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Box #2
Newsletter #2
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Garlic, Fresh
Kohlrabi
Lettuce
Radishes
Swiss Chard
Zucchini

Choice Box: parsnips.
New Stuff: kohlrabi, Swiss chard, zucchini.

The parsnips in the Choice Box were grown last year and overwintered without straw mulch. Overwintering parsnips changes some of the starches to sugar, resulting in a sweeter, tastier vegetable. During the March warmup, we harvested these roots because the hot weather caused them to start sprouting, which would have made the roots tough, fibrous and inedible. They've been sitting in our cooler ever since, and are a tad dehydrated, so will feel a little limp. Despite that, they taste alright. We've washed the worst of the dirt off for you in our barrel washer. Give them a good scrub, cut off the top and bottom—peeling is optional. I think these would be best incorporated into a stew or potroast.

If you were raised in this part of the state, you probably know and love kohlrabi. It has a juicy, mild flavor, and is excellent eaten raw. Many people have voiced a preference for it cooked, in a cream sauce. To use kohlrabi, trim off the leaves and peel it with a paring knife. Start by cutting off the bottom: you'll see a ring of small, white "hairs". Cut just inside the hairs, underneath the kohlrabi's skin and work your way around it like you would peel an apple. With the skin removed, cut it any way you like. I favor julienned pieces in a salad. It's great shredded and added to coleslaw. Refrigerate these in your vegetable drawer.

Swiss chard is the ancestor of beets. 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, but modern-day beets are the result. Both the stem and the leaves of chard are edible and delicious (as they are in beets). 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.

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

Dry, dry, hot and dry. 20% is not a very high chance of rain, and certainly not the all-day shower we really need to soak into the soil. When a short sprinkle is followed by high temeratures, that water evaporates too quickly and does no good. Monday evening and Tuesday morning a few storms pushed our way. Monday's missed us completely and Tuesday's gave us a sprinkle or two. It's been 5 weeks with less than ½ inch of rain. That bottom land we usually can't get into because it's too wet is looking pretty good.

Chuck's been having a power struggle with Colorado potato beetles. They've concentrated on one potato field, and have eaten some plants down to the ground. This particular pest multiplies quickly and is known for its ability to develop resistence to everything man has thrown against it. Chuck has been using several, different, organically-approved sprays, with only moderate effectiveness.

Despite the drought, both kale and chard are growing--not fast, but not drying up either. We'll be able to give you kale soon.

I ate my first beets yesterday: orange, "golden" beets. Wow, were they tender. We expect to be packing either red or orange beets in upcoming boxes.

The basil is growing well, branching and trying to flower. We pinch off these tops so the leaves taste good for a longer time. I wish the parsley was looking as good: it doesn't appear to like drought.

Our sweet corn patches are starting to show tassles. Chuck has concentrated the drip tape on them to encourage ears to form, but with only drip tape to quench their thirst, it's chancy. Cross your fingers and hope for the best.

As certified organic vegetable growers, we are concerned about maintaining the integrity of the organic law. Like most laws, it's only as strong as the people who enforce it allow it to be. We've all seen and read reports on so-called "organic" eggs, chickens, and beef where animals have no access to the pasture the law clearly states they should have. Someone, in some federally-approved certifying agency, has to sign a piece of paper stating that the farm meets the requirements of the organic law. So, someone is lying. The fact that they're lying about it for large corporations is sadly unsurprising. Charging organic prices for commercial beef makes money. However, this damages the good name of farms who follow the organic law and are certified by ethical certifying agencies. As consumers, Chuck & I want to trust that "organic" word when we see it on a food or product. Since we don't have time to research these abuses ourselves, we subscribe to a few E-newsletters from organizations we trust. High on our list is the Cornucopia Institute, and we support them with an annual contribution. The Organic Consumers Union is another. Both of these make it easy to vote for an issue they feel is especially important by clicking on a button. The Cornucopia Institite is close by in (where else) Cornucopia, Wisconsin. Their website, at http://www.cornucopia.org , is a wealth of knowledge. If you don't already know about them, we urge you to look them over.

SAVE THE DATE: Sunday, September 23rd is Farm Day. This is your chance to come out to the farm, take a tour of the fields and chat with Chuck and myself. We hope to see you then!

Stay cool, drink lots of water, and be careful with fire in these dry conditions.
Happy 4th of July everyone!

Terry & Chuck