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Box #5
Odd Week
25 July 2018

Contents
Basil
Beets: Orange and Red
Broccoli (all Family Shares, some Couple Shares)
Chard
Lettuce: Mixed Types
Onions: Knob
Sugar Snap Peas: Couple Only (who don't get broccoli)
Zucchini: Mixed Types

New Stuff: broccoli
Choice Box: zucchini

The broccoli patch did not produce enough this week to give it to everyone. In fact, I'm surprised we got so many portions for the Couple Shares. If you don't get broccoli, you'll get sugar snap peas.
Broccoli is loaded with vitamins A, C, calcium, potassium and iron. To enjoy most of its nutritional value tho, eat broccoli raw. Or, gently cook or steam broccoli just until bright green and *al dente*. It's best stored inside a plastic bag in your refrigerator.
Broccoli should keep for about a week. You may find a green cabbage worm or two in your broccoli. They don't bite, and are easy to remove. Check for them underneath the florets as you wash or cut broccoli up, and deposit them in your compost container if you find any. Because we're organic, we do not spray for cabbage worms unless there is a large infestation, and there isn't right now. I imagine the killdeer and barn swallows find them quite a tasty treat.
Broccoli florets are aptly named: they are flower buds. If left to bloom, the buds open up into bright, yellow flowers. The younger a head of broccoli is, the smaller the buds. We try to harvest them when the buds are around 1/16". Sometimes, the buds don't mature evenly and you'll see larger and smaller buds on one head.
Depending on the heat and moisture, broccoli can have a sharp taste. Cooking it gets rid of that sharpness, even if it's 2 minutes in boiling water.

Broccoli & Zucchini Soup
In a large saucepan, over medium heat, put:
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
2 small zucchinis, peeled and chopped
a sprinkle of salt
-Sauté until the zucchini has started to give up some of its water and the onion is soft.
Add: 2 cups broccoli, (or whatever you have), chopped
4 cups chicken broth
-Cover and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer 20 minutes.
Using a hand blender (if you have it), puree the soup until smooth. If you prefer to leave it chunky, cut the cooking time down to 10-15 minutes.
Add: ½ tsp. celery seed
Stir and serve. Serves 4.
This is one of those recipes you can change around at will. If you want a thicker soup, add potatoes. Or, replace all or part of the broccoli with cauliflower. For an elegant touch, add ½ cup heavy cream after pureeing, and garnish with fresh dill and/or chopped chives. Go ahead, be creative.
Most of you will get a bag of beets without tops. We did a clean sweep of our first beet patch, which was pretty weedy, and the beet tops were going downhill. It almost yielded enough for everyone, but not quite. A few Family boxes will contain bunched beets. Altho the basil bunches are small, your plant may be able to supply the rest of what you'll need to make pesto.

Basil Pesto
makes approx. 2 cups pesto
In the bowl of a food processor, put:
2 cups, packed, fresh basil leaves, washed and spun/dried
4 medium cloves garlic, chopped coarsely
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. freshly-ground pepper
1/4 cup almonds, walnuts, pine nuts, etc.
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
Process all ingredients just until uniform in size. Add more salt, pepper, etc. to suit your taste. You can also freeze this pesto, altho the flavor and texture are better if you leave out the cheese. Pesto is a pretty potent sauce on pasta, so use sparingly. Start with about 1 Tbsp. per serving, taste, then increase the amount, if desired. Pesto can be frozen easily. I buy a package of the ½ cup containers and put the finished paste in those. To thaw, take a container out of the freezer the night before and put it into your refrigerator. Do NOT try to thaw it in the microwave: it'll turn black. Basil oxidizes (turns black) easily, so always cover it when

you're not actually spooning some out. If you can, pour a thin film of olive oil over the top of the paste to protect it from the air.
"Pesto" simply means "paste". You can make pesto with other herbs besides basil. People often substitute parsley when they're a bit short on basil for this recipe. I've made delicious herb pestos using tarragon, thyme, parsley, fennel, sage, lovage, oregano, rosemary, marjoram, Summer savory and sorrel. Use one quarter to half as much of the stronger herbs: sage, rosemary and lovage.

Field Notes

This last rain dropped 2.5" on the farm. Everything has had a good drink and is all the better for it. Before it started raining, we planted more broccoli, cauliflower and lettuce. Plants were looking a bit dry, so the rain was very welcome.
Last week I got a lesson in driving the cultivating tractor. Our International Harvester Farmall Super C tractor is a rusty relic from the 50's, but it runs (altho the seat tilts to the right rather alarmingly), and it does a decent job cultivating. The farmers I know say "cultivating is an art". I just wanted to get thru the onions without digging too many of them up. Taking into account my beginning status, Chuck had the tractor set up to cultivate only one row at a time. Still, driving down a row of little plants with cultivating shovels only an inch or 2 on either side of the plants is stressful. The first row was a knuckle-biter, but the second was better. After 14 rows of onions, I felt a whole lot better (and only dug up 1—onion, that is). The 4 rows of Brussels sprouts required concentration, but by the end of the 6 rows of broccoli, I was feeling a little cocky. Ha! Pretty good for a beginner. But I'm fixing that seat.
While harvesting broccoli, I was close to our first cauliflower patch. The heads are forming at the base of the leaves, and need to be tied. We do that to keep sun away from the cauliflower so the heads stay as white as possible. The plants conspire by producing long leaves that are easily tied. You'll probably see this in your box in a week or two.
The sweet corn is progressing beautifully. We plan to put sweet corn in your boxes next week.
Our green bean beds are flowering like crazy, but beans are still small. Next week on the green beans.
Has anyone ever pickled zucchini? Do you have a good recipe? I've found several on the web, and I'm wondering if it turns out well.
Time to get this printed and sent off. See you soon!
Stay cool,

Terry & Chuck