

Two Onion Farm

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Week of October 19th, 2008

The season is nearing an end, and we're harvesting the last of the fall vegetables: rutabagas, spinach, lettuce, and Brussels sprouts. Chris and the crew are bundled up in long johns, winter jackets, hoods and hats as they harvest, clean and pack vegetables. Our work days become effectively shorter as we need to wait for ice to melt in the morning, and the sun sets early in the evening.

Last week we separated all of our seed garlic into individual cloves, and this week we will be planting approximately 6500 garlic cloves to grow into next year's crop of bulbs. The winter rye cover crop which we planted the weekend before last is emerging from the ground, and if severe winter cold holds off for a few weeks longer we will have a nice carpet of green to protect the soil in much of our field over the winter. Winter rye is an amazing plant, and will grow during the fall in temperatures as low as forty degrees.

We're also hoping for some dry weather in the next two weeks. We'd like the soil to dry out enough for us to plow the sections of the field which we will plant with early spring crops next year. Fall plowing helps the soil dry out in the spring and saves time during the busy spring planting season; both factors which help us raise early spring vegetables more reliably.

Biweekly members: This is the last delivery for many of you. Thank you for joining us this year! It has been a pleasure to raise a season's worth of fresh vegetables for you. We will soon be sending you a link to a brief internet survey. (Those of you without email will receive a paper survey). Please fill out the survey. We're always trying to improve and we take your comments very seriously. In the past we have substantially changed the quantity and selection of vegetables which we include in boxes in response to our members' comments.

In this week's box:

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Store In Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Beauty Heart Radish	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Brussels Sprouts	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Carrot	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Green/red oakleaf
Onion	Yes or No	No	2+ wks	Dry and cold is ideal, but will store well at room temperature.
Potatoes	No	No	2+ wks	Baking potatoes. Keep in a dry, dark place. Biweekly members only.
Rutabaga	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Spinach	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Winter squash	No	No	2+ wks	Acorn, Buttercup, and/or Confection squash

Brussels sprouts. Biweekly members are receiving these for the first time. Look on our website for several excellent Brussels sprouts recipes from past newsletters:

Brussels Sprout and Pine Nut Pasta Sauce
(10/21/2007 newsletter)

Shredded Brussels Sprouts with Bacon
(10/15/2006)

Brussels Sprouts with Mustard (10/17/2005)

And biweekly members, look in last week's newsletter (10/12/2008) for Brussels Sprouts with Pine Nuts and Balsamic Vinegar.

Spinach. Spinach salads can be delicious. Try a salad of spinach leaves, sliced pears or apples, creamy goat cheese, and chopped walnuts. It's wonderful. If you have any beets left from previous boxes, they are also a good addition to spinach salads. A good simple dressing for spinach salad is 1 cup olive oil, 5 Tbsp balsamic vinegar, ½ tsp salt. That makes a lot of dressing – store it in the fridge or reduce the recipe.

Rutabaga. These turnip relatives reach their peak sweetness and taste in the cool weather of late fall. Their flavor is assertive, but rutabagas can be excellent when prepared well:

- We enjoy the mashed rutabaga recipe in this newsletter.
- Rutabagas are excellent in stews and soups – the rutabaga should be added early in the cooking, so that it has time to completely soften, and almost dissolve. It contributes a wonderful silky texture.
- Grated rutabaga can be cooked with onions in butter – see the recipe in our 11/12/2006 newsletter.
- Roasted rutabaga: peel and slice the 'bagas thinly. Spread the slices in a single layer on large baking sheets, each oiled with about 2 Tbsp olive oil. As you lay the slices on the

sheet, first lay one side on the sheet and then turn the slice over – this ensures that both sides are oiled. Roast in a hot, 400-450 degree oven. We use the highest and lowest shelves in our oven, where the temperatures are hottest. Roast until the bottoms of the slices begin to brown, about 10-20 minutes. Turn each slice with tongs, and continue roasting until the bottoms begin to brown. Collect the slices in a bowl and toss them with salt and balsamic vinegar. Somewhat time-consuming, but an excellent recipe.

Squash. Buttercup squash are dark green with a grey protuberance at the bottom. Confection squash are gray colored. Both have dark orange flesh which is generally dense and sweet. You can roast and eat them plain like any squash. They are also very well suited for breads, pies, and muffins – roast the squash, then scoop out the cooked flesh and use it in place of canned pumpkin pie filling.

If you're scooping the seeds out of the buttercup or confection squash before cooking, be sure to remove all traces of the stringy material around the seeds – it has a bitter taste.

Mashed Rutabagas

1 lb rutabagas
1 Tbsp butter
1 Tbsp milk (or more)
1 Tbsp maple syrup
Salt and black pepper
Nutmeg

Peel the rutabagas and cut them into 1" cubes, or even smaller. Steam them until they are tender. Mash the cooked rutabagas using a potato masher or food mill. Place mashed rutabagas in a saucepan and cook over medium heat 2-3 minutes. Stir in butter, milk, and syrup, and season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Serve warm.

End of the delivery season: After this week, we will deliver once more, in the week of October 26-November 1.