



The Beanstalk

Easy Bean Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Easy Bean Farm

5075 100th Ave. NW Milan, MN 56262

easybean@fedtel.net

Mixed Red and Green Bell Peppers: *Goodbye to the peppers for this year!*

Butternut

Squash: While *MANY* of our crops have suffered during this overly wet year, the butternut squash have really liked the weather. WE have been eating these both in sweet and savory dishes and one of our crew members, Maeve, made a delicious Butternut Pie last week.



Red Russian Kale: *It has been a long time since we had kale in the boxes! Kale and potatoes are an excellent and hearty dish during these cool autumn days.*

Kennebec Potatoes: *I think that these Kennebecs are the best of the varieties that we grew this year. WE have been enjoying potatoes in at least one meal every day for the last few weeks.*

Leeks: *Leeks are a close relative to the onion but have their own distinctive taste. A simple way to use them is in a delicious Potato Leek Soup. Another great recipe is a Potato Leek Gallette made with Gruyere Cheese*

Onions: *This year's onion crop came out at about half of what last year's did. Sadly there are lots of smaller onions.*



Carmen Sweet Peppers: *The Carmen Peppers are red and are horn shaped. These are, I believe, the sweetest of all of our pepper varieties. These are too good to cook*

Lunchbox and Baby Bell Peppers: Last summer we trialed these varieties and had very good results. This year both were very slow to mature and had much lower yields. WE will have to try again next year!

From the Fields

Folks,

Week Sixteen!

In some years the final weeks of the season feel triumphant but, this year, I feel a bit as though we are limping into the



finish line. While this certainly has not been our very worst year farming, it also has not been as good as the last few and, while we have had a few very good crops, a large percentage of the things we planted underperformed. A lot of this was due to things that were outside of my control but, looking back, there were a few mistakes that I made where I potentially could have made some adjustments that would have given us a little more abundance. For whatever reason I kept thinking that dry weather was “just around the corner”... and then it never was. We are very fortunate to have had such a good crew who were willing to work through more rainy and muddy days than I can ever remember having in a single growing season.

When I wrote my newsletter last week I had seen that frost was predicted for early Saturday morning and so we made very good use of the remaining



days and rushed to bring in as many peppers, and other cold sensitive crops, as we could. In the end we awoke on FRIDAY to a (more or less) unexpected frost which was followed by a much deeper freeze on Saturday. The fields, still verdant last week, are now mostly filled with wilted plants and the few remaining crops that are very cold tolerant. I took a very early morning walk on Saturday, just as the sun was cracking the horizon, and I felt a nearly perfectly balance of sadness (that the growing season was coming to an end), and relief (again, that the growing season was nearly over). WE put in a valiant effort but, as farming has taught me, often that just isn't enough!

I want to thank all of you for sticking with us, and sending us messages during this "less-than-spectacular" summer. For me, as a farmer, this is one of the things I like most about CSA. I know many of you and it makes it easier to work hard and put in the extra effort since I know that I have a responsibility to you and that so many of you support us and have done so for over two decades. Just over a week from now we will deliver our last boxes for this season and, if the weather improves a little (not holding my breathe) and the last few crops get a chance to finish growing, I think it will be a fairly nice final box. One nice thing about completing a tough season is that, as it ends, I always begin to feel the stirrings of hope that next summer will be better. More often than not it is!

With Gratitude,

Mike



