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Box #4
Even Box
19 July 2023

Contents
Parsley: Curly
Beets: Chioggia and Orange
Chard: Rainbow
Garlic
Kohlrabi
Lettuce: Red or Green Leaf
Onions: Knob
Zucchini

New Stuff: Chioggia beets, knob onions
Choice Box: ?

Onion, or *Allium cepa*, is the most widely used seasoning in the world. Historical references go back to 3200 BC. There are 300 species of alliums, and 70 of them are native to North America. Think garlic, chives, scallions—all the same family.
Alliums are an excellent source of vitamins C, B6 and a good source of dietary fiber, folate, potassium and manganese. Onions also contain sugars, hence that sweet taste when you sauté them. An onion's layers are actually leaves, and are thick because this is the plant's nutrient storage for next year's growth.
At Full Harvest Farm, we grow both sweet and storage onions. Sweet onions, like Walla Walla, Vidalia, or the variety we like, Ailsa Craig, taste sweeter, but don't store well. It's best to put them in the refrigerator if you don't use them within the week. When you cut a sweet onion in half, you'll see the "leaves" are thicker and there are fewer of them.
We put the sweet Ailsa Craigs in your box until they are all gone, then switch to yellow storage onions later in the season. In between, we'll bunch together some red onions for a little variety.
Storage onions will keep for months, especially in cool conditions. When you cut a storage onion in half, you'll see it has more, but thinner, leaves/layers.
"Knob" onions are simply young onions that have started to bulb out and are about a quarter of the way to being full sized.
The onions in your box are very fresh, very young and their tops are still green: you can use those tops like scallions. To keep the leaves green, store them in the vegetable bin in your refrigerator. The bulbs are small and whitish because the onions we picked to get these are technically "yellow". When they're this fresh, onions contain more liquid and may squirt when you chop them. To reduce that possibility, cut slower and make sure your knife is very sharp.



Chuck surprised me this year by growing a 3rd kind of beet: Chioggia, and a lot of them. Chioggia is an Italian heirloom variety that's sometimes called "Candystripe Beet" or "Bull's Eye Beet". It's dark pink on the outside with green leaves whose stems show a little pink at the base. When cut across its root, the flesh shows pink and white concentric circles. Their taste is a little milder and sweeter than the red.



Some have grown quite large. HAVE NO FEAR—they are not woody, and their skins are still tender. I recommend Terry's Favorite Way To Cook Any Vegetable (Newsletter #2), or roasting. The bigger the beet, the more flavor it has and the better for roasting. One of our restaurant clients buys all 3 kinds of beets, roasts them and puts them in a salad with goat cheese and walnuts.
Or, try this recipe:

Creamy Beet and Tahini Dip
Makes about 1 1/4 cups
3 medium beets (3/4 pound), washed and trimmed
2 small garlic cloves, quartered
1/2 cup tahini
1/2 cup sour cream
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
Freshly-ground pepper
Olive oil, to serve (optional)
Pita or crackers, to serve
Preheat the oven to 375°F. Place the beets on top of a large sheet of aluminum foil and fold the edges over to create a pouch (the beets should be completely enclosed in foil). Lay pouch on top of a baking sheet to avoid any dripping onto the bottom of the oven and roast until tender, about 1 hour. Let cool.
Once cool, slough away the beet skins with your fingers (or a paper towel) and discard. Cut beets into

wedges and transfer to a food processor. Add the garlic, tahini, sour cream, lemon juice, salt and a few grinds of fresh pepper and process until smooth. Taste and season with additional salt and pepper if needed.

The flea beetles have been busy in our chard patch. Many of you will get some leaves with small, roundish holes in them, the result of the little beetles feeding on those leaves. A few holes does not change the flavor or usability of chard.

Asian-Style Chard

Wash chard and cut out stems. Grouping several stems together, cut into 1" lengths and set aside.
Pile leaves together, and chop roughly.
In a large skillet over medium-high heat, put:
1 Tbsp. oil
-and heat until it shimmers. Add stems, toss and cook 1-2 minutes.
Put in: chard leaves
2 garlic cloves, minced
-cook until leaves begin to wilt, 2-3 minutes.
Stir in: 1 Tbsp. soy sauce
2 Tbsp. hoisin sauce
-stir and cook until chard is tender, 2-3 more minutes.
Add: freshly-ground pepper to taste
Serve immediately.

Field Notes

Last Wednesday came thru: 1.5" of rain! Sunday night's rain dropped .4". Everything is looking much perkier than before. But, the soil has been so dry there are lots of places you can't tell from the ground that it was ever wet.
We have a small patch of cabbage that is almost ready to harvest. Look for those in a few weeks.
The onion beds are looking better after the rain, starting to put on weight, as it were, so here's hoping we continue to get periodic showers to keep them happy. We're hoping for onions as big as your fist!

The big news out in the field is that it's garlic harvesting time. The bulbs have grown about as big as they're going to get, and it's time to get them out of the ground and start the drying process.
Over all the years we've grown garlic, we've tried lots of ways to dry it: hanging in small bundles, loose in bulb crates, spread out on wire shelves, spread out on tables in our greenhouse (too damp), and we always lost more than we liked to mold. Then we learned that sunlight kills the fungus that can grow on garlic as it dries. So, now we lay the bulbs out on the edge of the field to dry for a few days in the sun. Then, we gather them up and put them in crates, loosely, to finish drying in our barn. Now, we have very little problem with mold on our garlic.

Our Field Crew is a vital part of our farm. They do all the tasks needed to seed, plant, weed, harvest, water and maintain the crops we grow, and so much more. Chuck and I could not pack 130 boxes a week, supply vegetables to wholesale clients and our large stand at the West Bend Farmer's Market without them.
Here's this year's Field Crew:



From left to right: Kris, Abby, Greg and Destiny. They are hard-working, honest, dependable and fun to be around. Chuck and I are incredibly grateful to have such a terrific crew!

And that's it for this week. We hope you enjoy your produce!
Cheers,

Terry & Chuck