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Box #9
**Odd Week**
25 August 2021

**Contents**
Dill
Beets: Chioggia or Red
Cucumbers
Lettuce
Melons: Galia
Peppers: Carmen / FlavorBurst / Red Ace
Sweet Corn
Turnips: White Salad

**New Stuff:** melons, white turnips
**Choice Box:** cucumbers, melons, peppers, white turnips, ??

**Melons**, so good when they're ripe, so disappointing when they're not. This season, we grew many kinds: Galia, muskmelon, canary and yellow watermelon. Galia melons originated in Israel. They have green-to-yellow rinds and smooth, green flesh. Muskmelon is like cantaloupe, but has lobes instead of a smooth skin, and orange flesh. We prefer it to cantaloupe, flavor-wise. Canary melons are bright yellow, football-shaped and have light-green flesh. We grow seeded watermelons, and like the yellow-fleshed "Peace" cultivar, altho we're growing another yellow to compare. Chuck and I feel that seeded watermelons have better flavor.
Galia is a new one for us. Adaptive Seeds offered a mix of Galia types that were small and early, so we decided to give that a try. They are indeed small and early and different. Some have smooth skin and are netted, like a muskmelon. Others are ribbed and have no netting. Few of them weigh more than a couple of pounds, and many are much smaller. I cut one open that was the size of a tennis ball, and it was delicious. Chuck tasted his way across the patch, and harvested those that tasted good.
People often ask us "How do you know when a melon is ripe?" There are a couple of ways. First, look for the "ground spot", it should be yellow. A "ground spot" or "field spot" is the place where a melon's skin rests on the ground while it grows. When a green melon matures, its ground spot turns from green to yellow. The deeper the yellow, the more mature the melon. Even yellow melons have yellow ground spots, they're just a different shade. The next way is overall color. Muskmelons have a green undercolor that turns to beige/yellow when it's ripe. If a melon has ribs, like a muskmelon does, those ribs should be brown or beige instead of green. Canary melons turn a deeper shade of yellow. Color is tough to use as a measure on watermelon, tho. Look for a yellow ground spot on those, not white or light green. The last way is smell. A ripe muskmelon or canary or honeydew should smell wonderful. Again, this is a hard one to use on watermelons because they don't have a strong smell and that thick rind blocks most scent, but experts say a ripe watermelon will smell slightly sweet. Lots of people say to thump a melon with your finger and listen for a "plunk" sound. This would be easier if you had melons of different ripenesses to test all at the same time for comparison. However, one source recommends you ask the farmer or grocery produce manager to demonstrate this technique.

**White salad turnips** are a smaller, sweeter, milder version of the classic large, purple-topped variety. I recommend you simply wash them and cut up into a salad—no need to peel, the skins are very thin and tender. They can also be used in stir frys, put into soups of stews or mashed like potatoes. Try adding the leaves to your salad, or in a stir-fry—they have a spicy flavor.
There are several small critters that also think white turnips are pretty tasty, and some of them have had a go at yours. Most of the damage is to the surface or just under, and can easily be cut away, leaving plenty of white turnip to enjoy. Just another example of how little we use chemicals here on the farm.
Turnips are a good source of vitamin C (especially if eaten raw), potassium and calcium. The leaves are an excellent source of vitamins A, C and B complex, potassium, magnesium and calcium. Turnips are one of the cruciferous vegetables believed to help prevent cancer.
To store, break off the leaves and store in separate plastic bags in the refrigerator. The leaves will keep for 3-4 days, the roots 1-2 weeks.

Here's your 2nd round of Big-Ass beets. Most of them will be red, but some folks will get some Chioggia in their bags. Chioggia is an Italian heirloom beet with pink and white concentric circles on the inside. Their skin is dark pink/red, similar to red radishes.
Last year, I asked my members for beet recipes. From Rachel, "My whole family likes this beet burger recipe:"
**Beet Burgers**
2 medium beets, peeled (about 2 cups; 300 g)

1 cup (95 g) walnuts
1/2 cup (45 g) rolled oats
1/4 cup (25 g) ground flax seed
2 cloves of garlic
1 teaspoon dried rosemary
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon cayenne (optional)
1/2 teaspoon sea salt
1 cup (170 g) white beans*, rinsed if using canned
1 tablespoon low-sodium tamari

Preheat the oven to 375F and line a baking sheet with a silicone mat, parchment paper or aluminum foil.

Finely grate the beets using a food processor attachment or handheld grater. Set aside. Quickly clean out the processor, then re-attach it to the base with an S-blade attachment. Add the walnuts, oats, flax, garlic, all dry spices, and salt. Process until a slightly coarse flour forms.

Add the shredded beets, beans, and tamari to the food processor and blend until combined, scraping the sides of the device with a spatula as necessary. It's okay if there are still some pieces of beans or beets left – this will add texture!

Scoop out the burger "batter" to form patties; I used a ½ cup measure to make 6 large patties. Use slightly damp hands to flatten and shape the burgers, then place on a baking tray.

Bake in the middle rack of the oven for 20 minutes, then flip the burgers and bake in the *top* rack of the oven for 15-20 minutes, until the edges are crispy and slightly browned.

Serve as desired; leftovers will keep in the fridge for up to 5 days, or can be frozen for up to two months.

NOTE: The ground flax seeds act as a binder in this recipe, replacing the egg-and-breadcrumb mixture we usually see in things like meatloaf. If you don't have ground flax seeds (not whole), substitute a similar amount of cornstarch, potato starch or tapioca flour.

Our plan this week was to give you all FlavorBurst peppers and let everyone enjoy their complex taste. Unfortunately, not enough of them had ripened, so we gleaned some reddish Carmens, more mature Red Ace, and a few Sweet Sunrise. So, everyone will get a colored pepper this week. Those FlavorBurst are taking their sweet time, but more should be ripe by next week, fingers crossed. They are worth the wait, as those of you who get one this week can attest.

The new sweet corn patch is looking good, and we were able to pick a large amount. Some of the cobs are on the small side. Sweet corn should be in next week's box also.

**Field Notes**

We had quite the little storm Tuesday afternoon: dark clouds, high winds, heavy rain. When it was over half an hour later, we'd gotten ½". Oh well, the plants, and we, are grateful. Fingers crossed for a little more in the wee hours.

Along with the last rain, we have a new flush of mosquitoes. It's been quite awhile since we've all had to spray ourselves down, but the little whiners are back with a vengeance.

Tomatoes are starting to turn color—at last!—so we think you'll begin getting some next week. There may not be many to start, but there should be lots soon.

Tomatillos are also looking good. A week or 2, and you'll get those too.

Cauliflower is soooooo slooooow. Maybe we can start tying them this week. And maybe, once they start growing heads, the heads will grow fast.

Monday night, Chuck and I planted 8 beds of fall kohlrabi, cabbage, broccoli and cauliflower. We hope to harvest most of this in October, altho some of it will likely last into November if the frosts aren't too bad.

Chuck and I have set the date for this year's **Farm Day**: Sunday, Sept. 26th. We gather in the afternoon for apple picking, cider making and farm touring. More details will be in next week's newsletter.

That's it for this week.

Stay Cool,

TERRY & CHUCK