

# Two Onion Farm

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## Week of September 14th, 2008

A warm welcome to biweekly autumn members who are receiving their first box this week.

Plenty of rain this past week has definitely ended the summer drought. We're looking forward to the warmer and drier weather forecasted for Tuesday through Saturday of this week. I'm writing this on Saturday afternoon; hopefully by the time you read this the patchy frost predicted for Monday evening will have been proved a figment of the weatherman's imagination.

This should be the week when we finish most of our squash harvest for the year. Winter squash need to be stored dry, to reduce the risk of rot. We like the field to be dry when we harvest, so that we're not putting wet squash into storage, and the recent rainy weather held up our harvest. We should be able to include winter squash in most of your remaining boxes this year. Squash yields are good, but not great. Apparently, inadequate pollination reduced the yields. Squash plants bear their male and female organs in separate flowers; bees must carry pollen from the male flowers to the female flowers in order for the female flowers to form fruit. Our squash vines were very healthy this year and produced copious flowers, but very few of the female flowers developed into fruits. We did not see many bees at work among the flowers. As an experiment, we pollinated a number of flowers by hand and most of these flowers formed fruit, which indicates that inadequate pollination, and not some other factor, probably caused our low fruit production. Unfortunately our squash patch is large enough that pollinating all the flowers by hand is not viable. For next year we will investigate increasing the bee supply by introducing honeybee hives and/or improving the habitat for wild bees.

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### In this week's box:

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Store In Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Acorn/Delicata squash	No	No	2 wks	Delicata has an ivory-yellow colored rind with dark green stripes. Dry and cool (50-55 degrees) is ideal for storage
Beauty Heart Radish	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	Round root with smooth, light colored skin and watermelon colored interior
Broccoli	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Not in all boxes
Carrot	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Cauliflower	Yes	Yes	1-2 wks	Not in all boxes
Celeriac	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	Large gnarly root
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Oakleaf or Boston types
Onion	Yes or No	No	2+ wks	Dry and cold is ideal, but will store well at room temperature.
Pepper	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Sweet peppers, not hot

**Acorn or Delicata Squash.** The flavor of the two squash varieties is similar although Delicata tends to be slightly sweeter. Delicata has thinner flesh and needs a shorter

cooking time. Either type can be used in this week's stuffed squash recipe.

**Beauty Heart Radish.** One of our favorite veggies. Really! This is a delicacy, not at all to be confused with regular ol' radishes. Peel the pale green skin from these beauties (the skin is bitter) and then enjoy the deliciously flavored and beautifully colored inner meat sliced in salads and sandwiches. The taste is slight sweet, slightly hot, and utterly alluring.

**Celeriac.** It is the light brown, globular gnarly vegetable. Celeriac is closely related to celery and has a similar flavor.

You can use celeriac in place of celery in most recipes. Add grated or finely minced raw celeriac to salads, or eat celeriac sticks with dip. In our house we generally eat celeriac cooked, in soups, sauces, and stir-fries. We find celeriac very easy to use. It has a pleasant but not overwhelming taste and we've added it to many cookbook recipes which did not otherwise call for it. If you start a recipe by sautéing onions, you can often add celeriac as well. On our website, you can find a dozen recipes with celeriac in previous year's newsletters.

You should peel the rough skin off the root before eating it: trim off the top and bottom ends, slice the celeriac in half horizontally, place each half with the cut end down on a cutting board, and trim off the skin by slicing down with a knife.

Store celeriac bagged in the fridge. Note that if you cut open the celeriac root, use part of it, and return the rest in a bag to the fridge, then the cut surface will darken with exposure to air, just like a cut apple. It's not a problem. Just trim off the darkened edge.

## Southwestern Stuffed Squash

Note that this recipe makes enough stuffing for two squash – halve if you only have one squash.

2 Acorn or Delicata squash  
5 oz bulk turkey sausage (or other sausage)  
1 onion, chopped  
½ cup minced celeriac (optional)  
½ red bell pepper, chopped  
1 clove garlic, minced (optional)  
1 Tbsp chili powder  
1 tsp ground cumin  
2 cups diced fresh, frozen, or canned tomatoes  
1 15 oz can black or pinto beans, drained and rinsed  
½ tsp salt  
1 cup grated cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut squash in half, scoop out seeds, place cut side down on a tray and roast in the oven until the squash flesh is tender when forked. When squash are done, reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees.

While squash are roasting: Lightly oil a large skillet and cook sausage until lightly browned. Add onions, celeriac, and bell pepper, and cook, stirring often, until softened. Stir in garlic, chili powder, and cumin; cook for 30 seconds more. Stir in tomatoes, beans, and salt and cook until tomatoes are broken down, about 10-12 minutes.

Fill squash halves with the stuffing and top with grated cheese. Place upright on a baking sheet and roast until heated through and cheese has melted, about 8-10 minutes.