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Box #13
**Odd Week**
25 September 2019

**Contents**
Cilantro
Beets: Red
Brussels Sprout Tops
Chard
**Cucumber: Couple Shares Only**
Garlic
Melons: Cantaloupe/Muskmelon, Peace Watermelon
Peppers: Red Carmen, Hungarian Hot Wax, Jalapeno
Tomatoes: Cherry or Juliets, Heirloom Slicers
**Zucchini: Family Shares Only**

**New Stuff:** Brussels sprout tops, cilantro, Peace watermelon
**Choice Box:** ?

**Cilantro**, also called Chinese parsley, is commonly used in Asian and Mexican cuisines, and Americans have come to love it also. There's nothing like chopped cilantro in a good bowl of salsa. Wash it before using. One method of storing cilantro is to wrap it in a damp paper towel, put in a plastic bag in your frig. Another method is to clip the bottoms, stand the bunch in a glass with an inch of water, change the water every 2 days and keep in the frig. Cilantro will last about a week, properly stored. To keep it long-term, freeze the cleaned leaves in a zip-lock bag, and don't thaw them prior to using. Altho most herbs taste more intense when they're dried, cilantro loses its flavor when dehydrated, tasting nothing like the fresh version.

One of the techniques for growing **Brussels sprouts** is to break off the **top** of the plant at a certain point in its development. Without its top, the plant puts more energy into forming sprouts and not in growing upwards.

If you're new to our CSA family, you've probably never eaten the top of a Brussels sprout plant before. No worries: it may be unusual, but it's **really good**. **Eat everything**: the leaves, the stems and **especially** the stalk: sweet and tender.

Store the tops in the plastic bag they come in, and enjoy them within 3-4 days. Cabbage worms love the leaves as much as we do, so you're likely to find some. Wash the tops thoroughly before using. You can eat them steamed, sautéed, stir fried, in soup--anything you put greens in you can put these in. Steaming is my favorite, followed by sautéing with bacon. Choose your favorite method and enjoy.

Here's the story behind harvesting Brussels sprout tops: Breaking the tops off hundreds of Brussels sprout plants is labor intensive. Several years ago, we gave this job to our Hmong crew, and watched with amazement while they stuffed the tops into garbage bag after garbage bag, then hauled them to their car. The next week, they brought lunch and we got to taste what all that hauling was about. Wow! Sweet, tender, especially the stalk. Who knew? We've been eating them ever since and sharing with our CSA members.

Monday evening, I used Brussels sprout tops instead of chard and made the "Asian-Style Chard" from last week's newsletter. Because Brussels sprout tops are thicker and take longer to cook, I added a cup of water to the pan after putting in the greens, turned the heat down and simmered them 10-15 minutes, until the greens were tender. The sauce was pretty thick, so a little extra water in the pan helped spread it around easier.

Remember, the stems, stalk and leaves are all tender, so use everything.

**Coconut-Braised Greens**
In a 10" skillet over medium high heat, put:
1 Tbsp. butter
1 Tbsp. coconut oil (or whatever you have)
When the oils are hot, add:
1 bunch scallions, whites & greens thinly sliced
-Sauté for about a minute.
Add: a bunch of greens, roughly chopped
-Stir, sauté for another minute.
Add: 1 ½ cups coconut milk (1 14 oz. can)
1 Tbsp. soy sauce
-Bring to a simmer, lower the heat and cover. Simmer for 10-15 minutes, or until the greens are done to your liking. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper before serving.

"Peace" watermelon is a yellow, seeded watermelon with good flavor. We grow it every year because of the flavor and small size. Chuck and I prefer the better taste of watermelon varieties with seeds.

We didn't have quite enough watermelons for everyone, so some Couple Shares will get a cantaloupe or muskmelon. Muskmelon differs from cantaloupe because it forms distinct lobes with lines between them, whereas cantaloupes are simply round. Both contain the netting pattern that indicates proper pollination. Next week, Chuck believes there will be enough watermelon for everyone.

Beets are back! By now, you probably have a favorite way of preparing them. You'll notice spots on many of the beet greens—this is their form of powdery mildew, caused by frequent rain and the heavy dews we get in the mornings.

**Field Notes**

Sunday was wet and gray, giving us 2.5". We decided a late start on Monday was a good idea to let the ground dry some. Still pretty muddy.

We think we've found a solution to muddy Juliet tomatoes. We tried running them thru our brusher-washer and they went thru the brushes great, but they fell thru the gaps while rolling down the sponges along the drying chute. Adam, one of our Worker Shares, came up with a method to cover those gaps and scoot the tomatoes right into the receiving bin. The result was clean, beautiful tomatoes. Bravo Adam!

The tomato patch is growing beautifully. There is almost no sign of late blight, bacterial speck or other diseases common to tomatoes that we've seen in years past. The heirloom slicing tomatoes are big and delicious, but cracking is still a problem. Whether they split while being picked, sorted, packed, transported or sitting on your counter, the best solution is to eat them soon.

We grow a recent organic cultivar called "Skyway", one bred to withstand picking, packing and transporting to market without cracking as well as resistance to a number of tomato diseases. All those benefits come at a cost: flavor. While still good, Skyway isn't a match for the flavor of the heirloom tomatoes growing near it. Guess we're still looking for the perfect tomato.

It's almost here:

# Farm Day

## Sunday, Sept. 29th, 2-5pm.

***Make fresh apple cider, tour the farm, win fabulous prizes.***

## See you there!

Chuck and I invite you to bring a quart or half gallon container with you so you can take home some fresh, unpasteurized, apple cider.

Enjoy this beautiful weather.

Terry & Chuck