



LIFE'S SURPRISES

As our returning members are aware, garlic is an important crop for our farm for several reasons. We sell a lot of garlic at our market stand which equals income, we include it in our CSA shares as much as possible which means more tasteful meals for you, and it is a staple in our kitchen (and medicine chest) year-round. We have been pulling samples of each of the seven varieties we have on the farm this season to see which is going to be included in your shares in what order. So there will be a menagerie of garlic varieties without labels this first week. After this, we will have your garlic more organized with better details.

Things happen every day that we don't necessarily plan. Of course, it seems like we always have a machine breakdown when we are trying to get chores done early. Or Tuesday, when we were on cloud nine after a great afternoon at market to find our pigs have been visiting the neighbors and are nowhere to be seen. But then there is the other side of the coin. Like finding out those stinky caterpillars that have been mowing down our fennel and parsley - those caterpillars that the kids have been harboring in a glass jar in their bedroom - are actually beautiful swallow tail butterflies. Or when Gus was doing his evening chores last night and came running into the house to exclaim that the big white hen hatched out some eggs. The whole family joined Gus in his excitement and marched outside to see it with our own eyes. She is now getting a chance that every hen only dreams of. What an awesome, adorable surprise!

It's easy on a farm, or in any situation, to get caught up in all the unplanned misfortune because we work so hard all the time, but the reality is, there are far more great surprises that we probably realize. We just need to take a second to look around and find them. Dwell on those events, the ones we need to reflect on when we try to figure out why we do what we do.

With garlic on our breath and our hands,

Eric & Rebecca

IN THE CRATE

Golden Acre Cabbage

Cucumber

Cortland Onion

Garlic Bulb

Summer Squash

Romaine Lettuce

Parsley

Red Potatoes

Red Celery

Broccoli (*family shares*)

**And on the 8th day,
God looked down
on his planned
paradise and said,
"I need a caretaker."
So God made a
farmer.**

- Excerpt from Paul Harvey's speech at the 1978 National FFA Convention

FEEDBACK

We are throwing some varieties at you this week that we have never grown on our farm. We'd love to hear your opinion to help us make decisions for the next growing season. Share your thoughts next time you receive your share or send us a message when you get a moment. Your feedback is necessary to make our CSA system come full circle.

words from our youngest farmers

**"We don't have any eggs...
we have baby chickens!!!!!"**

- Gus, overjoyed at HIS discovery of tiny chicks while collecting eggs

GOLDEN ACRE CABBAGE

Golden Acre is an early green cabbage with a "delicate but crunchy texture and sweet, spicy flavor with buttery undertones when cooked." (High Mowing Organic Seeds) We included this variety in our trials this season to find a lighter, less dense fresh eating variety. Something that had less bulk and more tender leaves. Cabbages will store very well wrapped in plastic in the fridge even after they have been cut. Just slice a fresh edge when you get the cabbage back out for your next meal.

Our favorite way to make the first cabbage of the year is simply fried in butter til tender in the cast iron skillet with salt and lots of fresh ground black pepper. This isn't exactly the healthiest option, so you might prefer it how the boys do, simply cut up and crunched up fresh as a stand alone side dish. On thing the kids at Rib Lake taught me during our gardening classes this spring, kids prefer vegetables be left raw and cabbage is no exception in our house.

RED CELERY

This is a second variety of celery we trialed this season just for fun. So we went from no celery in 2015, to an abundance of two varieties in 2016! Red celery is very similar to green from its initial appearance however, the leaves are somewhat finer and less waxy. The seed supplier states: "Red celery has a richer flavor than the green types. Until you've sampled the golden-pink hearts, you haven't tasted celery!" As with the last bunch of celery you received, be warned that it is much stronger than store bought. Use less because you get more flavor. We'd love to here if you found a difference in the two types. Your feedback helps us make decisions for next season.

RED POTATOES

Our first red potatoes are looking very nice and taste SO good! For those who don't know, we had wireworms (click beetle larvae) infest at least 90% of our potato crop last year. We lost a majority of 1,800 row feet of potatoes! So far, the changes we've implemented to combat the problem have proven successful. There has been very little damage found so far.

There is nothing like fresh boiled baby reds, perfectly creamy, lightly buttered and sprinkled with fresh parsley. Keep the skins on if possible, that is where your nutrients are at. Store in a cool, dry, dark place. Do not refrigerate.

ZUCCHINI/PATTY PAN

We're putting these two in the same section for two reasons. 1) They are interchangeable in recipes. and 2) You are getting one or the other, but not both. We use zuc-

chini so many ways! Grilled, battered, roasted, pickled in turmeric, stuffed, fritters/pancakes or simply in a sauté or stir fry.

The long green striped variety is called romanesco, a rich-flavored Italian variety we have fallen in love with. The pale white patty pan squash looks much different but tastes very similar. The kids think it looks like a little spaceship. Some say the scalloped patty pans have way more flavor than regular zucchini, so I'd like to hear our opinion. All I know, is do not peel it. The flavor is in the skin in both varieties.

CORTLAND ONIONS

Did you know an onion is actually a stem? Not a root? Try explaining that to little kids. They will look at you like you're crazy.

This week, your onion is a cortland. Cortland are a classic yellow storage type onion. They are mid-range in the flavor index which means they are neither overly sweet, nor overly spicy. However, the flavor will intensify over time. For this reason, older onions make us tear up worse than fresh onions.

With their unique combination of flavonoids and sulfur-containing nutrients, allium vegetables such as onions belong in your diet on a regular basis. When onions are simmered in low heat method of cooking, the flavonoids do not get degraded. They simply get transferred into the liquid of the soup, the rice, the au jus, etc. Also worth noting, onions are a rich source of biotin.

PARSLEY

There are two types of parsley on our farm this season, moss curled and Italian flatleaf. Both are included in your bunches. They taste very similar, but the texture varies considerably. We prefer the Italian variety for fresh addition to raw salads, but use the tightly curled moss variety in our fresh boiled red potatoes.

Aside from the obvious, don't be afraid to use parsley to flavor rice dishes (risotto or pilaf), fish, fried chicken, and steaks, as well in meat or vegetable stews. It can be a good source of minerals like potassium, calcium, manganese, iron, and magnesium, so don't let this one go to waste.

Parsley will last several weeks in a small jar of water. Even longer if the jar is kept in the fridge, covered with a bag. Alternatively, hang to dry and then store for use this winter.

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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