



FINDING BALANCE

We were startled by something in the grass at the end of the cat tunnel this evening. It was brown. Assumed it might be a bunny. Went after it. It was a toad. The biggest toad ever seen on our farm. The same adjective can be used for the garter snake we see in the high tunnel each day sunning himself on the straw mulch. And we spotted lady bugs last week. Real ladybugs, not Asian beetles. They are much more red and have nice big black spots compared to those stinky Asian beetles. It seems that Mother Nature is finally making the connections organic farmers hope for. The predators that will alleviate pest problems like mice, cabbage moths and aphids, just to name a few. These little critters are all good signs of a balanced system.

We had some excitement this week when a friend had a swarm and no one was around except Mrs Farmer to go capture it. Volunteer Sally was more than willing to take a time out from planting and the boys were excited for a road trip as well. The swarm was, luckily, very low on a tree just hanging out. The mass of worker bees surrounds and protects the queen before they leave the area. You have a short window of time to get them inside a box while the scout bees are out looking for a new home. Just line up your container and give them one big shake and - BUZZZZZ - you've got ~10,000 bees plus one queen in a box. And no one was stung, not once.

There are two things going on this week at We Grow. First, we are hosting a UW Extension Beekeeper's Workshop on June 15 from 6-8 pm. Let us know if you need details. Second, we are collecting donations for the children's museum Huey's HideAway being built in downtown Medford. We want to encourage the museum board to include gardening in their outdoor exhibits. We feel passionate about teaching children food doesn't come from a store, it is grown! We Grow's sales from Tuesday's market will be donated. We are asking members to join us in contributing and sending this message.

Supporting the community that supports us,

Eric & Rebecca

IN THE CRATE

Napa Cabbage
Carrots
Oakleaf Lettuce
Kale - Siberian Frill
Baby Arugula
Herb (Dill or Parsley)
Spring Garlic
Radishes (*family only*)

WHAT YOU SEE DEPENDS ON HOW YOU VIEW THE WORLD. To most people, this is just dirt. To a farmer, it's potential. *-Doe Zantamata*

words from our youngest farmers

"Can we go check out that baseball field?!"

- Dene & Gus, not much interested in seeing Mom catch a swarm of bees

BE SOCIAL



Let everyone know what tastes good in your house. Share your favorite recipes, tips and photos on We Grow's Facebook page.

CRATE RETURN

Please return your crate or grocery bag every week for re-use. There will be a charge for all unreturned crates at the end of the season as was stated in your sign-up form. New in 2016, we are willing to issue one reusable grocery bag to each member. Each additional bag is \$4. Feel free to use the bags around town and help promote the farm. Thanks!!

NAPA CABBAGE

Napa cabbage is very versatile. It can be eaten raw or cooked. Slawed or stir-fried or egg-rolled. So getting another one shouldn't kill you. But if you haven't eaten your first, you're gonna wanna get working on that! Just remember that it only take a very short time to cook so add it at the very end if you want it to stay crunchy. Keep the dressing light to enhance, but not overpower the subtle flavor of your napa.

Napa cabbage will last up to two weeks if kept wrapped up in your crisper drawer with high humidity. When ready to eat, just chop the bottom stem to separate the leaves, cut away any brown spots and wash well. Don't be surprised to find insects inside. They are impossible to remove. And any flower parts hidden at the center are edible - just in case you find some.

CARROTS

Carrots are a staple in our home. Going without them after our winter supply dwindled back in February was difficult. That may be part of the reason we pushed this crop in so early. And nothing tastes better than fresh from the ground carrots - in our opinion.

Why the tops? Eric and I went back and forth on keeping the tops on or removing them. We decided in the end to leave them on for now. Here is why. We will often add carrot tops (usually only the tender center leaves or just the feathery part of the leaves) to our salads. They have an herbal, earthy, subtly carrot-ish flavor and are a nice visual addition.

And then there is something our farm volunteer Linda told me. When she cooks down vegetables for soup stock, she likes to use the carrot tops instead of the carrot roots because everyone in her house loves to eat the roots. It seemed like a waste to cook the roots and toss the tops out. So consider making a healthy soup stock with tops if you want to get creative. Perhaps toss them in the freezer until you have a few other items to throw in the pot as well. But carrots will be coming in the shares for a few weeks, so there will be more.

OAKLEAF LETTUCE

This is week two on the oakleaf lettuce. We will try to include at least one red variety in each bag to boost your antioxidants this week. And make your salad look pretty.

Generally speaking, red lettuce is healthier than green. Red leaf lettuce is a rich source of carotenoids, primarily beta-carotene which converts into retinol, so it contributes to your daily vitamin A. You'll also get a smaller amount of the carotenoids lutein and zeaxanthin, which work as antioxidants in your eyes. Now you know!

Your lettuce has been field rinsed, but please separate leaves from the stem and rinse the joints. Stems may be getting a little large to eat. Spin or blot the leaves to remove excess moisture and store in a bag (or better yet, leave in your salad spinner) in the fridge for up to a week or more.

BABY ARUGULA

This peppery green has high levels of potassium and vitamins A and C. It is a nutritional powerhouse.

There are lots of good ideas out there for ways to use arugula from pizza toppings to pestos. See page 84 if you have the A-Z cookbook. I also found webpages dedicated entirely to eating arugula. Just ask Google. One farm member recommended simply adding cider vinegar and eating them fresh as the acid complements the peppery flavor perfectly.

Store in fridge in a bag in crisper with high humidity. Wash and spin or blot dry immediately before eating.

KALE: SIBERIAN FRILL

You've gotten a sample of this variety of kale last week, but now we're giving you more. We've had such positive reviews of this "salad" kale. Hopefully you are finding some use for it. It really shines in salads and we tried it in cranberry lemon kale salad this week and it was delightful! This recipe is available at pick-up.

The stems are long and taste good too. We have been chopping them to about a half inch and using them as a substitute for broccoli in casseroles, stir-fried, even scrambled eggs.

SPRING GREEN GARLIC

Again, just chop the roots, trim dead leaves and then the entire stalk, leaves and bulb are edible and FULL of flavor. Use it wherever you would normally utilize regular garlic. Don't waste a bit of the leaves (just chop finely) and you should have enough garlic for a week's worth of cooking. Refrigerate and keep the cut end wrapped.

RECIPES

We've prepared recipe cards for you to take if you'd like more ideas for using the vegetables in your share. 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!

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