

# WE GROW CHRONICLE

WEEK SEVENTEEN

2019 SEASON



## THE WORK OF MANY HANDS

A group of high school students from Medford High along with two teachers visited the farm on Friday last week. The kids had to choose a project to work on for their required community service credits. Twenty students decided to come to our farm to work for two hours. Some chose farm work last year and knew what they were in for, but some were perhaps caught off-guard with the tasks assigned to them during their visit.

Thankfully, we had Linda and Roxanne on hand to help oversee the youth who were split into a number of groups. Eric had some of the kids digging and topping carrots, others were taking down old trellising, pulling vines and rolling up huge sheets of landscape fabric, harvesting tomatoes, removing vines and infrastructure from the high tunnel, and when all of that was done we all pulled plastic sheeting from the onion rows. Needless to say, we got a lot of work done in a short amount of time with that many hands moving at once.

We owe thanks to the teacher in charge of this project who happens to be a CSA member. As we conversed throughout the morning, she commented on how much the kids learn about the work it takes to grow food and farm in general. There was dirt, heavy lifting, mud and heat! Some of the kids grew tired quickly, for others the manual labor was second nature. We knew little of each one's background but forced small talk as we got on with our day. Little did the students realize the learning experience they were taking part in.

Before the group loaded back onto the bus, we sat down for a water break while our staff began to wash carrots. Everyone had the chance to snack on the fresh veggies. We even sent a bag of baby carrots along for the ride home. Hopefully a few found the flavor to be incomparable to store bought like we do. Making an impression on these kids is an important part finding future food enthusiasts. Seeing first-hand that small farms can be a thriving business and an integral part of a community is an equally powerful lesson.

Growing for you,

*eric + rebecca*

## IN THE BAG

Spaghetti Winter Squash  
Rutabaga  
Daikon Radishes  
Orange Carrots  
Mixed Onions  
Peppers  
Bok Choy  
Lettuce  
Scallions  
Peas (*larges*)  
Cherry Tomatoes (*larges*)

## CARROTS

Please check your carrots often for soft spots. The excess of water this fall caused the many of our orange carrots to become compromised in quality. The problem is that we can't see it when we package them. If you notice any sort of an off color spot, use that carrot promptly. It only takes a few days to turn to mush. We have been harvesting several days ahead of bagging to try to catch this before they go out to you but we haven't been able to catch it all.

**WHAT WE LEARN  
WITH PLEASURE  
WE NEVER  
FORGET.**

- Alfred Mercier



## DIRTY GREENS

With all the rain the past two weeks, the lettuce greens are filled with dirt from splashing the soil. Normally the crop will dry out and much of the dirt will shake off in the breeze, but there hasn't been much drying out lately. So please accept our apologies for the excessive dirt and do your best to clean the leaves before they hit your plate.

## DAIKON RADISH



These long white radishes are popular in Asian cuisine. In the past, we grew the long type that gets up to 18" long but found they split and were misshaped in our heavy soil and compaction. You are receiving a shorter variety called Alpine which we trialed and loved in 2018.

Daikons are often fermented in a form of kimchi, but they are also cooked with brown rice, egg, a few

other in-season veggies and soy sauce. You can also eat them raw like a traditional red radish or in a salad. We highly suggest peeling them with a veggie peeler to remove the sharp, pungent skin and enjoy the sweet radish inside. While there is far less insect damage in our daikons than years past, there is still some bad spots so please trim out any damage.

**Fall Root Veggie Storage:** All root veggies such as rutabaga, radish, carrot, turnip, etc. (the exception is potatoes) are best stored in a cold refrigerated space at high humidity but not sitting in water. That said, waxed rutabaga do well stored in a cellar space because of their thick skin.

## RUTABAGA



Rutabaga is a cruciferous vegetable that is known in other parts of the world as a "swede." It is a cross between cabbage and turnips. The leaves are used much like other leafy vegetables, such as spinach or chard, while the root meat can be prepared in similar ways to potatoes, either mashed, roasted or boiled. Don't be afraid to try it raw. Sliced thinly it goes great on a veggie tray or serves as a substitution for crackers with hummus.

Baggies are considered a healthy alternative to potatoes with fewer "empty" carbs, providing a wide range of minerals, vitamins, and organic compounds that are beneficial for human health.

We've read articles touting rutabagas ability to improve your digestive health, prevent certain forms of cancer, act as an antioxidant, boost your immune system, and improve your metabolic function. There are also claims that rutabaga lowers blood pressure, and cholesterol levels, aids in cellular and enzymatic functions, builds strong bones, and can even help you lose weight.

## SPAGHETTI WINTER SQUASH

Baked until tender, this is one of the best replacements for pasta. Just consider the added nutrition and fiber versus traditional wheat flour noodles.

Just cook until tender and then use a fork to pull the "noodles" from the halves. Spaghetti squash is excellent served with tomato sauce, but also delicious with just butter and parmesan cheese or basil pesto. Store at 45-50°F well into the winter, hence the name! Check often for signs of decay.



## PEPPERS

One year ago we told our membership that we struggle to grow bell peppers and listed some changes to hopefully improve our offering in the coming season. Our efforts definitely paid off! Improved soil fertility and inside tunnel growing space has created an abundance of fruits this season despite the below average temps.

Hopefully you aren't sick of peppers yet. If they are starting to pile up on you, considering chopping and putting them on a cookie sheet in the freezer with some wax paper to keep from sticking. Then toss them into a freezer safe container for use during the off season. Pre-chopped and frozen peppers are great in soups, stews and most cooked dishes.

You will see a collection of many colors in our peppers including purple, yellow wax, nearly black and green. All of them are to be used like a green pepper. All sweet peppers will turn "ripe" after about 20 extra days on the plant. A ripe pepper will turn red, yellow or orange after its original color. At that point, it is considered sweet.

## SCALLIONS

You haven't had scallions since this spring so here is a refresher. This is the first time we've put in a fall crop of scallions and they are doing well in the cool weather.

Also known as green onions, scallions are essentially young, tender onions. Tops are not trimmed short on our scallions as you would find in the store. This is done to allow them to fit into packaging and is simply a waste. Go ahead and eat the tops.

Scallions don't have as strong of flavor as regular onions so they can be enjoyed raw on salads, eggs, cottage cheese, etc. Utilize every part except the roots.