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Box #1
Odd Week
29 June 2022

Contents
Basil Plant
Beets: Orange (Some bunches have a red one too)
Garlic Scapes
Kale: Green Curly
Lettuce: Green Romaine, or?
Sunflower Greens

New Stuff: everything
Choice Box: ?

The **basil** plant you're getting today is the large-leafed, very fragrant, Italian Genovese basil. The leaves are wonderful in both cooked and raw dishes. Basil needs full to part sun to do well, a little fertilizer and adequate water (don't let it wilt). This herb grows 1 1/2 to 2 ft. tall and will branch into a small bush taking up about a foot of space. Cut off the top half of the center stalk first, harvesting the older, larger leaves--this forces the plant to branch out and produce more, newer leaves. When the hop-like flower buds appear, pinch them off as often as possible: by preventing the plant from flowering and forming seeds, you will extend the useful life of the tasty leaves. At some point later in the summer, the leaves will start to turn bitter. Start tasting them around the end of August. You'll know right away when they're no longer usable. You can let the plant go to flower at this point and just enjoy it for its appearance. Basil will not survive a frost.
If you get a basil plant that looks a bit yellow, get it into a pot or your garden and add a little fertilizer. Then, they'll turn a nice, bright green.

We grow two different kinds of **beets** here at Full Harvest Farm: orange and red. Orange beets are orange inside and out, have a sweeter, milder beet taste and grow a nice set of lovely leaves that are fairly disease-resistant. Orange beets can be grated and tossed, raw, into salads. Red beets have the most flavor and are red inside and out. Their leaves tend to be darker green and the stems dark red. The root, stem and leaf are all edible, and each part tastes a little different. Fresh beets have tender skins, so **don't peel your beets**: that's where most of the vitamins are! High in vitamins A and C, beets also contain carotene. The beet greens contain good portions of vitamin C, calcium and iron. Chop them and the stems into ½" strips, sauté in a little butter or olive oil. So good you'll look forward to eating your greens!
To store beets, cut off the greens, put leaves/stems into a plastic bag then into the vegetable drawer in your refrigerator. Use within 3-4 days for best flavor. Store the roots in a separate plastic bag in your refrigerator, and they'll keep for weeks, altho they'll taste best if you eat them within a week.
In my opinion, roasting is the best way to prepare beet roots. 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, trimming off the tap root. Do NOT peel, as the skin provides better flavor, important vitamins and needed fiber. Cut beets into largish chunks and put into a bowl. Toss with oil, salt & pepper until all beets are evenly coated. Line a pan **with sides** with aluminum foil (this helps with cleanup and prevents oil fires in your oven). Spread the oiled beets in the pan, 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. The skins are now very tender. Serve hot, or cool, or cut up into salads. Roasted beets make a great snack.

Garlic scapes come from hardneck garlic. They are the plant's graceful way of forming a seed sack, called a "bulbil", which is the lighter, rounded part near the end. Altho the seeds are viable, it can take 2-3 years for them to produce a bulb of garlic, whereas planting one clove will result in a whole bulb the next summer. The entire scape is edible and delicious with a mild, garlic flavor. Use them like scallions, in anything you want the taste of garlic in. They're also great in pesto, soups, scrambled eggs, etc.. Store these in a plastic bag in your fridge and they should keep for a few weeks. They also freeze well.

Garlic Scape Dressing *Makes 1 cup*
2 garlic scapes, coarsely chopped
2 green onions, coarsely chopped
1 teaspoon honey
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard or similar brown mustard
4 tablespoons red wine vinegar

1 tablespoon lemon juice
dash salt
1/8 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

Preparation: In a blender, combine the garlic scapes, onions, honey, mustard, red wine vinegar, lemon juice, salt, and pepper. Process until smooth. With machine on low, slowly add the olive oil until well mixed.

Kale is highly nutritious, loaded with vitamins A, B, C, calcium and many minerals, and has the highest protein content of any cultivated vegetable. It keeps for a long time in the fridge, but you'll get the most nutrition from it if you use it soon, and eat it raw. Check online for a "green drink" or smoothie incorporating kale.

Raw kale will get tenderer and milder if you toss it with a dressing an hour or 2 before eating. I think the effect is from the vinegar and salt.

Kale will stay hydrated best inside a plastic bag with just a little water on it. To prepare kale, remove most of the center rib (very fibrous), then chop up as your recipe indicates. Depending on the size of the pieces, kale will cook in 10-20 minutes. You want it soft, mostly tender with just a little chew, and still green in color.

The curly green kale tends to be a bit on the bitter side (good for the heart). If a little bitterness is not to your taste, remove that by blanching the leaves in boiling water for 2 minutes, then proceed with whatever recipe you wish. Frost tends to sweeten the taste of kale, or, at least makes it less bitter. In some years, one type of kale will be considerably milder than another, for no discernible reason. Young kale leaves are usually sweeter and milder than older ones.

You may find some leaves with small holes or rips due to insect damage. They do not affect the flavor, but you should use those leaves first.

Here's a great way to use kale:

Kale Chips

Preheat oven to 350ºF.

Cut out the stems & center veins of a large bunch of kale. Chop the kale roughly into 1"-1½" pieces, wash and spin them as dry as you can. (You may have to do that step in batches.)

In a large bowl, stir together:

2 Tbsp. olive oil
Kosher salt or sea salt
freshly ground pepper

Toss the kale pieces in the mixture until all are coated. Line a rimmed baking sheet with aluminum foil or parchment paper. Spread the kale out on the baking sheet as evenly as possible. Bake for 10-15 minutes, or until the leaves are very crispy. They will shrink some. Remove from oven, cool for 10 minutes, and enjoy.

We grow lots different kinds of **lettuce** here at Full Harvest Farm, green leaf, red leaf, green Romaine, red Romaine, green Boston bibb (sometimes knows as buttercrunch), red Boston bibb, green oakleaf, red oakleaf, etc. Lettuce goes into most of our boxes, so you're likely to get all of these at some point.

This week we're putting in green Romaine for everyone, with the Family boxes getting another, small head of something else.

Wash lettuce thoroughly before eating—rain splashes soil onto it. We always do an initial washing, but it will need more. Store lettuce in a plastic bag, in your vegetable drawer in the frig. It should keep for about a week or more. If you have a lettuce spinner, great, use it. If you don't, consider buying one: it's a real time saver for washing lettuce. And, it'll help you keep your lettuce fresh longer. Clean, mostly dry lettuce leaves will keep for a few weeks when stored in a ziplock freezer bag with most of the air gently squeezed out and the bag sealed.

Sunflower greens are a "living" food, and especially good for you. They have a sweet, nutty flavor. We started these in warm water, then spread the seeds over a little potting soil. Next, they went into the germination chamber where it's warm and damp. Some of the sprouts may just be emerging from their shells. Before you enjoy these, you need to do a few things to finish them off.

First, place the container in a shallow plate, something that will catch water. Then, give them some water, about ¼ cup, and place them in a sunny location. Leave the plants in the window for a few days so they can continue to grow. They will reach for the light and the cotyledons (those leaf-like things) will appear. Gently pull or brush off the split seed shell at the end of those cotyledons if it doesn't fall off by itself. For best flavor and nutritional value, harvest before true leaves emerge in the center of the plant. To harvest, snip the stems, just above the soil level. Rinse them off, and you're ready to eat. Many of our members put the greens on sandwiches or in salads. Once the sprout is cut it's done. However, not all seeds sprout at the same time, so as you harvest some plants, others could emerge.

Yes, they will grow into sunflowers, and yes, you can plant them outside. Wait until the plants have their 2nd set of true leaves before you put them in the ground.

Field Notes

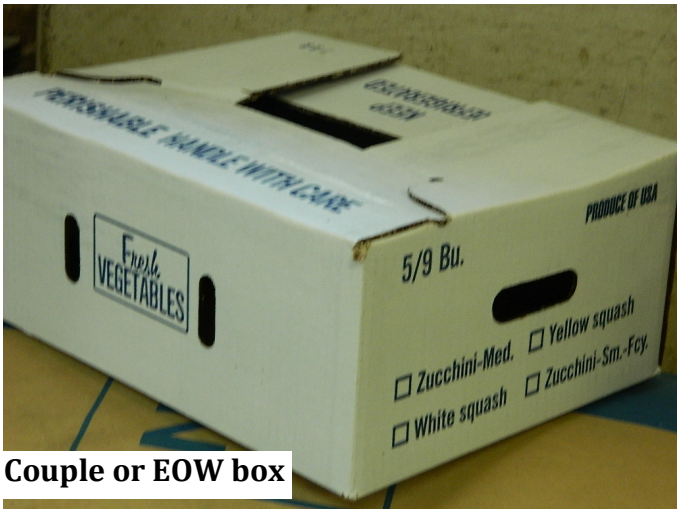
It's been a dry spring overall, but cold up until the beginning of May. That cold meant the ground didn't warm up as fast as it usually does, and didn't send the "grow" signal to our plants as early as usual. So, everything is a bit smaller and a bit later.

This means Box #1 is, as stated, small, 6 items. Going forward, you should see a steady march up to 8 items and larger portions. Onions are being weeded regularly and growing well. The 1st beds of carrots have got nice, green tops and should be ready to dig in a week or 2. Garlic bulbs put on most of their size right now, so in 2 or 3 weeks they'll be ready to dig up. Chuck planted more garlic for this year, so we plan to put it into the boxes often. Zucchini grows fast once it's in the ground, with noticeable changes from day to day. The first flowers are male, then female flowers appear and fertilization happens. You'll see zucchini in your boxes in a week or 2. Zucchini season can be long, so dig out those recipes, and I'll contribute a few. We also have sugar snap peas planted and flowering. God willing and the creek don't rise the patch produces enough to put them into next week's box.

We've had plenty of sunshine, but not plenty of rain. Saturday's misty rain didn't add up to much, a trace, but the plants needed everything they could get whether it was on their leaves or the ground. We have a chance at some rain this evening (Tuesday), so cross your fingers for us.

When Mother Nature doesn't water our plants, we lay out drip tape and do it ourselves. I'll explain drip tape in another newsletter: I've lots to cover today.

One of the biggest problems we have on the first delivery day is someone taking the wrong size box. I try to get ahead of that by showing you a picture of the box your vegetables are packed in.



Couple or EOW box

If you bought a **Couple or Every-Other-Week Couple Share**, you'll pick up this box, a 5/9 bushel. Short, squat, light blue lettering.

If you bought a **Family Share**, you get this box, a ¾ bushel. Tall, colorful, red, white and green lettering.



Family box

If you forget what you signed up for, the size Share is next to your name on the signin sheet.

One last reminder: unfold your CSA box before you leave it at your pickup site. Many sites have a big box you can set them into. This helps your site manager store your box easily until we pick it up next week. Here's the link to watch a short YouTube video on how to unfold a wax box:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEaBFTlnGdo

And that's it for this week's extra-long newsletter. Enjoy box #1, and stay cool.

Have a wonderful 4th of July!!!

Terry & Chuck