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Box #2
Newsletter #2
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New Stuff: everything but the sunflower greens.

Calendulas are annual plants, with edible flowers. One thing nice about them is that they drop a lot of seeds and will come up year after year—sometimes where you don't want them. Once up, calendulas are hardy souls. Plant it in a sunny location, water when it wilts and enjoy the blooms in salads, float in a drink or cut them for your vases.

Our soil grows a tasty beet: sweet and juicy. Beets are full of vitamins A & C as well as carotene. Beets are descended from Swiss chard. Someone, sometime, decided that they liked to eat the roots on their chard plants and started to select for large roots. This reduced the size of the leaves, and modern-day beets are the result. In addition to the root, the stems and leaves are also edible. Choose good-looking ones, however. Sauté the stems and leaves with other vegetables, or put raw into salads. In my opinion, roasting is the best way to prepare red beet roots. The only reason not to roast is because it's too hot to turn the oven on.

Roasted Beets

In a medium bowl, put:

1 Tbsp. olive oil
½ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. freshly-ground pepper

Remove stems and leaves from the beets and reserve for another use. Cut off the root and scrub clean. Cut beets into largish chunks and put into bowl. Do NOT peel, as the skin provides better flavor. Toss with oil, salt & pepper until all beets are evenly coated. Put the oiled beets into a pan **with sides**, and bake in a 400 degree oven for 30-60 minutes, or until they're done enough for a fork or knife to go in and out easily. Serve hot, or cool, or cut up into salads. Roasted beets make a great snack.

These wood chips are from the branches we pruned from our apple and pear trees this winter. They'll add a mild, smokey flavor to anything you want to grill. To use, first soak the chips in a container of water for 30-60 minutes. At this point, there're a few ways to use them. The quick and dirty way is to simply throw the soaked chips onto your coals. They'll smoke as long as they're wet, but will burn as soon as they dry out. Another method is to strain off the water, then put a cupful of chips onto a sheet of aluminum foil. Fold the foil around the chips, rolling the ends upward so no water drips out. Snip several holes in the top of the packet, and place it directly on the coals. This method gives you more smoke for a longer time. Happy grilling!

"Junior lettuce mix" is what we call our baby lettuce mix when it grows too big to be baby anymore. These leaves are on the tender side, so treat them gently. We've only spritzed a little water over the leaves, so you will have to wash them yourself a few times to ensure all the soil is gone. Like all lettuce mixes, this has a nice variety of colors and cultivars.

Sugar snap peas are a marvel of pea breeding—so sweet you can eat the whole thing, pod and all. Pull off the "string" first: grab the stem and pull towards the end. Otherwise, that string is pretty fibrous. Store them in the frig when you're not actively munching. The trick with sugar snap peas is to pick them when the peas fill the pod and the pod is still smooth and green—this is when their flavor is best. They are great eaten raw, lightly steamed, in a stir-fry, or . . . . All this rain has caused a little powdery mildew on the plants, so use these up soon. We hope to put them in your box again next week.

Swiss chard is the ancestor of beets. Both the stem and the leaves of chard are edible and delicious as well as beautiful. Cook the stems 3-4 minutes longer than the leaves, to whatever doneness, al dente or soft, that you prefer. Store chard in a plastic bag in the vegetable drawer of your fridge. Wash them before cooking, and cut the leaves in half lengthwise before chopping to make them easier to eat. Chard leaves are great, raw, in salads.

Terry's Favorite Way To Cook Any Vegetable:

Get out a 9"-10" skillet that has a lid. Put it on a low flame and add 2 Tbsp. butter. Add the vegetable(s) you want to the skillet, some salt (Kosher is excellent) and freshly-ground pepper. Stir, cover and cook until you reach the desired doneness, stirring a few times along the way. I think this simple method brings out the purest flavor of the vegetable you're cooking. When you know what something really tastes like, you

can make better decisions when combining it with other things.

Field Notes

Golly, where to start?

We've had 3, solid days of sun and cooler temperatures: perfect weather for a Northern girl. The ground has dried out enough to plant again, and we've got plenty to tuck in: lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, kohlrabi, cabbage, dill, tomatoes, and the list goes on. The zucchini plants are blooming and small squashes are forming. If they don't show up in next week's box, they should the week after.

One of our earlier crops is fennel, and you will be getting that in next week's box, along with a nice recipe. The plants are bulbing out nicely, and the fronds are a lovely green.

The beets you're getting this week were planted on April 28th, as were the sugar snap peas they share a field with. The greens/leaves look pretty good, and are good for you—use them in soups and stir frys.

Chuck is doing battle with Colorado potato beetles, and winning! These bright orange critters love to eat the leaves on potato plants, and will completely strip a plant in just a few days, if left unchecked. Our first line of defense is to walk the potato fields and squish the mating adults. This reduces the number of babies Chuck has to kill with pyrethrum, a contact poison that volatilizes in sunlight. Because the sunlight breaks it down, Chuck sprays at twilight, giving the pyrethrum all night to work. We use an OMRI approved formula, so no trace of it remains on the plant next morning.

Our sweet corn is definitely knee-high: right on time!

A few reminders: be careful to pick up the size box you've purchased and no other. Look at the signin sheet if you're unsure: the box size is right next to your name.

After you've taken all the goodies out of your wax box, please unfold it. Wendy Copeland and her daughter Madeline made this short YouTube video to show you how. It's to the point and less than a minute long—perfect! Here's the link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEaBFTlnGdo

You may have to copy and paste this into your address bar to see it.

Most pickup sites have a box for you to put the unfolded wax boxes into. Some prefer to have you place them under the table.

Chuck and I wish you all a fun and safe 4th of July!

Take Care,

T & C