



FRESH FROM THE FARM

Farm Share Newsletter

Week "B": 12 of 14

Summer Shares

Sept 1 - 3, 2020



WEEK #12 - OUT AT THE FARM

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"You don't have to cook fancy or complicated masterpieces – just good food from fresh ingredients."

- Julia Child

SUMMER WEEK #12 - OUT AT THE FARM

September... wait, what?! :)

The summer is starting to wind down now... For many reasons, it seemed like it started early and so we've had an extra long summer, but now that it's drawing to a close, it seems like it has flown by just like all the others.

It's been a great summer for us so in many ways it's hard to see it go, but we have a lot on the horizon to look forward to.

We checked on the potatoes last week for our fall shares and they're looking good! We planted both a yellow and a red variety and should have plenty of both to share with you. Plus, this is the first year our sweet potato plants have survived to this point so we're excited to dig them up and see what we've got there too...

It's been a great summer, and it's going to be a great fall too! ;)



UNBOXING YOUR OFFERINGS THIS WEEK

**Signifies DANGER ZONE Veggies - those items that are in danger of rotting more quickly than other items. Store in the refrigerator immediately upon returning home and plan to eat quickly, within 3 - 5 days for best results.*

*CARROTS ~ I probably don't need to tell you much about carrots except that they are a DANGER ZONE vegetable... that is, their greens need to be removed immediately when you get home so that they don't suck the moisture out of the carrot. The greens can also be eaten, in salads, in pesto's, or they can be composted if you're not up for that ;)

*SPICY RADISHES ~ With the heat, these guys are even spicier than usual so you've been forewarned! But they're still delicious for you and are a great thing to eat in the late summer months to help prepare your body and mind for fall. To cool them down and temper the heat, try roasting them or making a sour cream radish salad. These are a DANGER ZONE veggie too so as soon as you get home, cut off the greens so they don't suck all the moisture out of the radish leaving you with limp radishes. The greens can be sauteed and used too!

*TURNIPS ~ Another great crop to enjoy right now to prepare us for fall. They add a great zip to dishes and are even tasty (and crunchy) raw. Turnips can be cut into wedges and served as crudites with dip, or sliced and added to salads. Delicious added to stir-fries and is a great way to "hide" them for those that don't particularly enjoy them (yet!). Another DANGER ZONE veggie so be sure to cut the green tops off the turnips as soon as you get home to preserve the root for a week or more. Turnip greens can be used like any green.

CUCUMBERS ~ One of the most "sensitive" vegetables... ;) Should be stored at room temperature - not in the refrigerator. Are sensitive to temperatures below 50°F. When stored at room temperature, cucumbers thrive and last longer. Stored below 50 degrees, they're prone to developing "chilling injuries," including water-soaked areas, pitting, and accelerated decay. But if you absolutely insist on chilling your cucumbers, limit it to no more than three days and eat them as soon as possible. We also suggest keeping them towards the front of the shelf, where temperatures are warmer, and off the bottom shelf, which is usually the coldest part of the fridge. One more thing to keep in mind is that cucumbers are highly sensitive to ethylene, a natural gas that causes the certain foods to ripen (and eventually spoil) very quickly. Not only should you keep your cukes on the counter, but be sure to keep them separately from bananas, tomatoes, and melons, which are all high ethylene producers.

UNBOXING YOUR OFFERINGS THIS WEEK

EGGPLANT ~ Our favorite eggplant variety - Rosa Bianca. Eggplant is tricky; with its soft texture and sometimes slightly bitter taste, it can get a bad rap. Eggplant are best enjoyed either baked, grilled, or sauteed. When prepared well, eggplant is truly satisfying. Check out [this website for 8 simple ways to prepare eggplant](#). Place uncut and unwashed eggplant in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator crisper where it will keep for a few days. If it is too large for the crisper, do not try to force it in; this will damage the skin and cause the eggplant to spoil and decay. Instead, place it on a shelf within the refrigerator.

SUMMER SQUASH / ZUCCHINI ~ Super versatile; great shredded as a raw salad, grilled with garlic, [fried with a breading coating](#), [steamed with butter and salt](#), or baked/roasted, or even made into "[noodles](#)". There's not too much you can't do with summer squash and zucchini! For best results, refrigerate yellow squash and zucchini, unwashed, in a plastic bag in the vegetable drawer where it will last at least up to 7 days. If you're short on fridge space, store on your counter but it's best if used then within 2 or 3 days.

BELL PEPPERS ~ Will last approximately 1-2 weeks in the refrigerator, but can also be frozen. For best preservation of flavor and quality, store peppers in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper of your refrigerator. To freeze for later use, slice or chop them up, place in a single layer on a cookie sheet and freeze; then promptly place the pieces in an airtight container or heavy-duty freezer bags for future use.

HOT PEPPERS ~ A variety of hot peppers with different flavors and heat levels. Earlier in the year they tend to be a bit more mild than later in the summer when they start changing from green to red. To enjoy the flavor without all the heat, remove the inner seeds and veins. We recommend wearing plastic or rubber gloves whenever working with hot peppers, especially for people not accustomed to them. Once you're used to handling them, you can determine if the gloves are necessary or not. Store on the counter or in the crisper drawer of your fridge. Also, the longer the peppers sit, the more heat they seem to acquire so be aware. Also, wash hands immediately after working with peppers and avoid touching your eyes or face before doing so.

UNBOXING YOUR OFFERINGS THIS WEEK

TOMATOES ~ We try to pick them at a variety of levels of ripeness so you don't have to eat them all immediately upon returning home. Some you may want to let sit on your counter to ripen a bit for a few days before enjoying... Perfectly ripe tomatoes should be kept at room temperature on the counter away from sunlight. Make sure they're in a single layer, not touching one another, and stem side up. Consume within a couple of days for best flavor. Overripe tomatoes that are soft to touch with very red flesh are best kept in the fridge until they can be used.

TOMATILLOS ~ Store tomatillos for a day or two at room temperature or for up to a week wrapped loosely in plastic in the fridge. However, you store them, leave their papery husks on until you're ready to use them. The papery husks on tomatillos are pretty, but they need to be removed before cooking. Simply lift them off and discard them, twisting them off at the stem end if they're resistant. Once their husks are removed, the tomatillos underneath may feel a bit sticky. That's okay and normal. Just rinse them clean under cool running water and pat them dry. Again, don't remove their papery husks until you're ready to use them.

***ITALIKO ROSSO DANDELION GREENS** ~ A new crop for us that we're loving!! All the benefits of dandelion greens that's easier to harvest! [Read more about dandelion greens here.](#) I like to include them in our salads, or anytime I'm using greens, and in our green smoothies.

***KALE** ~ For a bunch of whole leaves, it's all about avoiding excess moisture. Wrap the bunch of kale in a layer of paper towels, and store in a zip-top plastic bag in the refrigerator crisper drawer. The kale should be in great shape for a week. Enjoy raw in salads, in your green smoothies, or lightly sauteed with garlic, sea salt, and olive oil.

***SWISS CHARD** ~ Use raw leaves in salads, or sauté the leaves and finely chop the stems to combine with olive oil and garlic, and add to pasta, frittata's, scrambled eggs and stir-fries. To use, rinse under cold water. Once washed, it should be wrapped in paper towels and refrigerated for up to 4 days.

PERPETUAL SPINACH ~ Actually a variety of Swiss Chard that won't go to heat during the summer yet tastes just like spinach. Has already been rinsed and spun dry so it should last longer than other greens. High in antioxidants and vitamins A, C, E, and iron so lightly cook or enjoy raw for highest retention of nutritional value. Cook quickly until spinach turns a bright green for best flavor. Use in salads, pasta, pestos, and egg dishes as well as being a favorite for green smoothies.

UNBOXING YOUR OFFERINGS THIS WEEK

SUPER GREENS MIX ~ A heartier salad green mix with "super powers." Includes lettuces plus kale, spinach, chard, and collards. Great for salads and for smoothies! Like our other mixes, it has already been rinsed and dried so it should last longer than some of your other items so plan to use this after other more fragile veggies have already been eaten.

BASIL ~ The ultimate summer-time herb! Basil loves the temps toasty so it doesn't make its appearance until it's hot! Besides being delicious in Italian and Thai dishes, basil is also medicinal and helps soothe upset stomachs and anxiety. Basil-icious recipes you've got to try: [Caprese Salad](#), [Basil Pesto](#), and [Thai Basil Fried Rice](#). Also, you'll notice that its' fragrance is divine so you just might want to sit and smell it too... ;)

OREGANO ~ Delicious added to marinara sauces for pasta and pizza, add a few leaves to your salads for flavor and added nutrition, also delicious on any roasted or grilled meat. Fresh oregano must be used quickly. Store whole stems with leaves in a glass of water with a plastic bag loosely tented over the glass. If you know you can't use it that quickly, it's so easy to dry for later use: lay out on a baking sheet to dry, turning over once or twice until dried completely. Once dried, crumble and add to a spice jar.

MINT ~ Like all herbs, using fresh mint in cooking can help add flavor while giving an opportunity to reduce sodium and sugar intake. I like sipping mint water throughout the spring/summer to cool me down from the inside out, or I make mint tea by letting the mint leaves and stems steep in boiling water when I need to warm up. Mint is a fun, fresh addition to smoothies and salads. Before leaving the house, you can chew on a mint leaf to freshen your breath without having to resort to gums and breath-mints that have harmful chemicals.

THYME ~ A delicious herbal flavor, can be used in a number of ways. Add whole or chopped to a dish at any stage of cooking. The longer they cook, however, the more flavor they'll provide. Thyme stems are fibrous and won't break down during cooking, so if using whole thyme stems, pick them out and discard before serving. If baking with thyme, remove the small individual leaves from the stem beforehand. Store fresh thyme loosely wrapped in a damp paper towel, inside a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator, for up to two weeks. Once removed from the stem, thyme leaves will stay fresh in a small sealed container in the refrigerator for up to three days.

RECIPES AND IDEAS

We're excited to have radishes again in our offerings, now and into the fall. Did you know they are actually a Superfood?! They are so good for us; rich in Vitamin C, Folic Acid and Potassium, oh and they aid in digestion and heart health also! And this recipe literally has only 3 ingredients in the radish salad and 2 ingredients in the dressing (including salt!) So simple yet delicious!

It's a great way to realize the benefits of the radishes while cooling them down a bit with the cucumbers.

CUCUMBER AND RADISH SALAD

1 cucumber thinly sliced

1 bunch radishes, trimmed and thinly sliced

1/2 cup chives or green onion (1 bunch), chopped

3/4 cup sour cream or plain yogurt*

3/4 tsp sea salt or add to taste

*Regular sour cream gives the most original flavor, but plain yogurt can be used as a substitute.

In a medium salad bowl, combine sliced cucumbers, sliced radishes and chopped green onion.

Just before serving, add 3/4 cup sour cream and 3/4 tsp salt or add salt to taste. Stir to coat the salad in dressing.

Wait to stir in the dressing until just before serving because the longer it sits, the more liquid the dressing will become (the salt causes the cucumber to release some juice). But you'll still want to use a spoon to gather any extra juice left behind. It's so yummy!

GET TO KNOW

EGGPLANT



We grow a unique variety of eggplant called Rosa Bianca. It's our favorite and our shareholders seemed to prefer it over the traditional purple varieties so now we grow only this variety. It has a firmer flesh and a slightly sweet taste to it.

Eggplant is actually a very nutritious vegetable full of many vitamins and minerals and antioxidants. If not already familiar with them, antioxidants are important molecules that help the body eliminate free radicals - unstable molecules that can damage cells if they accumulate in large amounts. So foods that contain antioxidants help prevent a range of diseases. That's why eating a large variety of fruits and vegetables is so important. And the more local those fruits and vegetables are, the more of the nutrition you are receiving into your body!

Back to eggplant, eating them can help strengthen heart health, maintain healthy blood cholesterol levels, reduce the risk of cancer (again, because of all those antioxidants that are found in them!), and also helps improve cognitive function in the brain.

Here's some delicious recipes to try with your Rosa Bianca eggplant(s) this week:

[Easy \(Shortcut\) Eggplant Parmesan](#)

[Eggplant Pizza](#)

[Baked Eggplant Fries with Lemon Dill Dipping Sauce \(scroll down\)](#)

THE JOY OF GOOD FOOD

Not too long after Mason and I cleaned out our cupboards and started our real food journey in 2009, we were visiting family down in Arizona. My sister suggested a restaurant one day saying, "You guys are going to love this place!"

And we did so much, we're *still* talking about it over a decade later! We haven't gone back to eat there again yet, but we hope to... Our first experience eating real food outside of our kitchen was at the Queen Creek Olive Mill.

It's located on an olive tree farm where they grow and press olives. The farm was started by the Rea family in the late 1990s who longed to get out of Detroit and the automobile industry and do something closer to the land as a family.

Even though we didn't know at the time we would be going a similar direction ourselves someday, we thought it was pretty cool. Before we ate, we toured the farm, saw all the trees and discovered how little we knew about olives.

The highlight of the afternoon was definitely the food! Nearly everything served at the restaurant was grown locally and organically, sourced from farmers in the surrounding areas using the same responsible growing practices that the Rea family believed in.

As mentioned, that was our first experience eating REALLY GOOD FOOD! Seriously, I can't even begin to describe how good the food was! We ordered simple sandwiches—there was nothing fancy about the restaurant or the food—yet it tasted so fresh!! It was like something we had never eaten before!

It gave us hope in the journey we were embarking on. If real food tasted that good, we reasoned, then we were definitely on the right track. What a difference from chemically-induced cravings of so much processed foods, or the bland nutrient deficient replacements that are being pushed on us.

The food we ate that day let us fully satisfied, mind, body, and spirit, just as real food does; we were truly filled and we've never forgotten about it.

And really, every meal should be that way, don't you think. ;)
