



Mid-Summer Farm Update

Now that it is after the 4th of July many items in the garden are really taking off. We just got a couple inches of rain in the last few days and avoided any hail in the previous storm. We have had a few “challenging” crops that will be discussed later in the newsletter and have been looking for ways to improve our methods there. With some more garden space opening up our focus has turned to fall crop planning, and we are also expecting peppers, tomatoes, eggplants, beans and cucumbers soon. Are there any items you are especially enjoying or things you would like to see more of? Let us know and we will factor your input into our fall planting. We are also busy planning the Solar Fresh Field Day that will take place on Saturday August 8th, 2015. It should be great fun and we hope you can join us!

Vegetable Family: Brassica

The brassica family of vegetables includes items like broccoli, cauliflower, kohlrabi, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, turnips, and romanesco. Vegetables in this family are high in vitamin c and soluble fiber and they contain anticancer properties and can help boost the immune system. Depending on your taste buds, you might find brassicas to taste bitter but this flavor can be balanced out by steaming or stir frying, which are the best preparations to maintain the beneficial properties. Brassicas tend to prefer cooler temperatures and are therefore tastiest as a spring and fall crop. If temperatures become too hot many brassicas tend to “bolt,” or send up a flower to create a seed as a survival mechanism. Once this happens the edible part of the plant becomes tough and bitter instead of sweet and crisp. This is especially common in broccoli. Another challenge of this family is their preference by certain insect pests. We have avoided much of this damage through use of floating fabric, beneficial insect introduction and minimal organic pesticide

application. One other issue we have been experiencing is an inconsistency of maturity among the same varieties. Because of this we will be harvesting items as they become ready and rotate items as needed among the boxes. We hope you enjoy the brassica items you receive. The green and red cabbages we are growing look delicious and we also have a fall planting of these crops with lots of ideas for a successful harvest.

Box 5 Items

Scallions: Add to your salad dressing or stir fry or use with new potatoes

Carrots: If you don't get to your carrots right away for snacking, cook them and puree for a soup or use with other roasted veggies

Potatoes: New potatoes are a sign of lots of other new items to come. Boil them whole, slice in half, and toss with butter, salt, pepper and herbs.

Beets: This cylindrical variety is ideal for pickling

Spring Mix: Wednesday is salad night. These greens were picked at the height of freshness and sugar content

Turnips: This brassica family item has experienced some pest damage but it has not impacted the flavor and crispness. Slice it raw for salad night or roast it with carrots and scallions. If you don't get turnips this week we will have more in the fall.

Cauliflower: Sorry, not everybody gets cauliflower this week but we have some coming up next week. Nutritious and versatile in the kitchen. You can roast, stir fry, steam, or eat it raw.

Summer Squash: This is the best time to enjoy summer squash raw. Slice into spears for hummus or veggie dip or add coin slices to your salad.

Recipes

Mediterranean Cauliflower

1 Head of cauliflower
1 Tbsp. Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Salt and Pepper
4 Tbsp. Butter

10 Dates or other dried fruit
12-15 Kalamata olives
2 anchovy filets rough chopped (optional)
Rosemary

Preheat the oven to 375 F. Remove exterior leaves of cauliflower and cut into florets. In a large roasting pan or baking sheet, toss the cauliflower florets with the olive oil and the fresh ground black pepper. Roast the cauliflower for 20-25 minutes (depending on your oven) until tender with some caramelized edges.

About 2 minutes before pulling the cauliflower from the oven, heat the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Brown the butter just slightly. Chop rosemary, dates, olives and anchovy filets and add to butter until heated through. Drizzle the mixture over the cauliflower and toss to coat. Return to the oven for the last minute. Serve immediately.

