

THE TIPI TIMES

September 15, 2011, week 18 (green EOW)

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THIS WEEK'S BOX CONTAINS:

Red potatoes, 3.5 lb
Broccoli
Edamame soybeans
Lettuce
Slicing tomatoes, 4.75 lb
Red bell peppers, 2,
mixed #1 and #2 grades
Red onions
Parsley
Garlic

Some sites will receive an heirloom tomato.

A few sites will receive 1 pt raspberries this week.

NEXT WEEK'S BOX WILL PROBABLY CONTAIN:*

Tomatoes, peppers,
lettuce, broccoli and
more

Should we frost-protect tonight? What would you decide?

As I send this newsletter, we still don't know if there will be a frost tonight. The decision seems obvious, but it is not. Let's walk through the process. Next week, I'll let you know how things turn out.

It seems a no-brainer; of course we should protect our crops from frost. We've waited so long for the tomatoes and peppers. They are at peak production and it would be a shame to lose them. On the other hand, the weather forecast is unclear (there's a possibility of frost) and it is costly to cover the plants with sheets of floating row cover. There is wear and tear each time we use a piece of row cover. When handled gently, a \$400 piece of row cover can sometimes be used many times. On a windy night, it could tear during its first use. Of course, each field needs its own \$400 piece.

Then there's the effort required. We can protect a field or two by irrigating lightly during the coldest part of the night. Earlier today, I proposed this to Steve but he said "We just moved the pipe into the carrot field! I really want to keep it in place until the end of the season." There's a lot of effort in moving and setting pipe for the possibility of frost. It is getting late in the season and we're getting tired. The kicker is that Steve has to get up in the middle of the night to turn on the irrigation. We don't want to leave the irrigation running all night; it's too much water. With row cover, we can go to bed once the covers are in place. Using irrigation means a night with little sleep for Steve.

Well, we chose to make both efforts. We covered the tomatoes with row cover and moved the irrigation pipe into the pepper fields. Steve will set the alarm and get up at 2 a.m. We always come to the same conclusion; we always make the effort because we want to keep these summer crops producing as long as possible. I'll write next week and let you know what happens. *Beth*

We will host another raspberry u-pick this SUNDAY if there's no frost damage to the berries. All members are invited if we have a u-pick.

Let's see if there's frost damage before we decide whether to host a raspberry u-pick this weekend. If we do host an event, all CSA members are invited, regardless of pick-up site. Milwaukee members, we suggest that you call by 9 a.m. Sunday to tell us you are coming so we can reserve a part of the patch for you (608-228-0653, use this phone this weekend only.) We don't want you to make the long drive, then find that the berries are all picked.

We have switched this u-pick to Sunday to accommodate members who cannot attend Saturday u-picks.

TENTATIVE Date and time: SUNDAY September 18, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

I will send an email on Friday afternoon to notify everyone whether the u-pick is on or off.

U-pick price: \$2.50 per pint

Date for Pumpkin U-Pick and Gleaning Party

Date: Sunday October 2

I'll send more info in another newsletter.

Veggie Notes. *Red potatoes* - These organic potatoes are from Chris Malek again.

Edamame soybeans (bundle of stems with pods) - This harvest is from the same field as last week. You will notice that the pods are a bit fatter. The leaves have begun to yellow, but that is normal. The plant draws resources out of the leaves in order to plump the beans. See last week's newsletter for cooking instructions.

Lettuce - We're back to lettuce now that the weather has cooled. The variety this week is called Batavian. It is a type of lettuce that tolerates growing during warm weather. The recent cool nights have been perfect for bring the crop to maturity.

#2 GRADE RED BELL PEPPERS - *This info should be familiar to returning CSA members.*

Many of the red bell peppers we send in the CSA boxes will be our #2 grade. We do this to avoid waste and to deliver good value to the CSA members. The #2 grade peppers are excellent eating quality, but are not quite pretty enough to sell to stores. As a result, we place a much lower value on these peppers. This allows us to provide generous amounts of red bell peppers over the course of the season, far more than we could provide if we only gave #1 grade. We feel this is a good exchange, even if it means you occasionally open a pepper and find that it needs trimming. Here are the reasons that peppers are downgraded from #1 grade to #2 grade:

1. They may have a minor blemish, or
2. They may have minor insect damage, or
3. They may be very ripe and beginning to wrinkle. (These are especially sweet and delicious as they are fully ripe, yet they can't be sold to stores because their shelf life is short. You will find that the texture is less crisp than a #1 grade pepper, but the flavor more than makes up for it.)
4. They might be partially red and partially green.
5. Others are just too small.

The eating quality is fine (or excellent) for all these #2 peppers, as long as you are willing to cut out the blemished parts. We throw away all peppers that we suspect have rot inside (although one may occasionally slip through in either #1 or #2 grade.) Today's peppers are a mix of the #1 and #2 grades.

We provide lunch for our work crew two days per week. This year, cooking is shared by two members of our work crew. Cook/farmhand Lacey Smith prepared the two dishes below for us. Both are quite tasty. Together, they make a great combination.

Herbed Baby Potato Salad From the blog Coconut & Quinoa,

<http://coconutandquinoa.wordpress.com/2011/08/31/herbed-baby-potato-salad/#more-2443> Serves 4-6.

"This salad tastes like a garden to me as it reminds me of eating freshly dug potatoes for dinner as a child. We would eat them simply steamed along side a big, well-dressed salad, with lots of chives and parsley of course. I always loved the combination of the creamy potatoes and the tangy salad dressing. This has got to be the fastest way to make potato salad. You don't even make a dressing and all the ingredients can be tossed while the potatoes are still warm. I find they absorb more flavor that way too. Of course you can use any size or shape of potato, just cut them after you've boiled them."

4-5 cups baby potatoes

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 tablespoons raw apple cider vinegar

sea salt

freshly ground black pepper

½ cup chopped parsley

¼ cup chopped dill

¼ cup chives, I used garlic chives

3 dill pickles, cut in half and sliced. I used organic kosher dills

pickle brine to taste.

Boil the potatoes in salted water until a sharp knife glides easily through them.

Drain and cut the larger ones in half. Place in a bowl and drizzle with the olive oil, cider vinegar, salt and pepper. Toss well and let sit while you chop the herbs and pickles. Add the remaining ingredients to the potatoes and a good splash of the pickle brine. Mix well and taste. I usually add a little more oil, vinegar and salt as the potatoes tend to absorb as they sit. This salad is best served room temperature.

Pepper and Onion Salad

From Alice Water's 'Chez Panisse Vegetables'

Beth's note: This is easy to prepare with any quantity of peppers.

Seed and slice thin some peppers of different colors and varieties. Slice a small to medium sweet red onion very thin and toss together with the pepper slices, some pitted nicoise olives, and a spoonful of capers rinsed of brine.

Make a vinaigrette with red wine vinegar and good olive oil, and season with chopped garlic and jalapeno pepper and red pepper flakes. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Cut basil leaves into a chiffonade and sprinkle over the salad. This salad should be spicy and robust; taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary.