

# Two Onion Farm

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Week of June 24, 2007

## Member Workers

For the first time this year we have invited farm members to work on the farm. We published a list of dates and times when members can work on the farm, and members who are interested schedule themselves to work one or more of these shifts. Working members participate in the work and learn more about the farm; we receive some needed help. To acknowledge their contributions, we provide working members a \$20 rebate on the price of their share for each four hour shift worked.

So far this season, members have worked about fifty of the four hour work shifts. They have done very good work and greatly speeded up some very time consuming tasks. We raise many of our vegetables from transplants: we plant the seeds in trays of nutrient-rich soil mix, raise the seedlings in cold frames, and then transplant them into the field. Members have been very involved in this process and have done much of the seed-sowing and transplanting. They've also helped with hoeing, weeding, setting up our irrigation systems, and other tasks.

Taking the vegetables in this week's boxes as an example, members planted seeds of the fennel, the kohlrabi, and broccoli; transplanted seedlings of the kohlrabi, broccoli, summer squash, onions, leeks, and lettuce; and hoed or weeded the broccoli, peas, onions, turnips. Members have worked hard, even under some difficult conditions; they endured a lot of wet, rainy, and drizzly weather at the end of May while we transplanted our squash, tomatoes, peppers, and eggplants.

Many of the member workers have told us that they enjoyed the work and it gave them more appreciation for their vegetables, and that they

value having a closer connection to where their food comes from. Members who garden have said that they learned useful growing techniques from us.

We are extremely grateful for the help we've received. We've also enjoyed meeting the member workers. It makes our work much more rewarding to know more of the people who eat from our plantings. It's good for us to have some social contact during the busy growing season when we don't have a chance to get out much.

We still have work shifts available, and you are welcome to sign up. Because the program has worked so well, we've recently added a number of shifts to the schedule. Work shifts are now available from June through mid October. Please bear in mind that member workers are making an important contribution to the farm. If you sign up to work, you're making a serious commitment. You'll need to arrive on time for your work shift; come prepared to do physical, repetitive work outdoors; and be willing to work carefully and conscientiously and to follow our instructions. If you're interested in working, go to the member services page of our website and view our schedule of work shifts and also read the "Information for member workers", which contains instructions on how to sign up and explains what we require from member workers.

Work shifts are primarily intended for working. If you just want to visit the farm and look around, without working, we also welcome visitors. Please call or email ahead to schedule your visit.

## In this week's box:

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Store In Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Red and/or green summercrisp lettuce
Broccoli	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Cabbage (Not all boxes)	Yes	Yes	1-2 wks	The Early Jersey Wakefield variety – thin, tender-crisp leaves in a cone-shaped head.
Salad Turnips (Monday only)	Yes	Yes	1-2 wks	White, round, and smooth. Tender flesh with a sweet, slightly mustardy taste. Try them raw in salads or sandwiches.
Fennel	Yes	Yes	1-2 wks	White flattened, bulbous vegetable with overlapping layers. Anise-licorice flavor
Snap Peas	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Excellent raw or lightly cooked. Eat pod and seeds both.
Kohlrabi (Thursday only)	Yes	Yes	1-2 wks	White or pale green, with flattened round shape and small protuberances on the sides. Peel skin, and eat raw or lightly cooked.
Beets	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	Red, round variety of beets this week. Stores relatively well in the fridge.
Baby red onions	Yes	Yes	1-2 wks	Bulbs and green tops are both edible. Best eaten lightly cooked or fresh.
Baby Leeks	Yes	Yes	1-2 wks	Young, tender leeks.
Summer squash (Not all boxes)	Yes	Yes	<1 wk	Yellow-green bicolor summer squash or zucchini.

Vegetable grow at their own pace. We keep careful records of when our crops mature, and we use our records from past years to schedule our plantings so as to yield an abundance and diversity of vegetables for each week's boxes. Sometimes, however, our plantings don't yield exactly as much as we want, when we want. Some weeks we may not have enough of a particular vegetable to include it in every box. We do keep track of which vegetables we include in which boxes and we try to ensure that people who do not receive a vegetable in one week will receive it in subsequent weeks. One reason why we label our boxes with letters "A", "B", etc., is so that we can track which boxes get which vegetable each week. We do try to give everyone an equivalent amount of vegetables each week – if we don't include cabbage in the "A" boxes, e.g., we include extra of other vegetables in "A" boxes.

This week, we have a turnip planting which is nearing the end of its harvest period, and a kohlrabi planting which is just maturing. Therefore we are including turnips in the boxes on Monday, and kohlrabi on Thursday. Our summer squash plantings are just beginning to bear, and we probably will not have enough to include in every box; but there will be more squash in coming weeks. Our cabbage planting also yields over multiple weeks, and we may not have enough cabbage for every box this week.

**Cabbage** – this week's cabbage is excellent for salads or light cooking. If you haven't tried cabbage salad, you should. Thinly sliced cabbage leaves dressed with a vinaigrette (1 cup olive oil, 5 Tbsp red wine vinegar, ½ tsp salt, black pepper, optionally 1 garlic clove) make a quick, tasty salad.

**Fennel** – To cut up a fennel bulb, wash it, then slice in half lengthwise. Slice each half in half again lengthwise. With a small sharp knife, remove the triangular core from the base of each of quarter-bulb piece. Then lay the quarters down flat and slice into thin strips.

Fennel can be eaten raw in salads, where it contributes a pronounced flavor. If you're eating it raw, we recommend that you slice it very thinly so the fennel's stringiness won't be objectionable. When cooked, fennel's flavor moderates to a gentle sweetness.

**Baby Leeks** - We enjoy the baby leeks lightly cooked. If eating raw, we recommend that you slice them very thinly. You can use them in recipes in place of standard, larger leeks, but you should substitute 3 or 4 baby leeks for each regular leek in the recipe.

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Many of this week's vegetables are very well suited for a quick sautéed meal. Try broccoli, leeks, red onions, and/or fennel cooked over medium-high heat in olive oil or butter and served as a side dish or over pasta. Summer squash can also be added late in the cooking.

## Wilted Salad with Fennel and Red Onion Dressing

If you opt not to use bacon in this salad, substitute 3 Tbsp olive oil for the bacon drippings.

1 head of lettuce  
3-4 slices of bacon cut into small pieces (OR 3 Tbsp olive oil)  
1 fennel bulb **very** thinly sliced (see discussion on how to cut up a fennel bulb above)  
3 small red onions halved and thinly sliced  
½ tsp salt  
3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar  
1/3 tsp dry tarragon (optional)

Black pepper

Wash lettuce, tear it into bite size pieces and put it in a salad bowl.

If you are using bacon, fry bacon pieces in a skillet until they are crispy, scoop them out and drain them on a paper towel. Add fennel, onion, and ½ tsp salt to bacon drippings (or heated olive oil) and cook, stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are softened and browned, 8-10 minutes.

Stir in vinegar and cook until just syrupy, about 30 seconds. Remove the skillet from heat and stir in tarragon and pepper to taste.

Scrape fennel mixture onto the lettuce, add bacon if using. Toss to combine until the lettuce wilts slightly. Serve immediately.

**For more recipes**, look at our website [www.twoonionfarm.com](http://www.twoonionfarm.com). You can search for all the recipes we've ever published using a particular vegetable. Here are some good recipes using this week's vegetables:

Roasted Fennel and Red Onions (6/25/2006)  
Beet and Fennel Salad (6/13/2005 newsletter)  
Beets in Raspberry Vinaigrette (7/18/2005)  
Sweet and spicy cabbage salad (8/22/2005)

**Biweekly members:** Welcome to your Two Onion Farm membership!

Note that your box includes a sheet with instructions for breaking down your box. The instructions are also available on [www.twoonionfarm.com](http://www.twoonionfarm.com). Please take care breaking down the box and remember to return it to the pickup location when you pick up your next box.

A note to those of you who receive half boxes: As stated in our membership brochure, we aim to provide you each week with a quarter or third of a bushel of vegetables. However, the smallest waxed produce box which is readily available has a half-bushel capacity. We need to use the half bushel box for your vegetables, so please expect some empty space in your box each week.