



SUNSHINE IN A BOX



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Farm Updates

This beautiful summer has been great growing weather however we are still waiting for beans and tomatoes to ripen. Some summer crops are starting to take off however I am noticing fewer pollinating insects than in the past—low pollination could become an issue but I am seeing a lot of little cucumbers that will size up soon. Beans should also be ready for next week. Hot weather has not been favorable for lettuce, but more will be coming in a few weeks. I am trying to clear out areas that have been harvested to make room for more fall crop planting.

Ordinary Magic

A vegetable becomes much more than just food and picked up at the store when it comes from the garden—watching it grow from a tiny seed to harvest is nothing but pure magic. The elements come together to create a living, breathing plant that continues to live even after picking it. There's no wonder veggies end up in so many stories and fairy tales, and watching my niece and nephew play I can see how kids find magic in ordinary objects. One of my favorite stories to read with them is Jack and the Giant Bean stock. I am still trying to figure out exactly

what the moral of this story is, but if nothing else there is the fact that seeds are a portal to a magical world. Produce pops up frequently in these tales—Cinderella's pumpkin carriage, poisonous apples, Frosty's storage carrot nose, spinning straw into gold, the princess detecting a pea under her mattress—and each have a different meaning and symbolism attached. For example, Cinderella's pumpkin seems to represent the limited time she has before the spell runs out, and the poisonous apple represents temptation.

This time of year it's easy to find beauty and magic in some of the simple things at the farm. The dog days of summer have a dreamy feeling that makes the mind wander and take notice of the small details like spider webs, flowers, the smells of herbs and cut grass, toads, dew drops and many other little wonders. Enjoy the beauty and magic in the cross section of a cabbage or smelling fresh basil because soon winter will be knocking at the door again.

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Week 5 Produce

Cabbage: Cabbage will store for several weeks. Peel outer leaves as needed. Use raw (in cole slaw) and cooked with sausage or as cabbage rolls. Cabbage is hydrating and full of plant nutrients and eating a combination of cooked and raw cabbage helps get the most nutritional benefit. This year's cabbages have not had to suffer from extensive pest damage resulting in tight heads.

Broccoli: Also in the cabbage family, broccoli can be consumed in a combination of cooked and raw forms to get the most varied nutrients. Broccoli is not enjoying the hot temperatures, but more is coming along nicely.

Zucchini: Some fruits seem to be affected by a lack of pollination, but this is still the best crop in a couple of years. Try making bread and butter pickled zucchini using turmeric as a seasoning. Don't forget that zucchini can always be baked into bread or muffins.

Cucumber: The first cucumber picking—more are on the way.

Basil: Such a delicious herb—not only will it flavor your dishes (try pairing with zucchini and cucumber) but it has a wide array of health benefits, especially for digestion.

Cherry Tomatoes: (Full Shares) Multicolored cherry tomatoes are new this season! This first picking is small but more will be on the way soon.

Recipes

Zucchini Bread

3 eggs	1 teaspoon salt
1 cup oil	1 teaspoon soda
2 cups sugar	¼ teaspoon baking powder
2 cups grated zucchini (peeled or unpeeled)	1 Tablespoon cinnamon
1 Tablespoon vanilla	¼ teaspoon nutmeg
3 cups flour	1 cup chopped nuts

Blend eggs, oil, sugar, zucchini and vanilla in large mixing bowl. Combine dry ingredients and nuts; stir into zucchini mixture. Pour into two greased and floured loaf pans (8-1/2 x 4 1/2 x 2 1/2"). Bake in 350 degree oven until golden brown and tests done with wooden pick (60-75 minutes). Cool 5 minutes before removing from pan. Cool on wire rack. Yield: 2 loaves. (Drewelow, 1991)

Zucchini Omelet

1 medium zucchini, thinly sliced
1 medium onion, sliced
1 ½ Tablespoons olive oil

2 Tablespoons water
½ teaspoon fresh basil
¾ cup shredded parmesan cheese

Simmer zucchini and onion in oil and water until tender. Combine other ingredients. Place this mixture inside a 4-egg omelet. Sprinkle with parmesan. (Drewelow, 1991)



References

Drewelow, P. M. (1991). *Zucchini: the summer squash for all year round 101 delicious recipes for cooking and preparing zucchini*. Zimmerman, MN: PMD Universal Distributor, Inc.