



SUNSHINE IN A BOX



SOLAR FRESH

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Second Spring

The autumnal Equinox tomorrow marks a second chance at cool weather crops

Farm Updates

The weather is feeling seasonally appropriate for the first time in a while and the fall rains are a welcome relief from another stretch of drought. Fall produce like carrots, beets, broccoli, greens, and radish benefit from cool moist weather along with sunny days to promote germination for some of the last of the direct seeded crops. Fall always feels like a “second spring” with cool moist weather and the revival of some vegetables that don’t grow as well in the summer months. It is nice to have another try and some crops—there are a lot of second chances in vegetable growing throughout the season.

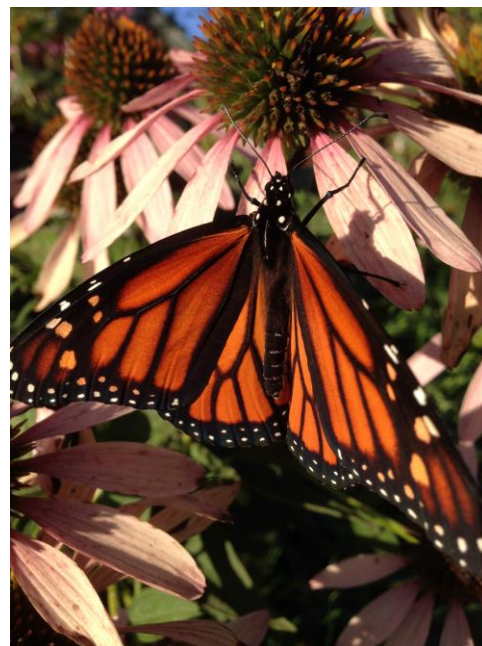
Most onions and winter squash are harvested and safe from moisture and fall pest pressure. The autumnal equinox means that fruiting crops will be ripening at about half the speed of high summer. Unfortunately we had a short ripening season this year for fruiting crops. Cucumbers are done for the season and I will be doing some “redecorating” of the hoop house with some greens to take us into the last weeks of the CSA. The beans have made an amazing

come back and I’m excited to have a good second crop this week. Moving into the final weeks of the CSA, I will be focusing on keeping some weeds back in the fall beds, preparing season extending infrastructure for some crops, planting late fall veggies, harvesting odds and ends before the frost comes, and wrapping up some areas to prepare for winter. The last week of the CSA will be October 18th unless otherwise specified depending on the weather and produce availability.

Recipes

Arugula Salad

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Week 15 Produce

Unseasonable weather has created a slightly unseasonable mix of produce this week

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Week 15 Produce

Arugula: This second cutting of arugula is slightly larger and more peppery but still crisp and fresh. Use in a salad with thin shaved vegetables and a light vinaigrette. This nutritious green can stand alone in a salad or be added to other greens for a blend. Arugula adds a fresh wild flavor to pizza, quiche, sandwiches and wraps, and pasta.

Kale: Cole crop of the week is lacinato kale. Soak in salt water to help remove any remaining caterpillar moths. The slightly holey leaves are the tradeoff for no spray. Remove tough part of stem and chop into large pieces for kale chips, medium pieces for soups or stir fry, and very thin pieces for raw salads. For raw salads, sprinkle with salt pepper, olive oil and vinegar or lemon juice and massage until tender, and let marinate. Add in radish matchsticks for a texture and color contrast.

Radish: The radish root and greens are a like a tonic for the body—the spiciness of the roots stimulates digestion and improves the nutrient absorption of the vitamin and mineral rich greens. Remove the greens for storage and keep in a plastic bag with moist paper towel until ready to use in stir fry or soup. The greens can also be used as a raw salad green added to arugula. If radishes begin to soften, don't throw them away—instead, slice in half lengthwise, toss with olive oil, salt and pepper, and roast in the oven at 375 until very soft. Add a splash of vinegar or lemon juice before serving.

Tomatoes: A modest tomato harvest as late blight takes hold across the state. I can't wait to take another stab at tomatoes next year.

Peppers: Hot temperatures are doing great things for the peppers which are finally producing larger and more fruits. Hopefully they will continue to grow and ripen up until the frost. Try a stir fry with Peppers, beans, garlic, onion, Green bell peppers make a great snack—try bringing along a crudité platter to work for a nutritious way to get that second wind with carrot sticks, tomatoes, radish, and celery. The flavor of home grown peppers can't be beat.

Garlic: How are you doing on garlic? Do you use lots or just small amounts? Try adding toward the end of cooking to avoid burning. Only cook on low heat to preserve nutritional benefits. Garlic will store for several months if you do not use it up first.

Red Onion: This is the quintessential onion for thin slicing and eating raw. Add to a burger to offset cholesterol content. Stir fry with beans or kale. Red onion will store for several weeks.

Cucumbers: Last cucumbers out of the hoop house. Try peeling skin if it is tough and bitter. You can also scrape out some seeds with a spoon if desired. Use in the arugula salad, or try combining with chilled blanched green beans with sour cream or yogurt dressing.

Beans: Beans are high in protein and fiber which makes for a filling snack that will provide energy. Beans work well with garlic and can also be paired with other vegetables for a stir fry. For a simple yet delicious cooking method, try cooking beans in boiling salted water for 7 minutes. Transfer to a bowl of cold water, then strain in a colander. Toss with salt, pepper, lemon juice and olive oil.

Recipes

Arugula Salad

1 Bunch Arugula, washed
4 Radishes, thinly sliced
½ cucumber, thinly sliced
1 rib celery thinly sliced
½ red onion, thinly sliced lengthwise

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon fresh squeezed lemon juice
Salt and pepper to taste

Toss all ingredients in a bowl and serve. Makes 4 side salads.