

Two Onion Farm

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Week of November 4, 2012

This is the final delivery week of the season. We breathe an immense sigh of relief and satisfaction as we end the 8 month growing season during which we planted, tended, and harvested about 17.5 miles of vegetable row and packed and delivered about 6000 boxes of vegetables. The main challenges this year were drought, intense heat, and insect infestation in some crops (probably aided by the heat). We are glad that we have installed and planned an irrigation system which kept our crops watered during an extremely intense drought. Heat, drought, and insects have different impacts on different crops and at different times of year, and we believe that our diversity of crops and a well-planned schedule of succession plantings allowed us to pack bountiful boxes throughout the season despite the year's challenges.

We thank you for your support of our farm. We appreciate the feedback, praise and encouragement which we have received from many of you over the year. We hope that you will take the time to respond to the survey which we send to you after the end of the season. We give great weight and consideration to your responses.

We would also like to thank and acknowledge the employees who worked side by side with us during the 2012 season: Justin Offerman, Emily Backes, Kevin Bergstrom, Ashley Neises, Rachel Miller, Cory McCullough, Amanda Butson, and Jillian Cassel. They shared the demanding and skillful work of growing the food which graced your tables.

We're finishing one busy and rewarding time of year, and we're entering another – winter! Here are a few items from our farm winter to-do list:

- Design a planting schedule. Each year we plant about 300 plantings of vegetables on an intricate schedule to ensure a consistent diverse supply of vegetables for your boxes. Much of the schedule remains the same from year to year but we're always tweaking as we experiment and learn.
- Inventory and order seeds, soil amendments, potting mix, stakes, gloves, irrigation hose, and numerous other items we use each year to keep our farm running smoothly.
- Hire employees for next season. Employees are our most important asset in raising food for you. We put a lot of effort into recruiting and interviewing applicants.
- Inspect, lubricate, and replace worn parts on all of our tractor implements, irrigation components, and other equipment. This is preventative maintenance to avoid frustrating and costly breakdowns during the hectic growing season.
- Work on renovation and remodeling projects needed to keep our old barns healthy and functional.
- Research and plan for managing our young plantings of perennial fruits. We have apples, grapes, currants, and gooseberries planted already, and we'll be adding kiwifruit, tart cherry, pawpaws, and more apples next spring. We're extremely excited to bring these new crops to you in the years ahead.
- Attend farming workshops and conferences to network with other growers and learn.
- Around March 10, begin planting seeds for next season!

Organic produce in this week's box:

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Store In Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Beet	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Brussels sprouts	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Cabbage	Yes	Yes	2 wks	
Carrot	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Garlic	No	No	2 wks	
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Oakleaf
Onion	No	No	2+ wks	
Potatoes	No	No	2+ wks	Store in the dark!
Radish, beauty heart	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Spinach	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Squash, winter	No	No	2+ wks	Not in all boxes
Sunchoke (Jerusalem artichoke)	Yes	Yes	2 wks	Segmented light brown tuber which looks like ginger root.
Sweetpotato	No	No	2 wks	Not in all boxes

Jerusalem artichoke is the only new vegetable in this week's box. This tuber looks like ginger root but is totally unrelated – it's a perennial sunflower native to North America. The crisp nutty flavored tuber can be eaten raw. The best methods of cooking are to cut the tubers into large chunks and roast (perhaps together with other root vegetables) or to slice and sauté. Peeling is optional but unnecessary.

Winter Storage Vegetables. Madison area members can still order bulk quantities of carrots, onions, and other winter storage vegetables for pickup on November 13. For a list of available vegetables and instructions on how to order, see www.twoonionfarm.com/index.php/current-members/winter-vegetables.