



Racheal, Susan and Rebecca after a long wet day of harvesting on Friday.

DOWNRIGHT DIRTY

In light of a conversation this weekend with our farming friends about employee woes, we realized we are fortunate to have the people we have working with us day in and day out. We don't always get to do exactly what we want all the time. There are tasks on the farm that we dread. Green beans are the least favorite item we have to harvest, largely because there are so many and they don't hold well in the field so we can't really push it off until tomorrow and jeopardize the crop. In order to pick the entire 250' three row bed, two of us would need to spend about 4 hours harvesting. We grow bush beans, so it is a lot of bending over.

Friday we had every crop crossed of the pick sheet except the beans and there was only an hour left in our day. Enough procrastinating! We had a wholesale order to be delivered that afternoon calling for 60 lbs. It had been raining all day. We were on our second change of clothes and soaked through again. But our crew, tackled the task with little complaint.

Every week there is physically taxing, downright dirty work on the farm. Pulling thistles and weeds as tall as our ten year old, ripping out expired brassicas, picking rock, hauling manure and the list goes on. But we have come to learn that even the worst of jobs can be tolerable and maybe even fun with the right people working with you. We are fortunate enough to have those people on our farm. Not a single one of us wants the other to overdo themselves or have to pull more weight. We are always taking turns on the fork, or on our knees, or with our hands in the cold water to make sure we each get a break. And there is no whining and very few complaints other than joking about the who is more miserable. The simple humor and vegetable puns never end and an accidental bump into the pile of poles with the van full of harvest bins keeps us laughing for days. A far cry from our days of laboring on a road crew or being in a dramatic office setting. We love what we do because of the people doing it with us.

Carrying on,

eric + rebecca

IN THE CRATE

Slicing Tomatoes +
Red Potatoes
Lettuce
Cucumbers
Red Onions with Greens
Swiss Chard
Zucchini/Summer Squash
Green and Yellow Wax Beans
Garlic Bulbs
Snow Peas *large shares*
Broccoli Shoots *large shares*

SHARE BAGS

Please check around your homes, automobiles, and offices. If you are starting a collection of reusable We Grow bags, please bring them to the drop site next week. Bonus points to those who can remember so well. Thank you!!

FARM VISITS

Our three major events for June and July are now over, but please don't let that deter you from visiting our farm. If you need to get your share on the farm one week or are just looking to take a Sunday drive, come on over. Give us a call or shoot a text message to make sure we are home. There is always something new to see. We have new piglets arriving this week and there isn't much cuter!

"Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independent, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty by the most lasting bonds."

Thomas Jefferson, agrarian and founding father

BABY RED POTATOES



**BOILED + FRIED
+ STEAMED**

Red Norland is a widely adapted, early maturing variety released by North Dakota Agricultural College in 1957. The phrase "new potatoes" means first fresh crop of the season as potatoes are traditionally eaten from storage. Small eyes and smooth, thin red skin make for little to no peeling, very little waste. Perfect choice for grating into potato pancakes and the most commonly chosen variety for potato salad. Not good for baking.

The french word for potato "pomme de terre" translates as: **APPLE OF THE EARTH**

SUMMER SQUASH



At We Grow, summer squash include any variety of zucchini, yellow summer squash, or patty pan squash. The latter being the most unfamiliar to our customers. Patty pan are a small scalloped-shaped squash often referred as flying saucers. With a higher skin to flesh ratio, we find it has more flavor and texture than most others.

There is no need to peel tender-skinned summer squash. Besides contributing color and nutrients, the skin helps the vegetable hold together better when cooked. Just give the squash a gentle scrub under the faucet before slicing or dicing.

Try sliced patty pans steamed and drizzled with a fruity, peppery olive oil, seasoned with salt and pepper, or tossed into a stir-fry. When sautéing any summer squash, use very high heat due to its high water content, it will steam over lower heat.

To store, refrigerate summer squash in the crisper drawer for up to a week.

REDWING ONIONS

We are sharing our crop of redwing onions with the green tops in this week's share. Typically red onions are milder than yellow, but they are not as sweet as the large Spanish types.

A few rings of raw red onion on a sandwich or a salad can take the flavor to a whole new level. We like to use the greens in kale salad, sauteed with ham for scalloped potatoes, in stir fries and more. Just trim the yellow tips and coarsely chop. Store in the fridge at this stage as they have not been dried and cured like mature onions.

BEEFSTEAKS

The tomatoes included in this week's share are some of the most flavorful tomatoes we've ever produced. Known for their rich flavors that develop over a longer maturity, beefsteaks are great sliced and eaten raw or chopped for a salad.



Our slicers are red, yellow, green or pink and green striped. Based on our flavor trials for UW Madison last season, the striped variety, Berkeley Tie-Dye is the best tasting tomato on our farm. If you have a green slicer and don't know if it is ripe, just go with the feel test. The fruit will become softer. Also, a subtle yellow color will develop starting at the blossom end (opposite the stem).

HEIRLOOM VS BEEFSTEAK: While we might be quick to call any large, imperfect, great tasting tomato an heirloom, this isn't necessarily true. Heirloom as classified as "Open-pollinated varieties introduced before 1940, or tomato varieties more than 50 years in circulation. Or seeds that have been passed down for several generations through a family."

LETTUCE

We ran a small experiment last month planting some more heat tolerant varieties of lettuce under a shade canopy consisting of metal fence posts with retired ginseng shade cloth strung between. The cloth is 70% shade and kept the lettuce cool at the peak of the day. Rather than bolting and going to flower or experiencing tip burn, the lettuce has grown beautifully. We have a small amount to share with you this week.

Based on this success, on Wednesday last week, we pulled the plastic cover off the 125x12' caterpillar tunnel and replaced it with 30% shade cover specifically designed for growing sensitive greens in hot weather. On Thursday just before the rain and cool weather, we planted 10 rows of lettuce transplants. The rain settled everything in with no shock. As long as we can keep the critters out, we should have a bountiful harvest of lettuce come August and Sept. When the frost threatens, we will replace the plastic and keep the plants warm in the cold elements to carry us into December for our wholesale accounts.

HAVE A VEGGIE QUESTION?

Odds are if you've got a question, someone else probably has to same one. Don't be afraid to ask!

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