

Two Onion Farm

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Week of October 14, 2012

We received a much needed heavy soaking rain over the weekend which should help to replenish groundwater and put us on a bit better footing for next growing season. Light rain is also forecast for the middle and later part of this week. It will complicate fieldwork for a while, however, as we wait for the surface to dry out a bit. Very wet soil prevents any tractor work such as fall tillage and spreading compost, and late autumn is one of the busiest times of year for tractor work. The wet conditions also complicate harvest, particularly for root vegetables which must be dug out of the ground. We are also waiting for drier soils before we plant our garlic.

We are harvesting our first **Brussels sprouts** this week. Brussels sprouts sweeten significantly after they've been exposed to cold weather and freezing nights, and so we only harvest them in late autumn. This is one of our favorite vegetables, and members consistently rave about them in our end of year surveys. This year's crop looks excellent, and we are hoping to include them in boxes for the next three weeks after this as well. We've included several of our favorite Brussels sprouts recipes on the next page.

This week's box has **beauty heart radishes** from our last planting, which we harvested last week. This is another of our absolute favorite vegetables. If you have not tried it yet, we hope you're not leaving it in the swap box or at the bottom of the crisper in your fridge! It is light-years apart from typical radishes and delicious in salads and sandwiches. Peel away the pale colored skin, which is bitter, and enjoy the sweet and spicy red interior.

We planted **lettuce** repeatedly every 3-7 days during August and early September to ensure a steady supply at this time of year. A number of plantings are still growing towards harvest under plastic and fabric covers, and we hope to harvest lettuce through our last delivery on November 9th.

Fall is our favorite time of year for lettuce because the leaves are tender and sweet. Aphids are a constant challenge in growing lettuce at this time of year. As most vegetation dries and senesces in late autumn, sweet and tender lettuce plants are extremely attractive to the aphids. We soak the lettuce heads in two changes of water at this time of year to remove most of the aphids, but you may still find some of these small pale insects inside as you peel apart the leaves at home. They are harmless and wash off easily.

Winter squash. Everyone will receive buttercup squash this week. This sweet, orange fleshed squash is one of our favorites. Like any winter squash, you can cut it in half, scoop out the seeds, roast it, and eat it plain or with butter. Buttercups have dense, flavorful flesh which is excellent in soups. Cooked buttercup squash is also a good replacement for pumpkin pie filling in bread, muffin, or pie recipes.

There is no **spinach** in the boxes this week as we wait for our plants to regrow after last week's harvest. We have large plantings growing under cover, however, and we expect excellent harvests in the coming 2-3 weeks.

This is our last week for **kale** this year. This earthy green in the cabbage family is generally cooked, either steamed or sautéed. Typically you will chop the leaves and discard the tough midrib before cooking. Aim to cook the kale until it is limp but still retains some texture. Steamed kale can be dressed with olive oil, lemon juice or vinegar, salt and pepper. Or sauté kale in oil or butter with onions and garlic. Garlic accompanies kale well. Some kale recipes from past newsletters:

[9/5/2005](#) Gingery Kale and Soy Sauce
[9/18/2011](#) Kale with Apples & Mustard
[10/9/2011](#) Kale with Lemon & Garlic
[10/1/2006](#) Lentil Kale Soup
[10/10/2005](#) Sweet and Sour Kale

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	
Broccoli	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Brussels sprouts	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Carrot	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Garlic	No	No	2 wks	
Kale	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Oakleaf
Onion	No	No	2+ wks	
Radish, beauty heart	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	White-green skin with red interior
Squash, Winter	No	No	2+ wks	Buttercup

Shredded Brussels Sprouts with Bacon

Makes 6 servings.

- 2 slices bacon
- 1 small yellow onion
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup water
- 1-2 tsp mustard
- 1 lb Brussels Sprouts, trimmed, halved, and thinly sliced
- 1 Tblsp cider vinegar

Cook bacon in a large skillet over medium heat, turning once, until crisp, about 6 minutes. Drain on a paper towel and crumble. Add onion and salt to the skillet (pour off excess bacon drippings if too much is left in the skillet). Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until tender and browned, about 3 minutes. Add water and mustard and scrape any browned pieces from bottom of pan. Add Brussels sprouts and cook, stirring frequently, until tender, about 4-6 minutes. Stir in vinegar and crumbled bacon.

Brussels Sprouts with Mustard

This is simple but very good: Halve the Brussels sprouts if they are large and otherwise leave them whole. 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.



And you can't go wrong with any of these other fine Brussels sprouts recipes from our website:

- [10/21/2007](#) Brussels Sprout and Pine Nut Pasta Sauce
- [10/26/2008](#) Brussels Sprouts and Carrots
- [10/24/2005](#) Brussels Sprouts in Apple Cider
- [10/24/2010](#) Brussels Sprouts with Almonds and Dill
- [10/12/2008](#) Brussels Sprouts with Pine Nuts and Balsamic Vinegar
- [10/24/2010](#) Lemon Caraway Brussels Sprouts
- [8/1/2005](#) Sweet and Sour Mustard Dressing
- [10/22/2006](#) Walnut Lemon Vinaigrette For Brussels Sprouts