

Two Onion Farm

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Week of October 14th, 2007

We hope for cool, but not bitterly cold temperatures at this time of year. Cooler weather increases the sweetness of later harvested fall crops such as Brussels sprouts, carrots, rutabagas, cabbage, and broccoli.

Most of our fall crops are yielding well. All of the vegetables which we are harvesting now were planted in July and August, and many got off to a rough start because of the wet cloudy weather in August. However, everything grew very well in the sunny warm weather of September. We've had excellent harvests of broccoli, cauliflower, and carrots.

Our yields of beets were somewhat reduced because many of the vulnerable young beet seedlings rotted and died in the constantly wet soil in August. However, we've harvested enough beets to give to everyone, and the flavor is excellent in the ones we've tasted.

Two big disappointments of the fall season were the fall spinach and peas. Every single pea plant in our fall pea planting rotted and

died in August, probably because of excessive moisture. Our fall spinach planting germinated extremely poorly. Spinach seed generally germinates poorly in warm wet conditions and we had both rain and warmth when we planted the spinach at the very end of August. This is the second year in a row that our fall spinach planting has failed to germinate well. Next year we may sow our fall spinach seed in flats which we can keep in a temperature and moisture controlled environment. Once the seedlings have emerged and began growth, we can transplant them into the field. This is much more time consuming but gives us much better control of seed germination.

Boxes - We are approaching the end of the delivery season. If you have any boxes which you haven't returned, please bring them back to your next pickup.

In this week's box:

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Store In Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Broccoli	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Beets	Yes	Yes	2-3 wks	
Carrots	Yes	Yes	2-3 wks	
Beauty Heart Radish	Yes	Yes	2-3 wks	Large radish with pale green skin and pinkish-red interior. Peel skin and eat red flesh.
Brussels Sprouts	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Oakleaf
Winter Squash	No	No	2+ wks	Buttercup type. Great in soups, muffins, pies. Cooked flesh stores well in freezer.
Yellow Onion	Yes or No	No	2+ wks	

Brussels Sprouts. Our favorite method for cooking them is to cook them with chopped onion, crushed garlic, and olive oil over low heat, covered, until the Brussels sprouts are nearly tender. Then stir in a good generous amount of mustard – enough to coat every sprout. Continue cooking a few more minutes until the sprouts are done. This is simple but very, very good. There are several other good recipes on our webpage.

Beauty Heart Radish. This is the round root with white and pale green skin. The flesh inside is pinkish red, similar to the color of watermelon flesh. Peel the pale green outer layer, which is hotter and can be bitter. The reddish interior is delicious. Sliced beauty heart radishes are wonderful in salads. We also add the slices to all kinds of sandwiches.

Beets. Three ways to cook beet roots: (1) slice them about 1/4 or 1/2 inch thick and steam them; (2) boil them whole or sliced; or (3) roast them whole at 350 degrees, covered or wrapped in aluminum foil, until they are tender, usually over an hour. Steaming or boiling is faster; but roasting yields a better tasting beet. If you object to the skins, whole beets are easy to peel once they've been cooked.

Cooked and chilled beets are great in salads. Pecans, walnuts, balsamic vinegar, and fruit vinegars all complement beets well.

Other good beet recipes from past newsletters:

- Beets in Raspberry Vinaigrette (7/18/2005)
- Beets in Orange & Lemon Juice (10/29/2006)
- Beet Chocolate Cake (6/27/2005)

Beet Salad with Pecans

- About 6 beets
- 1/4 cup pecans
- 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
- salt and pepper to taste

Cook and slice the beets as you prefer – see lefthand column.

Toast the pecans in small skillet over medium heat, stirring frequently, until the pecans just begin to change color and become fragrant – this will only take a few minutes. Chop them.

Combine beets, pecans, and onions. Whisk together the oil, vinegar, mustard, salt and pepper. Add the dressing a little at a time to the other ingredients, and stop when you have added enough – you may not need all the dressing, depending on your taste and how big your beets are. Chill the salad in the fridge and serve cold.

Vegetables for winter storage. You can order extra of several winter storage vegetables. See table below for pricing, minimum order, and good storage conditions. You can pick up your order at any of your regular deliveries. Call or email to order; we will reply to confirm your order. Please order at least 3 days before your pickup.

Vegetable	Price	Min. Order	Notes
Yellow Onions	\$1.25 / lb	5 lbs	Store dry. Ideal temperature is 32 degrees, but onions will store moderately well even at room temperature. Will store for 1-5 months, depending on temperature and humidity.
Celeriac	\$1.75 / lb	3 lbs	Most celeriac roots weigh about 1 lb each. Stores for months bagged in the fridge.
Buttercup squash	\$1.00 / lb	2 squash	Most squash weigh 3-4 lbs. Order by the number of squash you would like. Store cool and dry – 55-60 degrees is ideal. Does not store for a very long time – eat in Nov or Dec.
Carrots	\$1.25 / lb	5 lbs	Stores for months bagged in the fridge.
Beets	\$1.25 / lb	5 lbs	Stores for months bagged in the fridge.