



## SWEET SURPRISES

For the past five years, we have been attempting to keep bees. Just when we feel like we have them figured out, we are reminded that we do not. Some summers the bees are content and build perfect frames of honey. Other summers, they swarm every few days and the whole farm crew is on their toes watching for the bees leaving to find a new home.

This past winter we lost all ten of our hives. We haven't had 100% loss since our first year when we only had one hive on the farm. Not so many years ago winter survival of honeybee colonies was not a major problem in our area. Experts are reeling to determine exactly why so many colonies are dying even when they have stores of honey left to eat. Most scientific articles point to two things and assume they work with each other to create the problem. The first is pesticide chemicals on our landscape and the second is a tiny beetle, called the virona mite that parasitizes the weakened bees.

We originally purchased the hives with the intent of achieving better pollination in our vegetable crops. This is an important and often overlooked step in the growing process. We figured that cucumbers, squash and other cucurbits would be the primary attractant for our bees. That first growing season, we planted cukes right next to the hives. Much to our surprise, we never really saw our honeybees in these plants. Only native bumblebees and other pollinating insects. The same went for most of our varieties that require insect pollination. Matter of fact, the bumblebees built the underground nests right in our high tunnel two seasons ago and caused quite a commotion every time we came close to stepping on them.

What we've come to learn is that our non-native honeybees are absolutely beneficial for fruit and nut trees, but not so much for a vegetable garden. What is important is maintaining a safe place for the native pollinators. Eliminating chemicals that cause weakened immune systems in insects and reducing the urge to mow every square inch of our property. Perhaps even go so far as to plant some wildflowers or shrubbery for pollinator habitat.

With sticky fingers,

*eric + rebecca*

## IN THE CRATE

**Butternut/Butterkin Squash**

**Carrots with Greens**

**Brussel Sprouts**

**Yellow Onions**

**Broccoli**

**Salad Turnips**

**Bok Choy**

**Fennel**

**Arugula**

**Mixed Kale**

**Dillweed**

**Green Peppers *large shares***

**Tomatoes *large shares***

## EVENT REMINDER

Don't forget, our member Pumpkin Pick Event is taking place on Sunday, October 7 from 9:00 to 1:00. Pick out pumpkins for carving, eating or decorating. Enjoy the fall colors and fresh pressed warm apple cider, butternut squash soup, pumpkin cookies and muffins and more in our pack shed. There is no charge, so please plan to attend. One pumpkin per attendee please.

## PARSLEY

Our parsley is still growing strong in the borders of our tomato tunnel. It has served us well all season to deter pests and flavor our food, but it is time to pull the plants. If you would like up to a pound of parsley to preserve and enjoy in the off-season, please send us a message and we will bring it with your next share.

*"I feel it is an obligation to help people understand the relation of food to agriculture and the relationship of food to culture."*

- Alice Waters

## BUTTERNUT OR BUTTERKIN SQUASH

We are excited to be sharing one of our most requested winter squash with you this week. Butternut squash deserve the healthy food hype with over four times the recommended daily value of vitamin A in just one serving, over half the recommended intake of vitamin C, and an impressive list of other vitamins and minerals and low calories with high fiber to boot. Butternut has several properties that aid in losing weight and improve your colon health.



butterkin

There are two main varieties of butternut at We Grow this season. In an effort to grow more of this customer favorite, we are trying more varieties to find one that grows well here. The old fashioned Waltham butternut continues to be plagued by stem canker and low production, but the new version, JWS 6823 by Johnny's Selected Seeds has proven to be resistant. The downfall is that it is much smaller. The new to us variety we have found to be extremely productive is a butternut in the shape of a pumpkin called butterkin. Same great taste, new look!



butternut

From a culinary standpoint, butternut are generally drier than acorn and delicata. They are often used in baking, soups, roasting, and salads. They hold together well when skinned and cubed. All winter squash can be stored in a cool, dark non-refrigerated place for months.

## ARUGULA & BOK CHOY

See your week 15 newsletter for details.

## BROCCOLI

**The broccoli is back!** This is the third broccoli planting for 2018 and went in on July 19. The high temps that followed transplanting have drastically slowed it down. In the nick of time, it is finally ready for harvest this week. With the cool temps we have had the past couple days including a frost over the weekend, the brassicas should taste sweeter this time of year. We are thrilled to be sharing this nice broccoli with you. With a bit of cooperation from the weather, there is more to come!

## SALAD TURNIPS

With a creamy, juicy texture, these things do not deserve to be called turnips. They are so much better than turnips. In the organic farming world, they are often called hakureis, but few would recognize the Japanese word unless they've been in a CSA. These salad turnips taste amazing fresh from the ground raw and they're not something you can get in the store.



We have only been eating them fresh raw. The larger ones can be peeled if you want to cut the radish like spice off entirely and just enjoy the kohlrabi like center. The tops are very tender unlike purple top turnips.

These have only been in the ground about one month, so if you want to try sauteed turnips greens, this is the variety we suggest. Most of the recipes we have found online suggest cooking the turnip roots along with their leaves for the perfect combination.

## BRUSSEL SPROUTS

Sprouts are a treat fresh from the field. Remember, the sooner you eat these, the better they'll taste. Last year, we had many members tell us they didn't know how fresh brussel sprouts were supposed to taste having only had them from the frozen food section.



This season, our sprouts have black spots on the outside layer. This can easily be removed with a bit of trimming. They are from aphid damage and will not cause harm if consumed.

A quick search online and recipes abound: Pan Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Bacon, Fried Brussels Sprout Salad, Balsamic-Roasted Brussels Sprouts and Kale and the list goes on. If you're in a hurry, consider a high heat roasting approach. Cut the sprouts in half (or quarter if they're big), toss in some diced uncooked bacon (no need to add oil if you have delicious bacon fat), salt and pepper and roast at 450° on a baking sheet or cast iron tossing every ten minutes until done. Finish with some toasty pine nuts or almonds. Also worth noting, sprouts can be blanched for a 2-3 minutes and frozen for enjoying in the off-season.

### HAVE A VEGGIE QUESTION?

Oftentimes if you've got a question, someone else has the same one too. Don't be afraid to ask!

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