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Box #13
**Odd Week**
21 September 2022

**Contents**
Parsley
Cucumber
Green Beans
Lettuce: Mixed Types
Melons: Muskmelon or Watermelon
Onions: Red Torpedo
Peppers: Mixed Bells, Carmen, Jalapenos
Tomatoes: Juliets, Mixed Slicers, San Marzano

**New Stuff:** muskmelon / watermelon
**Choice Box:** split muskmelons, peppers, tomatoes, ?

**Melons**, so good when they're ripe, so disappointing when they're not. This season, we grew many kinds: muskmelon, canary and red & yellow watermelon. 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 a red, seeded one to trial. Chuck and I feel that seeded watermelons have better flavor.
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. I'm sticking with the ground spot.
Some of you will get muskmelons, more of you will get watermelons—that's just the way they're ripening. The muskmelons are very ripe and should be eaten within the next few days, if at all possible. Chuck, I and our field crew have sampled quite a few split and damaged ones, and they were all delicious. We let some melons with a bit of damage become part of the distribution because they're just so good. If you get one that has a small chew mark, a few round holes, or other damage, and you decide it's NOT delicious, we'll happily replace it next week. Just email me.
Chuck would love to hear from those who get a red watermelon. What did you think? Did you like the flavor? All feedback is welcome.
The cucumbers are climbing their strings nicely, and this week's harvest was better. We love having cucumbers to pick and they're so much easier to see on a trellis.
Here's a recipe sent in by Michelle Weber way back in 2013: "we found the recipe to not only be very tasty, but also very little fuss. We've also been enjoying the pickled onions that are a part of it on burgers, etc. The recipe is from an old Cooking Light magazine (2007)."
**Ingredients:**
6 cups thinly sliced pickling cucumbers (about 2 pounds)
2 cups thinly sliced onion
1 1/2 cups white vinegar
3/4 cup sugar
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon mustard seeds
1/2 teaspoon celery seeds
1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper (I used about 1/4 teaspoon and they still have a kick!)
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
**Preparation:**
Place 3 cups cucumber in a medium glass bowl; top with 1 cup onion. Repeat procedure with the remaining 3 cups cucumber and remaining 1 cup onion.
Combine vinegar and remaining ingredients in a small saucepan; stir well. Bring to a boil; cook 1 minute. Pour over cucumber mixture; let cool. Cover and chill at least 4 days. Pickles may be stored in the refrigerator for up to one month.

**Note**: At first, it doesn't appear that there is enough liquid to cover the cucumbers; however, by about 12 hours after you mix everything and it has a chance to sit in the fridge, there is more than enough liquid to cover everything. Also, I made sure to stir the mixture once a day for those first four days and the flavor was really the best after the fourth day."
You know, a few hot peppers might be an excellent addition to this recipe . . .

Chuck's electric fence seems to be discouraging the deer from eating the green beans. But some fungal disease seems to be affecting a small portion of the patch. Hopefully, it won't spread much. We want to pick green beans for another week or so.
The San Marzano tomatoes are finally ripe. Some found their way into your quarts this week, others we'll offer for sale at the West Bend Farmer's Market and on our WebStore. San Marzano tomatoes are terrific cooked. But raw, not so much. Cooking seems to bring out all the flavor San Marzanos are famous for, so for all you sauce makers, this is the one you want.

**Field Notes**
We got a short, heavy shower Tuesday afternoon that gave us ¼". We're still drying out from the last rain, so a lot more was not welcome. Mostly, the storms passed north of us, or went around us, which is often the case, for some reason.
Last week, the field crew pulled up all the yellow and red storage onions and set them on their sides to dry in the sun. Monday, we gathered all those onions up in boxes to continue drying in the barn or greenhouse. 17 crates of mostly large onions. What a haul!
Chuck is amazed at how big the winter squash is getting. We always choose tasty but smaller varieties of winter squash specifically so they will fit into a CSA box. Sometimes, Mother Nature has other ideas. When something gets too big, we box them separately for each pickup site and attach a sign to the box that says "Take One". I'll announce it in the newsletter and my email, so you'll have plenty of advance notice.

As you now know from my previous email, you can pay for your WebStore order with Zelle. We're using one of our email addresses to receive funds:
fullharvestfarm@yahoo.com
Once we get a confirmation email saying that money has been deposited, we'll post that amount to your CSA account and send you a confirmation email.
Remember, the downside to Zelle is that the funds are untraceable once they leave your account, so, if the funds don't get to the intended receiver, it's gone. If you don't want to use Zelle, we still accept payment with a check.

## Farm Day is this Sunday, September 25, 2022.

We'll start at **1pm**, harvesting apples to make cider. We try to set it up so as many people as possible can help. Bring a gallon or half gallon container with you so you can take some cider home. Also bring something to carry apples in because you can pick apples for yourself too.
Around 3pm, Chuck will take you on a tour of the farm fields so you can see just where your food comes from.
We're looking forward to meeting you!

Have a great week.

*Terry & Chuck*