



The Beanstalk

Easy Bean Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Easy Bean Farm

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WHAT'S IN THE BOX?

Arcadia Broccoli:

It feels so funny to write, week after week, about broccoli... but, really, this round is about as good as summer broccoli can get. One of the odd things about growing it, week after week, is that it no longer just feels like BROCCOLI. Each week I see the heads form a little bit differently and the flavor changes through the season



and based on where, in the fields, it is planted. Looking ahead I think that we will have another week from this round, and then, perhaps, a week without broccoli. Then it should resume, on and off, through the end of the season.

Napa Cabbage: Round two, of four, of the Napa. These are the light green/white heads of thin-leaved cabbage. I recommend using it in stir fry with some noodles and a little of your broccoli.

Zefa Fino Fennel: We have been eating fennel in many of our meals. The other day I thinly sliced it and sautéed it with some peppers, basil, squash and eggplant and served it over pasta with a little Romano cheese.

Ace Green Peppers: These peppers are just starting to mature and they are delicious. The walls are thick and juicy (from last week's rain) and the flavor is perfect. Expect more and more of these in the next few weeks.



Straightneck or Zucchini Squash: *People often tell me that they are unsure what to do with Summer Squash... but love zucchini. They are, for all intents and purposes, the same. These are the first few fruits... but there will be increasing amounts of several varieties over the course of the summer. A few years back my mother gave me a spiralizer and I have gotten addicted to squash “noodles” with a variety of sauces.*

Biscayne Cubanelle Peppers (Full): *These are the longer light green peppers. They are delicious stuffed with rice, herbs and a little cheese.*

Itachi White (or regular green) Cucumbers: *These white cucumbers have confused a few of you... especially when they are right next to the yellow squash! These are just like the green cucumbers but have a really nice thin skin.*

“Orient Express” Eggplant (Full): *This is a classic Japanese type eggplant (long and thin”.*

These are the first few fruits to reach maturity... but within the next two weeks there should be LOTS more, both Japanese and Italian Globe types, in your boxes. Do NOT refrigerate these.

Ailsa Craig Sweet Onions: *These onions are among the very sweetest onions I have ever grown. While these can be cooked, I like them raw on sandwiches or in salads. Unlike many of our other onions, these will not keep for a long time... so use them this week.*

Romaine Lettuces: *We debated whether or not to give these out this week; Two*





weeks after we planted them a herd of deer munched them down to the ground. WE covered them and tried to baby them... but they formed a little oddly and wanted to bolt while still young. They aren't the prettiest lettuces we have grown... but after tasting them we decided that they were worth harvesting. The next round of lettuces should be better!

Taxi Tomatoes: *The first handful of tomatoes have started to ripen (around two weeks late) and we thought we would give you a taste. Many more (in number and variety) to come!*

From the Fields

Folks,

This is the part of the season where I always get a little antsy; The period when we are waiting for the tomato crop to come into full maturity. Last week I predicted that there *might* be some ripe tomatoes this week... and there are... just less than I had hoped for. I think that it is safe to say that, barring any major weather disasters, there should be several types of tomatoes NEXT week and the yield should keep building for the next 4-5 weeks. The good news is that, so far, I have seen almost NO signs of plant disease in the tomato crop and the fruit set looks unusually high. This means that there is a very high chance that this will end up being a VERY good tomato year. In other good news, the melon crop, both watermelon and muskmelon, are ALSO looking very good. Today we harvested our second watermelon to check on their progress and taste and we were pleased to see that, while not at full ripeness, the fruit we picked (pictured on the preceding page), was VERY sweet and close to ready. Our crew was happy to help with the taste testing and, if we can keep the critters put of the fields, we could start harvesting watermelons as soon as next week and muskmelons the following week. I am making no promises... but things



do look good!

In the list of vegetables, above, I wrote a little bit about some deer damage that we had on this round of lettuces. I haven't written about it a lot, but we have had increasing predation on a few of our crops over the last three years. In particular the deer seem to like beets, chard and lettuces. While we have most of our fields fenced, the deer have figured out that they can jump 6' fences and they are no longer afraid of the electric fence. One of the things that we love about our farm is the amount of plant and animal diversity, here, along the banks of the Chippewa River... but it

seems that the deer population has been growing in our neighborhood and the deer are getting quite brazen; A few days back I was able to walk to within 30 feet of a mother and her fawn! Since the problem has been getting worse we have tried many things to deter them but it looks like, next spring, we will end up installing 8'



woven wire fencing around several of our fields. The DNR assures me that this is now the standard and that deer rarely, if ever, jump 8' fence. This year we have lost several hundred heads of lettuce and LOS of beets and so we have started to net these crops which, while a pain in the neck, does seem to do the trick!

With the arrival of August I can feel the days getting noticeable shorter and I can feel the pace of the work begin to slacken a little bit. Today we harvested the very first of our full-season onions, which are one of the very first things we plant in the spring and will be in your boxes until the very end. The Winter Squash plants are just days away from fully vining out and the Brussels Sprouts have little sprouts forming on their stalks! The first round of potato plants is beginning

to die back and is nearly ready to harvest and the first rounds of fall crops are well rooted in now and beginning to grow fast. For me, these are the first little signs of fall! Fortunately, we still have most of our late summer crops still left to harvest; The next month and a half should find you knee deep in tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, cucumbers and melons!

My best guess for next week: Eggplant, Peppers, Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Beets, Pac Choi, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Zucchini, Green Beans, Sweet Onions and maybe Melons, at least for the Full Shares.

Mike