



ANOTHER FARM SEASON

Behold the beginning of winter squash season. If you are not already, it is time to become a fan of winter squash. It can easily be considered a superhero in the CSA share for its nutrient overdose and health food classification, but also in the field when it's not even being consumed by humans.

Every year, we learn more about the food we grow. We have learned in the past about the way our ancestors stored winter squash and ate it in copious amounts during the cold winter months. The fiber in squash consumed in large amounts has a natural ability to cleanse our digestive system and prevent polyps. But this week, we learned that winter squash also cleanses our soil. On farms where chemicals have been used in the past, a crop of squash will take up a lengthy list of unwanted contaminants from the soil so they can be discarded. The absorption of chemicals in squash, which is four times that of other vegetables such as tomato, broccoli or beans, is another reason to make sure it is grown organically if it will be hitting your table.

This year is shaping up to be a bountiful year of winter squash at We Grow. The varieties planted this season include spaghetti, white acorn, butternut, red kuri, blue "winter sweet" kobocho, gold nugget and delicata. Each has a slightly different flavor and texture. The only one that we have a limited amount of is butternut - our favorite! For some reason the deer preferred this over the others and it did not grow well while being heavily browsed.

Nearly all winter squash benefit from time in storage. They achieve their peak sweetness some time in the winter months. The exception to this is delicata and acorn. These two are better in the first two months. The squash you are getting have been cured on our farm. They must be stored at 80°F for about two weeks to season or harden the skins before going into 45-50° basement or cool storage. Be mindful to check your winter squash every week for blemishes turning into rot. If you catch it early, a rotting spot can easily be removed and the squash still utilized. With everything it has going for it, why would we want to waste a bite?

Ready for the new season,

Eric & Rebecca

IN THE CRATE

Sweet Corn
 Gold Nugget Winter Squash
 Tomatillos
 Red Onions
 Sweet Peppers
 Garlic Bulb
 Choice of Kale
 French Breakfast Radishes
 Baby Beet Greens
 Green Cabbage
 Kohlrabi *family shares*
 Green Beans *family shares*

"Delicious autumn! My very soul is wedded to it, and if I were a bird I would fly about the earth seeking the successive autumns."

-George Eliot

FALL EVENT

We are planning a fall event on our farm in early October free to our CSA members. We are hoping to open our pumpkin patch for family picking, serve fresh apple cider and pumpkin-flavored treats in our new pack-shed and provide a fall hay ride in the National Forest surrounding our farm. Please stay tuned for details. Event based on weather.

2018 SHARES

This time of year, we get questions about signing up for the coming season. We do not plan to increase the number of shares in 2018, so space will be limited for the first time. That said, we give all existing members a chance to reserve their share before opening membership to the public on Nov 1.

GOLD NUGGET

Another first at We Grow. Gold Nugget Winter Squash is a variety we are trying in response to folks who asked for smaller, more manageable winter squash in a smaller size great for stuffing, soups and pies. This variety has been touted as a substitute for sweet potatoes in cooler climates. The seed packet claims "full of delicate golden flesh with melt-in-your-mouth flavor."

Gold nugget is from the hubbard family of winter squash. It has been curing in our greenhouse at 80° for a few weeks to help jumpstart the curing process that converts starch to sugar. With proper curing, any hubbard squash can be stored for 3-6 months in a cool garage or basement and tends to get better over time.

RADISHES

These d'Avignon radishes are also known as French breakfast radishes. These radishes are the handiest of snacks for the table. We tend to put out a bowl of them plain, but the shape also makes them great for dipping. In France they are sliced lengthwise, spread with butter and salted, or placed atop a buttered baguette for a "tartine."

The English chef Fergus Henderson butters them, too. He also suggests collecting the tops in a bowl as you go and turning them into a spicy salad with vinaigrette. You might try slicing both roots and leaves for a stir-fry, or sauteeing them in butter. Radish can eliminate wastes and toxins for better liver and gallbladder function.

BABY BEET GREENS

Mmmm! We were shocked at how good the baby beet greens are right now. They taste much like spinach. We trimmed the leaves from their stems and dressed with a basic dressing of balsamic vinegar, stone ground mustard, garlic, olive oil, honey and soy sauce. Surprisingly, they do not taste too much like beets. Use in your eggs, fresh salad, sauteed, etc.

TOMATILLOS

Related to the tomato and a member of the nightshade family, tomatillos provide the tart flavor in a number of Mexican and Latin sauces. They take center stage in salsa verde - green salsa. Most recipes that use tomatoes, can be recreated with tomatillos.

You can keep tomatillos at room temp for a few days, or up to a week in the refrigerator, stored in a paper bag. Leave the husks on until just before preparation. Then they should be removed and the fruits washed.

There are lots of things you can do with tomatillos if you want to get a little creative. We have several recipe cards available.

Here are some suggestions from Martha Stewart:

Salsa Verde

Freshly prepared salsa verde, bursting with tomatillos, cilantro, and garlic, is an addictive chip dip.

Tomatillo Mary

This ingenious twist on the classic Mary is slightly tarter. When tomatillos are pureed with cucumber and jalapeno, the juice takes on a gorgeous green color.

New Mexico Green-Chile Pozole

The hearty pork-and-hominy stew with tart tomatillos, gets its heat from jalapenos. It also makes lavish use of garnishes: avocado, sliced onion, cilantro, and limes.

Chicken Enchiladas Verdes

Roasted tomatillos and two types of chiles are blended into an intensely flavorful sauce.

Green Chile and Tomatillo Roasted Pork

Take a Latin spin on the old-fashioned pork stew. Serve with fresh tortillas and hot sauce for even more flavor.

Tomatillo Braised Pork Ribs

Country-style pork ribs become rich and tender when braised in this spicy crowd-pleaser of a chili.

ROASTED TOMATILLO CHICKEN SOUP

Ingredients

- 4 medium tomatillos, peeled and clean
- 1 jalapeno (optional)
- 1/4 cup cilantro, plus extra for garnish
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 small onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt, to taste
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 skinless boneless chicken breast

Directions

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Roast the tomatillos (and jalapeno if desired) for about 30 minutes until soft and browning, flipping halfway. Let cool slightly, then puree in a food processor with cilantro. If using the jalapeno, remove and discard seeds before pureeing. Set aside.

Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan saute onion in oil until softened. Add the garlic and season lightly with salt. Add the stock, cumin and chicken, and bring to a boil. Let it cook until the chicken is cooked through, about 15 minutes. Remove the chicken and shred, then set aside.

Working in batches, put tomatillo puree and soup into a food processor and blend until smooth. Return to the soup pot, bring to a boil and simmer. Adjust seasoning as necessary, add chicken back, and heat through.

Serve hot with a dollop of creme fraiche, additional cilantro garnish, and warm bread or tortilla strips.