back that everything looked fine. No damage was done... though my heartrate was certainly up.

This is our second week of deliveries and it looks like, by next week, we should be at full speed with harvest. Things are still leafy this week... but the Kohlrabi are substantial and the Full Shares are also getting our first taste of Peas and Summer Squash. My best guess is that there will be peas and squash for everyone next week as well as broccoli, basil, and red cabbage. Cucumbers and Cauliflower look to be around two weeks out.

Since there a few of you who are new to our farm, I thought that I would give you some simple statistics about our little Organic farm this week

1. This is our 21st year farming here on the banks of the river
2. We raise crops for around 250 families each week.
3. We feed around 750 mouths each week.
4. We grow about 83 different things!
5. WE have drop sites in Montevideo, Morris, Marshall, Milan, Willmar, Minnetonka, St. Louis Park, Edina, Robbinsdale, North Minneapolis, Linde Hills, Arden Hills, Shoreview, Mac/Groveland, Mendota Heights, Downtown St. Paul and the Seward Neighborhood.
6. Our farm is 120 acres but much of it is in trees (some of which we planted), prairie, river, pasture and yard. WE will have about 14 acres in rotation this year

Malena and I love that we have been blessed with the opportunity to learn how to grow vegetables in a way that both nourishes our soils, small community and you, our farm “family”. It still feel special to us that we get a chance to take care of

these 120 acres and to deepen our understanding, year after year, of what it means to both know a place AND take care of it. It still feels like a radical thing to try and engage people in the beauty of eating things that are grown with love and without any synthetic chemicals. I am still humbled that people continue to have faith in our little farm and to support our passion for this place and for healthy food. I just went through our membership list and was amazed to find that we have over 50 shareholders who have been eating from our fields for more than 15 years! It has been fun to watch babies whose first food was made from our vegetables head off to college and, in a year or two, it will be great to see their graduation pictures. Although this life, as a CSA farmer, CERTAINLY is different than I imagined it 21 years ago, it has been truly gratifying to feel all the ways that many of us have become connected through our love of food and of the land.

For the duration of this season I hope that you will think of Malena and I as YOUR FARMERS. You have doctors that are your doctor. You might have an electrician that is YOUR electrician. WE hope to be your farmers. We hope that you will engage with us; Let us know what you are cooking, ask us questions about our farm, come and visit if you have a chance! If you make something delicious, please DO post to our Facebook page and share with the rest of the Easy Bean Farm community. Last week we saw a great exchange where a long-time CSA members shared tips about quickly processing the share with some newbies. We love that!

Now that summer is here things will continue to get busier and busier for the next 5-6 weeks. With a little heat (and luck) we are hoping for our first tomatoes, peppers and eggplant towards the end of July and our first melons in early August. Shockingly, we are already forced to be thinking about autumn as we begin to plant the crops that will make up the late September and early October shares! One foot in the present and one in the future.

Farmer Mike