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In the first few boxes, we like to give you some plants for your own garden (or pot) that you may find useful. They will need full to part sun to do well, enough water (don't let them wilt), and a little fertilizer. Parsley does best in full sun. After it's been in the ground for about a week, give it a shot (I mean that in the vernacular) of fertilizer, whatever you have. The plant will need a week or two to acclimate itself to this new spot before you see any growth. By August, your parsley should be around 6" high and wide, or more. Nutritionally, parsley is extremely high in vitamins A and C, as well as minerals, especially iron. It has a calming effect on the stomach and helps us digest food. That parsley on the edge of your plate is more than just decoration!

In Chinese medicine, parsley and cilantro are used to help remove lead and mercury from the body. So, if you're sanding some old woodwork, or fond of the fatty tissue in salmon, eat plenty of these helpful herbs.

Did you know that you can eat everything on a beet? We all know about the root, but the stem and leaves are tasty, too. This plant is high in carotene and vitamins A and C—add more C, calcium and iron if you eat the leaves as well. Choose good-looking leaves and compost the damaged or discolored ones.

In my opinion, roasting is the best way to prepare red beets, hands down. 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 it 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 and cut up into salads. Roasted beets make a great snack. Use the stems and leaves cut up into salads.

Growing radishes is always a challenge for us because flea beetles love to eat radish leaves. Those little holes in the leaves? Flea beetles. We have to keep a close eye on them to keep the population under control. These radishes were started under row cover, a lightweight, polyester fabric we use to protect crops from frost, and certain insects. It's also helpful in keeping the plants warmer—like a mini greenhouse. Row cover allows some water and air to pass thru it, so plants can receive some moisture, too.

We are known for our lettuce, and we grow a lot of it, all summer and fall. Leopard is a new variety for us, a red lettuce with speckled leaves—very dramatic. The taste is—well, you decide. Winter Density is a cross between Boston and green Romaine. We grew it last year and liked it so much we planted it again.

Since your onions are fairly young, you may be able to use a fair amount of the green stem. Let your knife tell you when to stop.

Spinach is another crop we grow all season. It's high in vitamins A, K and C. To get spinach's full nutritional benefits, eat it raw.

Zucchini contains quite a bit of water, making it a refreshing snack in the field. It also has reasonable amounts of vitamins A and C, as well as fiber—as long as you eat the skin. Grated zucchini cooked in a little butter with salt, pepper and garlic is a family favorite. Best of all: grilled. Cut zucchini into ½" slices, brush with olive oil and grill until cooked thru and limp. Great on sandwiches!

Field Notes

Oh, my, where to start?

You've gotten our emails with bits and pieces of news from the farm, so I'll try not to repeat those.

After over a week with no rain, we got a little Tuesday evening. We'll take whatever we can get—those little transplants are thirsty. Chuck's been rolling out the drip tape, which allows us to water at soil level, getting moisture to the roots quickly and efficiently. Saturday we planted the last of the sweet corn, and they needed the water the drip tape provided, badly.

After that cool, dry spring, June was warmer and wetter. Our crops started to get the message, and everything has grown significantly. Altho they're still a bit behind overall, I think the vegetables are playing "catchup".

As a convenience to our CSA members, I have purchased a quantity of MACSAC's excellent cookbook: "From Asparagus to Zucchini". It's organized with the CSA member in mind: alphabetically by vegetable. Each chapter contains a variety of excellent recipes, both cooked and raw, as well as nutritional, historical and preserving information. The cost is $20 per book. If you'd like to order, please email me with your name and pickup site, and the number of books you want. I'll set them aside for you, and deliver with your next box after I receive your check. Please make checks out to: Full Harvest Farm, LLC, and mail them to the address at the top of this newsletter. Every newsletter has the same logo, which includes contact information, should you ever need to get ahold of us.

We're glad our CSA boxes have begun. Happy eating!
Terry & Chuck