

# Two Onion Farm

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## Autumn Vegetables

In the midst of irrigating, weeding, and harvesting beans, tomatoes, and other summer vegetables for the past few weeks, we've been busy planting, transplanting, and cultivating our plantings of fall vegetables.

Many vegetables sweeten in the cool weather and don't attain their peak flavor until fall. In the interest of whetting your appetites (and encouraging those of you with summer season only memberships to renew for the autumn), we're listing here some highlights of the fall delivery season:

✓ Carrots - Fall carrots are a specialty on Two Onion Farm, and we plant a lot of them. Our first carrot planting was sown in June and will be harvested later in August. We planted our second and third carrot plantings in July; these plants are still quite small and will be harvested in autumn. Expect carrots in your boxes most weeks beginning in mid September. We concentrate our carrot harvests in the autumn because carrots harvested then are exceptionally sweet.

✓ Winter squash - Acorn, Sugarloaf, and Buttercup. Our winter squash plantings look excellent so far, and we're expecting a good harvest in mid September. We plan to include a lot of squash in the autumn season boxes.

✓ Brussels Sprouts - Harvested after frosts in October, Brussels sprouts are wonderful - sweet and peppery.

✓ Spinach. Fall spinach is planted very late in August, so this is one fall crop which we have not yet planted. Spinach seed can germinate erratically, but if all goes well we hope to distribute spinach throughout October. Spinach is another vegetable which really sweetens up and tastes awesome in the cool weather of fall.

✓ Snap peas. We planted our fall peas in early July, just as we finished harvesting our spring pea planting. The plants are still small, just beginning to climb their trellises upward to their eventual height of 5 or 6 feet. We're hoping to harvest them in mid September.

✓ Yellow onions and leeks for fall soups and stews. We're harvesting and drying yellow onions now and they look wonderful.

✓ Lettuce. We continue to give out lettuce regularly in the fall. Most lettuce varieties do not tolerate heat well, and in the summer we are limited to growing a few heat tolerant varieties (particularly the red and green Summercrisp lettuces and the 'Jericho' light green romaine lettuce). In cool fall weather we grow a broader selection of lettuces, including some delicious Boston and oakleaf types.

✓ Beauty Heart Radish. This is the Crown Prince of Radishdom. All other radishes pale in comparison.

✓ Broccoli. We will harvest the last of our summer broccoli in the next week or two. After a monthlong hiatus, we expect to begin harvesting broccoli again in mid-late September. Fall broccoli is sweet.

✓ Other fall veggies which we plan to distribute occasionally in the autumn season include cauliflower, kale, rutabaga, beet, celeriac, kohlrabi, and cabbage.

With the exception of fast-growing spinach, we have already planted most of our fall vegetables and we expect excellent harvests. For high yields and good flavor, let's hope for a long, moderate autumn of sunny weather and gradually cooling temperatures!

**Autumn season memberships.** We offer three delivery seasons: full season (6/17 – 11/3), summer season (6/17 – 9/8), and autumn (9/9 – 11/3). We still have autumn season memberships available. The autumn season last for 8 weeks and includes the star vegetables we discussed above.

If you have friends or neighbors who have been jealously eyeing your vegetables this summer, please tell them that they can sign up for an autumn season membership.

If you have signed up for the summer season only, we invite you to enroll for the autumn as well. You may notice in our brochure that the cost of a summer membership plus the cost of an autumn membership is greater than the cost of a full season membership. (This reflects the overhead, administrative time we spend for each additional member). If you extend your summer season membership and enroll for the autumn season as well, then you need only pay the difference between the full season and summer season prices. The cost of an autumn season membership for those who have already signed up for the summer season is listed in the next column.

Delivery Frequency	Box Size	Price
Weekly	Full	\$255
Weekly	Half	\$150
Biweekly	Full	\$140
Biweekly	Half	\$80

**Paste Tomatoes.** We are offering paste (Roma) tomatoes for sale at \$8.00 per 5 lb; please order in 5 lb increments. These are suitable for canning or freezing.

Paste tomatoes are very easy to freeze – simply place the whole tomatoes in a ziplock bag and put it in the freezer. Later, take out a few tomatoes to cook in any recipe which calls for canned tomatoes. If you need to slice or chop the tomatoes after you take them out of the freezer, microwave them very briefly until they have softened but are still partially frozen; in that condition they slice very easily.

We're expecting to harvest the paste tomatoes from August 12-25. Email farmer@tweenionfarm.com or call 608-762-5335 to place an order. We will respond to confirm your order. You can pick up the tomatoes at one of your scheduled vegetable pickups – let us know when you would like them.

### In this week's box:

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Store In Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Summercrisp
Broccoli	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Collard Greens	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Waxy green leaves
Tomatoes	No	No	<1 wk	
Yellow Beans	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Pepper	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Green or red bell peppers
Garlic	No	No	1 mo	Biweekly boxes only. Dried garlic which does not need refrigeration.
Ailsa Craig Onions	Yes	Yes or No	2 wks	Very juicy and only moderately pungent, well suited for light cooking and eating fresh.
Eggplant	No	No	1 wk	
Lemon Basil	No	No	<1 wk	Basil with lemony flavor. Store like flowers: place stems upright in a cup of water
Summer Squash	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Not in all boxes

We are giving out two **cherry tomato** varieties: orange 'Sun Golds' are very sweet. The pale whitish 'White Cherry' tomatoes have a milder, mellow taste.

We grow a number of red **slicing tomatoes**: 'New Girl', 'First Lady', 'Pink Beauty', 'Dafel', 'Red Sun', and 'Estiva'. It's hard for the casual observer to tell them apart, so we won't describe the differences. Why do we grow so many? Some varieties bear slightly earlier than others, which spreads out the harvest season. The varieties do differ somewhat in size and taste, which livens up your kitchen. And the varieties differ in their susceptibilities to particular diseases, which reduces our risk from an outbreak of single disease.

'Garden Peach' is the pale small fuzzy slicing tomato, with a very mild taste.

Many of you received 'Orange Blossom' tomato last week. This is an attractive orange tomato with meaty flesh. It yields heavily early in the season, which is why we included so many in last week's boxes. However for the second year in a row it has succumbed quickly to blight disease, which is why we may not grow it again in the future...

Note that we do not wash our tomatoes (unlike almost all of our other vegetables). Tomatoes are susceptible to some nasty diseases, and washing the fruit after harvest increases the likelihood that the tomatoes will rot on your countertop. For one thing, wet washed fruit are more susceptible to infection, and for another, disease spores spread easily from fruit to fruit in the wash water. This week rain has splashed much dirt on our tomato plants, and some of the tomatoes have dirt on them that you will need to wash off before eating.

**Yellow Beans** have a pleasant buttery flavor. Eat them like green beans.

**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 is quite tough, so we recommend that you cut them away and discard them before cooking.

Biweekly members, look at last week's newsletter, on [www.twoonionfarm.com](http://www.twoonionfarm.com), for a tasty recipe of lentil soup with collard greens.

Those who receive our weekly emails read that we were planning to give out **Swiss chard** in the boxes this week. However the chard was heavily damaged by insects and we are giving out collards instead. We hope to have chard in a few weeks.

## Tomato Pasta Sauce with Fried Eggplant

Serve over pasta. You can make the tomato sauce alone, without the eggplant. Serves 3-4.

2 medium eggplant (approx 1 lb)  
Salt  
Olive oil  
1 onion, minced  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
3 cups chopped fresh tomatoes with juice  
Black pepper  
2 Tblsp minced fresh basil leaves

Trim ends from eggplant and slice into 1/4 inch thick slices. Salt both sides of the eggplant generously and place in a colander for 40 minutes so excess juice will drain away.

Prepare the tomato sauce while eggplant is draining: Sauté onion in olive oil until translucent. Add garlic and cook for another 2 minutes. Add tomatoes, 1/2-3/4 tsp salt, pepper, and basil. Simmer gently, stirring to break up tomatoes, about 20 minutes.

When eggplant is drained, heat a thick layer of olive oil in another skillet. Wash and pat dry the eggplant slices. Fry the eggplant, turning once, until golden brown on both sides (app. 3 minutes each time). Fry the slices in batches, as many in the pot as you can fit in one layer. Transfer fried eggplant to a dish lined with towels. Cool slightly and cut into thin strips.

(Fried eggplant is nice but oily. As a lighter alternative to salting and frying the eggplant, you can also grill the eggplant slices and then slice them.)

Serve warm tomato sauce over cooked pasta with eggplant and Parmesan cheese on top.