

# Two Onion Farm

Chris & Juli McGuire • 19638 Cottage Inn Road, Belmont, WI 53510  
[farmer@twoonionfarm.com](mailto:farmer@twoonionfarm.com) • (608) 762-5335

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Week of August 2, 2009

**Beans.** We are giving out several bean varieties this week. Some of you will receive a very long round green bean. This is a very flavorful variety. You can use it anywhere you would use shorter round green beans, although you may want to cut each beans into several pieces.

Others will receive flat podded Romano-style beans, either green or pale yellow. These can be prepared similarly to round green beans. Cooking time may be slightly longer than with round green beans. The flat podded beans have a very nice flavor, slightly more buttery than round beans. We have included one recipe calling for the flat Romano beans.

**Broccoli** is only in the Friday boxes this week. This is the second time in three weeks where we are able to give out broccoli on Friday but not Tuesday. We do plan to have broccoli in every box for the first eight or so delivery weeks. To that end we plant broccoli weekly succession plantings of broccoli throughout the spring. Sometimes, however, uneven weather causes two successive plantings to mature at almost the same time and leaves a gap between two other plantings. Each individual broccoli head only remains in peak harvestable condition for a few days. Broccoli is also very perishable, and we don't want to harvest a large amount and store it in our cooler to distribute it later. Because of all these factors, there are sometimes gaps in our broccoli distribution where we did not plan for them. When we give out one vegetable on one day but not another, we do try to compensate with another vegetable. In this week, for example, we plan to give out broccoli on Friday and peppers on Tuesday.

Looking ahead, we may harvest broccoli for the Tuesday boxes next week. After that we will not harvest broccoli for several weeks. This is a gap which we planned, to make room for the

peak August harvest of tomatoes, peppers, and other warm weather summer vegetables. In early September we should begin harvesting from our fall broccoli plantings.

**Cucumbers and summer squash.** One member recently asked about the range of sizes in these vegetables and asked why we give out both large and small cucumbers and summer squash. Both of these vegetables develop and enlarge very rapidly on the plant. In order to give out uniformly sized cucumbers and squash we would need to harvest every 1-2 days to be sure we caught each fruit at precisely the right size. We are very concerned with the freshness of our produce. We like to harvest the cucumbers and squash (and all perishable vegetables) the day before we deliver them to you, and store them for only one night in the cooler. We have two delivery days per week (Tuesday and Friday) and thus two harvest days (Monday and Thursday). We have chosen to distribute less uniform sized, but fresher vegetables, rather than uniform sized produce which may have been stored in the cooler for several days.

We do grade the summer squash and each day we pack vegetables we put small squash in some boxes and larger squash in other boxes. We do this because most people are cooking their squash and same sized squash require the same cooking time.

As a general rule, for both cucumbers and squash, the smaller fruits will have a more tender skin and will not store as long. The larger fruits have tougher skins, more conspicuous seeds and keep longer in the fridge.

**Onions.** We are giving out two onion varieties this week. One is an early yellow onion variety, which is unwashed and has a dry papery outer layer. This onion has been cured and should be stored in a dry place. Do not

keep it in a plastic bag. The yellow onions should keep for several weeks. Refrigeration is optional but will extend the storage life.

The washed onion is an uncured Ailsa Craig onion. This variety matures later and has not had adequate time to cure. Store bagged in the fridge and aim to use soon. The Ailsa Craig is juicier and usually slightly less pungent than the yellow onions.

**Collard Greens** are generally eaten cooked. Use them similarly to kale and Swiss chard. However, collards are quite tough, and you will probably want to cook them a bit longer than kale or chard. Also, collards do not reduce in volume while they are cooked as much as chard or kale. The stalk and midvein of the collard leaves are quite tough, so we recommend that you cut them away and discard them before cooking.

A simple way to cook collard greens is to sauté onions and garlic, then add chopped collards with a small amount of water and braise covered for about 15-20 minutes, until greens have almost reached the desired texture. Remove the cover and continue cooking to boil away the water until greens reach desired consistency. Season with salt, pepper and/or fried bacon pieces, and serve.

## In this week's box:

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Store In Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Basil	No	No	<1 wk	Store upright in a vase with water, out of direct sunlight. Refrigeration will blacken the leaves.
Beans	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Various shapes and sizes
Broccoli	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Friday boxes only
Collard Greens	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Cucumber	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Onion, Ailsa Craig	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Washed onion – uncured; store in fridge
Onion, Yellow	Yes or No	No	2-3 wks	Unwashed onion with dry paper outer layer – store dry, in or out of fridge
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Romaine
Pepper, white	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Tuesday boxes only
Summer squash	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Yellow-green bicolor and/or zucchini
Tomato, Cherry or Yellow	No	No	1 wk	Tomatoes may keep slightly longer in the fridge but fridge temperatures damage the flavor a bit.

## Braised Collard Greens and Romano Beans

5 collard leaves, with midvein removed, sliced thinly  
 2 Tbsp olive oil  
 1 cup minced onion  
 1/2 tsp salt  
 1/2 lb green or yellow flat Romano beans, cut into 1" pieces. Can also substitute round green beans.  
 Black pepper to taste  
 1/4 cup raisins

Steam collard greens for 7 minutes and set aside. Heat oil in a large skillet; add onions and salt and sauté until soft. Add steamed collards, green beans, raisins, black pepper and 1/4 cup water. Cover pan and simmer on low heat, stirring occasionally for 12-15 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.