



TRADING TOMATOES

Two subjects come to mind we would like to share this week. The first concerns our friends at Red Door Family Farm in Athens who suffered a great loss Thursday morning when high winds destroyed their three high tunnels and a majority of the crops within and adjacent. What a tragedy! As we would expect, they already have plans for moving forward and these do not include dwelling on the loss. The rebuild is underway and their weekly CSA shares have been packed as they head to market as usual.

The irony of the situation is that back in May, when we lost our tunnel tomatoes due to a deep-freeze, Red Door was the first farm to insist we come get replacements. No questions asked. Last week we harvested the first tomatoes from those plants. Perhaps now is the perfect time to return their generosity. Our philosophy of doing good deeds and having it come back two fold continues to be exemplified. Their success as an organic CSA is our success as long as we work together getting people to value local food.

The second topic comes from the Tuesday market, where a person walked up to our stand, briefly browsed our products and stated, "Hmphf. I don't believe in organic." Not being one to debate in this situation, I let the opinion go unaddressed. Sharing the statement with Mr. Farmer, we both wanted to know what part of being organic is unbelievable to her? Building the soil to prevent pests and disease? Fearing cancer comes from chemicals in our food chain? The price? This woman, two generations older than us, is fortunate to have experienced life before organic had a label unlike our generation. Her blanket statement is hopefully derived from experiences with organics far from our farm.

Buying organics from a local farm cannot be equated to buying organics shipped thousands of miles. You're helping more than just yourself. You're supporting a local family that in turn supports the local economy with the side effect of getting more nutritious, chemical-free, non-GMO food. While there are skeptics, we realize there are more supporters. Summarizing everything labeled "organic" in the same group is a simply a lack of research whether you believe in it or not. Spread the word.

On the defense,

Eric & Rebecca

IN THE CRATE

Broccoli Heads

Pablo Batavian Lettuce

Mixed Carrots

Green & Yellow Wax Beans

Cucumbers

Kale/Chard - choice

Mixed Basil

Garlic Bulb

Tomatoes (*family shares*)

Patty Pan (*family shares*)

**When diet is wrong,
medicine is of no
use. When diet is
correct, medicine is
of no need.**

- Ayurvedic proverb

GET DIRTY

We've recently had several inquiries from members hoping to come spend a few hours on the farm. We always welcome volunteer help from members and non-members alike. It is a great way to see first hand how we grow your food. Your visit further establishes your connection with the land. No worries, we'll find a task to match your capabilities. Don't be afraid to reach out, maybe bring a friend. On our farm, we call your visits dirty therapy.

BE SOCIAL



Let everyone know what tastes good in your house. Share your favorite recipes, tips and photos on We Grow's Facebook page. You're part of a local eating collective!

BROCCOLI

Fresh local broccoli is packed with flavor! You will notice the stems are slightly sweeter than the florets, so please don't toss the stem. The sugars quickly convert to starch in transport over long distances which is the reason fresh picked broccoli tastes different than store-bought. It is one vegetable our kids will eat raw all day, but don't cook it.

In case you missed it in 2015, we were unable to get broccoli heads. In our conversations with other CSA farms over the off-season, we discussed our broccoli perils. Turns out, broccoli is somewhat difficult to get nice heads. The trick is maximum fertility and the right variety for your location and soil type. So we trialed a variety we liked from years ago called Bay Meadows from Johnny's Seeds, we ramped up the nitrogen after getting the transplants into the ground this spring and alas, we have some nice heads of broccoli. Now to figure out cauliflower.

We do everything we can to keep the insects that like to hang out in broccoli from hitting your plate. But you may still find some as we do not treat with pesticides. To further clean your broccoli, either quickly blanch before using and shock in cold water to dislodge the critters or soak for several hours in salt water.

PABLO LETTUCE

Pablo bears a superficial resemblance to a red iceberg, but is a batavian, not a crisphead. Its larger plants form loose heads of beautiful upright rosettes surrounded by wide wavy-edged flat leaves. Bronze coloration on the outside leaves contrasts strongly with the green interiors lending a striking metallic sheen. Very sweet and mild with some bitterness in the ribs, slow-growing and extremely heat resistant.

We chose this variety for our mid-summer CSA shares hoping to keep some fresh lettuce in your box even in the hottest part of July. Having not tasted them yet ourselves, we are excited to hear your feedback.

BEANS

Let the bean picking begin! It can be a daunting task and for this reason we aren't growing as many extra beans this season. The labor involved drives the cost beyond what people are willing to pay. If you want to buy extra for canning or freezing, members get first chance - just let us know.

We are growing three varieties this season. The green beans are jade, a long gourmet bean. The speckled variety is the heirloom variety called dragon's tongue, a taste-test winner time and time again. And the yellow is called golden wax bean. Wax beans are more tender than the run of the mill green varieties.

There isn't much better than the first meal of beans from the garden each summer. Lightly steamed and served with butter. When they are this fresh they are a little squeaky. Not kidding.

Fresh beans will a week or more in a plastic bag in your crisper. Kids often prefer them uncooked, so save yourself the effort and give them what they want just this once.

CARROTS

Here comes our second round of carrots. These have been grown in the field versus the earlier version that was grown between the rows in the high tunnel. The two primary varieties are kuroda and cosmic purple. We should have enough for you for several weeks.

Fresh carrots will last several weeks in a plastic bag in your crisper, but they'll be tastier cleaned up and snacked on within a few days.

TOMATOES *(family only)*

There are green tomatoes every where! With the recent heat wave, we are really starting to see a lot of orange and pink hues as the ripening is just starting. Family shareholders will get a taster this week.

We will share many varieties as the season goes on. Please let us know what we should grow more of next season. If you do not need tomatoes, just let us know and you can exchange for something else.

RECIPE: BETTER MAYO

If you are looking for something better than plain mayonnaise or an easy alternative to buying ranch dip, try our homemade version. It tastes great as a veggie dipping sauce or on sandwiches and wraps.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup yogurt
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise or Miracle Whip
- 1 Tablespoon fresh dill weed (1 teaspoon dried)
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon juice

Directions

Combine all ingredients and serve. Make it your own with finely chopped onion, garlic or sweet red pepper.

Using Greek yogurt will make a thicker sauce. Find the recipe for our homemade Greek yogurt on our website. Add milk if a thinner consistency is desired.

Feel free to share your own ideas with us online or in person. Being part of a farmshare collective makes it fun. We love to hear from you!

PHONE: 715-427-1002 or 715-905-0431

EMAIL: farmer@wegrowfoods.com