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Box #10
Even Box
30 August 2023

Contents
Beans: Yellow
Beets: Mostly Orange
Carrots: Orange
Cucumber
Garlic
Kale
Lettuce: Mixed
Peppers: Anaheim, Green Bell
Tomatoes: Orange and Red Slicers

New Stuff: tomatoes
Choice Box:

These delicious orange and red tomatoes are from the generous hearts and bursting greenhouses of Pinehold Gardens, the organic farm of our good friends Sandy Raduenz and Dave Kozlowski. They recently retired and are having trouble downsizing, so they offered some to us. Who says no to free tomatoes? And such beautiful tomatoes!

Tomatoes are native to Peru, and were first cultivated by the Aztecs and Incas in the 8th century. The word *tomato* comes from an ancient Mayan word "xtomatl. Europe got its first tomatoes via the Spanish explorers in the 16th century. The Italians embraced them first, followed by the Spanish and French. Now, we can't imagine a dish of spaghetti without them.

Store tomatoes, uncut, at room temperature. I have a bowl for them on my counter. They will keep for about a week or more, especially if they are ripening. If you cut into one and can't use it all, refrigerate it, but use the rest quickly.

Tomatoes get redder and softer the riper they are. Well, if they're normally red when ripe, that is. Most tomatoes start off green, change to light green, yellow to orange, then finally thru orange to red. Sometimes, in future boxes, you will get tomatoes that are still in that orange-red stage. As they sit on your counter, you will see them change to red. The flavor gets a little better too. Worth the wait.

Now let's define some terms that Chuck and I throw around a lot: cherry, grape, slicer, paste. A **cherry** tomato is small, round and measures 1" or less. A **grape** tomato is small, oval and measures 1"-1 ½". A **slicer** is medium to large, roundish and juicy—the kind of tomatoes folks use on sandwiches, salads, etc.. A **paste** tomato is medium-sized, oval to long, has little juice and lots of pulp—the kind often used to make tomato sauce.

Chuck and I grow lots of different kinds of tomatoes every year. One of our favorites is Juliet, a large grape tomato. It has great tomato flavor, ripens early, and produces loads of bright, shiny fruit. It's not a juicy tomato, so makes a great salsa. A similar variety we planted for the first time is "Verona"—supposed to be even better than Juliet.

We've got the "Sweet 100" red cherry, an orange cherry called "Sungrazer", striped grape tomatoes called "Sunrise Bumblebee" and "Pink Bumblebee", and several others I can't recall—a fun variety.

We grow several different varieties of slicers. Some are smaller (Mountain Merit), some are larger, some are multicolored, yellow and pink, some are green and red (Black Krim). We choose the varieties for their flavor, productivity, and tendency to NOT crack.

We've also planted San Marzano, a paste tomato that makes great sauce.

An easy way to store extra tomatoes is to freeze them whole. I'll wash mine, put them into the freezer anyplace they'll fit, then throw them into a ziplock freezer bag once frozen. This way, they don't clump together. If you just need one or two for a dish you're cooking, pull it out of the freezer, chop and add. If you don't like the skins, run some warm water over the frozen tomato. The skin will split and you can peel it away easily. Then chop and cook.

Our patch is just starting to produce a few slicing tomatoes, cherry and grape, so it'll be a few more weeks before we have enough to put them into 120 boxes.

Some of you may not have enough tomatoes to make this, but file it away for the future (or the next farmer's market).

Cold Tomato Soup

In a blender or food processor, put:

- **2 lbs. tomatoes, coarsely chopped**
- **½ onion, coarsely chopped (1/4 to ½ cup)**
- **1 clove garlic**
- **1-2 tsp. red wine vinegar**
- **2 Tbsp. good-quality olive oil**
- **½ tsp. cumin, ground**
- **1 tsp. Pimenton/smoked paprika *optional***
- **½ tsp. Kosher salt**
- **½ tsp. freshly-ground pepper**

-Process all ingredients until everything is finely pureed. Store in refrigerator until ready to eat. Soup is

better if allowed to sit for 2-4 hours so the flavors can "swap around".
Optional ingredients: cucumber, peeled and seeded; peppers, sweet or spicy; parsley; basil; anything else you think would be good in this soup.
The cucumber vines are growing, branching, flowering and heading for bountiful, but haven't reached that goal yet. They're just managing to produce enough fruit for everyone to get one. We're finding a little more damage on them than I anticipated. The fruits swing in the wind and rub against the thorny stems. Luckily, the fruit usually manages to heal that area on its own—that is the reason for the brown patch or line on the skin.
Anaheim peppers are milder than Jalapeños. In Scoville Heat Units (SHU), Anaheims are at 4500, whereas Jalapeños are at 8000. To compare and contrast, Habanero peppers have a SHU of 70,000. There are loads of Anaheim peppers on those plants, so expect them in future boxes.
Randa, one of our Worker Shares, passed this recipe on last year:

White Bean Soup with Greens

Heat a large, deep skillet over medium heat.
Put in: **2 Tbsp. olive oil**
Add: **1 medium onion, diced**
salt
freshly-ground black pepper
-Sauté until the onion turns slightly golden. Turn heat to low, cover skillet and cook another 5 minutes, or until the onion starts to brown.
Add: **3 cloves garlic, minced**
-Sauté until garlic is fragrant, 3-4 minutes.
Add: **2 tsp. fresh thyme, chopped, or 1 tsp. dried**
-Sauté another 2 minutes.
Add: **3 cups cooked navy beans, drained & rinsed**
1 cup vegetable stock or water
-Cover and cook at a simmer for another 5-10 minutes, or until the beans are very soft. To make the soup thicker, mash some of the beans with a fork or a potato masher.
Add: **4-5 drops liquid smoke, *optional***
4 cups chopped greens: chard, spinach, kale, beet tops, collards, etc.
Simmer until the greens have wilted.
Add: **2 tsp. apple cider vinegar**
Stir, add salt and pepper if needed. Great with crusty bread.
NOTE: If you have *pimentón*, or Spanish smoked paprika, you can use 1 tsp. of that instead of liquid smoke to add a smoky flavor to this soup.

Field Notes

Altho extended rain has not been part of the forecast, pop-up showers are, and we've gotten several. Not complaining!
The last rainy period helped the plants we want and the plants we didn't—weeds are abundant. So abundant, we need some help beating them back. Chuck and I are considering holding a Work Day on Sunday, September 10th to do battle. We'll let you know more closer to that date.

On a completely different subject, the West Bend Farmer's Market, our farmer's market, is entered in a competition run by the American Farmland Trust, with the Farmers Market Coalition, called "America's Farmers Market Celebration". The West Bend Farmer's Market is hoping to become the Best Farmer's Market in the Nation and share in $15,000 worth of prizes. It's also in the running to become the Best Farmer's Market in the Midwest—it's already the Best Farmer's Market in Wisconsin.
Please vote for the West Bend Farmer's Market by clicking on this link. You only need to provide your first and last name and email address. One person, one vote. Thank you!!
Please come visit us at our stand in West Bend. The Farmer's Market happens on Saturday morning, 7:30-11am, from now to Oct. 21st. This year, we're located around the Heritage Towers/Old Courthouse block on 5th, 6th and Poplar streets. Our stand is in the middle of 6th St. Parking is free, and there are lots of vendors to tempt your pocketbook.

SAVE THE DATE:
Chuck and I will hold this year's **Farm Day** on **Sunday, Oct. 1st**. This event is open to all CSA members, their families and friends.
We'll start at 1pm gathering apples in the orchard, move to the barn to press cider, then Chuck will take you around our fields for a grand tour about 3pm. A raffle with Fabulous Prizes is part of the afternoon's festivities. Bring a half gallon or gallon jug so you can take some cider home.
We usually schedule Farm Day for the 4th Sunday in September, but the Packers are playing that day at noon. We find more people come to Farm Day when the Packers are not playing.

Have a wonderful Labor Day weekend!

Terry & Chuck