



WHO PAYS FOR CHEAP FOOD

Every year about this time, we come forth with that story about the farmers market shopper who surprises us. This year it was an individual who commented that our peppers cost more than WalMart's. Our quick response was to note the fact that you can't talk with the WalMart farmer and ask how that pepper was grown or even know where it came from. And that your money isn't supporting a local family. Not to mention, the flavor isn't even comparable because that pepper probably traveled a very long distance. It was noted that we would gladly pay this amount if she herself had grown the pepper and we were standing on her side of market stand.

What is it that makes us dole out large amounts for processed foods, prescriptions drugs, and fad diets, but when it comes to buying real, whole food the indifferent person shuts their wallet? In 2020, U.S. consumers spent an average of 8.6 percent of their disposable personal income on food.

Pre-pandemic figures put 14 cents of every dollar spent on food in the farmers pocket. According to USDA, over half of all food dollars are spent at restaurants, cafes and other food service places. Compared to grocery store purchases, farmers receive an even smaller share of away-from-home food dollars, roughly 2.4 cents, because of added, prep, service and marketing.

Where shoppers were once content to husk their own corn and slice their own apples, they now buy those foods pre-husked, pre-sliced and otherwise processed. Over the past 50 years, the shift from cooking meals at home, to eating away from home has shifted the food dollar and farmers profit very little compared to just a few generations ago. Interestingly, this trend has not taken hold in European nations and less "developed" countries.

Looking ahead 20 years, where does this put farmers? We do not feel like our farm is a victim of processed food. We have worked hard to find a strong customer base that understands local food, but it is a tiny percentage of our population. How do we create space for more young farmers? How do we get more people to buy whole food, direct from farms? How do we get that notion out of our heads that cheaper is better.

Feeling less offended with age,

eric + rebecca

IN THE BAG

Sweet Corn
Green Pepper
Lettuce
Superior Potatoes
Carrots
Green Beans
Zucchini
Cucumbers
Garlic Bulb
Onions
Mixed Tomatoes
Cabbage (*larges*)

TOMATO ORDERS

Very soon the sauce and paste tomatoes will be ready for harvest. These are growing out in the field, so they are planted much later those in your shares which are inside a high tunnel. Once they start ripening, we will have tomatoes up until hard frost in late Sept. If you would like to get your name on our tomato schedule, please send a message or talk with us when you pick-up your share. Thanks!

FRESH MEAT

This week, we picked up fresh pork and grass-finished beef from the processor. Please browse our complete selection online. We can't bring every cut to market, so pre-ordering is the best option. Payment can be made at pick-up.

VEGGIE HUMOR

Why did the tomato stay after school? To ketchup on its schoolwork.

FOLLOW THE FARM:



SWEET CORN

Get out your toothpicks! It's corn season. We chose the transplanting method for our sweet corn again this season to avoid weather problems. Remember that frost on May 28? We followed up a month later with a second planting as usual. You should get plenty of sweet corn over the next three weeks.

We tried our best to pick the perfect ears, but sometimes they are a bit over-ripe and sometimes a bit under ripe. **Please enjoy your sweet corn as quickly as possible before the sugar converts to starch** which starts to happen immediately after picking. Best within two days.

We always feel the need to explain a few things about organic sweet corn to lower your expectations. First, supersweet hybrids marketed as "candy corn" are not an option for organic growers. These are hybrids for which we can not get certified organic seed. Second, organic corn can not have fungicide applied that keeps the seed from rotting in a wet spring. And there is a possibility of a corn worm when you open the husks as we do not treat with pesticides nor is our corn genetically modified to kill the worm when it eats the kernel.

Get creative with your corn. Try grilling, cooking over the campfire or put it in the smoker. We have enjoyed experimented with some variation on Mexican street corn and found it to be delicious. Don't underestimate how delicious fresh corn is cut off the cob. Having never been frozen or canned, it has a flavor that can't be replicated in the off-season. Enjoy!

SUPERIOR POTATOES

Superior is a white-skinned, white-fleshed, mid-season potato variety. It was released by the University of Wisconsin potato breeding program in 1962. Superior has the same parentage as the equally popular kennebec variety. We procure our certified organic seed potato from Vermont Valley Community Farm in southeast Wisconsin.

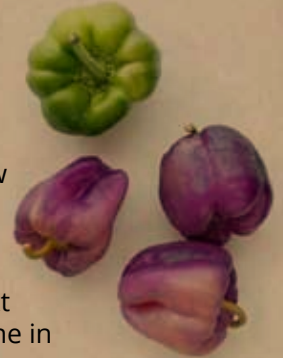
This spud is fairly firm, and dry, it may slough after boiling. Excellent mashed, baked and chipped. Some consider Superior a standard for baked potatoes. Also good scalloped, steamed, fried, roasted.

Please note: If you have a potato with any green on the skin, be certain to trim this off. This green is terribly bitter and can ruin an entire dish. It occurs where the potato is exposed to light in the field, often after heavy rain.



BELL PEPPERS

The peppers we grow vary greatly in size, color and shape. Peppers are similar to tomatoes in that the number of different cultivars is in the thousands. This year, we have a purple variety that we grew to love last season. Not only has it been more productive than many of our green bells, it was ready earlier as well. Over the next several weeks, we will try to get one in each of your shares. Purple bell peppers can be used the same as green. The only difference is the purple boast the healthy anthocyanins associated with purple foods like blueberries and plums.



Over the next several weeks, you will see purple, yellow wax, chocolate, green and bullhorn-shaped peppers. All of them can be used like a mild 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. Rarely do they get to that point on our USDA temperature zone 3b farm.

Store peppers in the crisper drawer in the fridge for up to two weeks. Peppers can be easily preserved by chopping and freezing in ice cube trays.

SWEET ONION

We are trying to clear the field of our earliest sweet onions. They are generally very white inside with some gold in the wrappers. The variety we are trialing is from Osborne seed called Candy F1 Onion. We are pulling all of them, small and large so don't be surprised at the range of sizes.

Candy is famous for its large size and sweetness and crunch. The flavor is very mild. This variety is harvested early just as the tops start to tip over and growth ceases. A short keeper, it is best used soon after harvest for fresh eating, cooking or freezing. We think it is fantastic as battered onions rings, an occasional treat in our house.

HAVE A VEGGIE QUESTION?

Don't hesitate to call for help identifying new veggies or asking for tips on how to use. Our farm collective on Facebook is a great place to get prep ideas. Odds are if you've got a question, someone else probably has the same one.

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