

Two Onion Farm

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Those of you who receive our Saturday emails will notice that this week's box contains a few items which we did not expect to have when we sent the email. We apologize for that - we try to write the emails as accurately as possible. However, the few days of warm weather we had recently advanced some of our crops more than we anticipated. Some of our fall vegetables are still behind where we expect them to be at this time of year, so we hope for more heat after the current cold front passes.

These are the vegetables we're distributing this week. You'll receive a selection of them in your box, but not all of them.

Chinese (Napa) Cabbage. This is the large leafy head vegetable with pale green leaves and wide white midveins. It is related to cabbage and other vegetables in the Brassica family, but it has more tender, juicier leaves than regular cabbage.

Chinese Cabbage can be eaten raw or cooked. For raw eating, the leaves are generally thinly sliced. It's common to dress the leaves with a dressing based on sesame oil, rice vinegar, and soy sauce. On the next page, we've included one recipe for such a salad. If your dressing contains salt (including soy sauce), we recommend that you dress it immediately before eating. Chinese cabbage has a lot of water in the leaves, and if you let the sliced leaves sit in a salty dressing, the salt will leach the water from the leaves and you will be left with a very watery dressing.

The leaves are generally sliced before cooking. They cook quickly, we suggest that you only cook them for a few minutes, until the leaves are wilted but maintain some texture and crispness. They're well suited to stir frying. For a simple side dish of stir-fried Chinese

cabbage, begin by sautéing minced onion in peanut oil over medium heat. Then add sliced Chinese cabbage and crushed garlic, raise heat to high, and stir-fry until the leaves are cooked. Add salt and/or soy sauce, and rice vinegar; serve immediately.

Fennel. Eat raw in salads or cooked. Try the fennel and beet salad recipe on the next page which we've reprinted from one of last year's newsletters. Also see the recipe for roasted fennel and red onions in the June 25th 2006 newsletter, on our website.

Beets. Young beets with greens. The green leaves can be cooked and eaten as well as the roots. We love the roots, but we confess that we're not especially partial to the leaves. If you cut off the greens and store them separately, it will prolong the life of the roots.

Lettuce. Small heads of baby Boston, Romaine, and/or Oakleaf lettuce. See this week's recipe for Apple Vinaigrette dressing.

Recent heavy rains have cast dirt and mud over the lettuce. Please understand that we've done the best we can washing the lettuce, but there's still some dirt trapped inside the heads. Wet fall weather has also prompted many of the small earthworms and other critters in our fields to wiggle in among the lower leaves in lettuce heads. We don't know any practical way to remove the worms as we harvest and wash the lettuce, so you may find them living inside the heads.

Cauliflower. Only enough for some of you; our plants are just starting to bear.

Peppers, Kohlrabi, Potatoes, Onions.

Storage

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Approximate Storage Life	Comments
Beet Roots	Yes	Weeks	Remove greens before storing; keep bagged.
Beet Greens	Yes	1 week	Keep in sealed bag
Cauliflower	Yes	1-2 wks	Keep bagged.
Chinese Cabbage	Yes	1-2 wks	Keep bagged.
Fennel	Yes	1-2 wks	Keep bagged.
Kohlrabi	Yes	1-2 wks	Keep bagged.
Lettuce	Yes	1 week	Keep bagged.
Onions	No	Long	Yellow onions store longer than red.
Pepper	Yes	1 week	Keep bagged.
Potato	No	Weeks	Keep in dark

Chinese Cabbage Salad

2 Tblsp sesame seeds, toasted briefly in a skillet

About 1 lb Chinese Cabbage, thinly sliced
2-3 Tblsp minced onion

Dressing:

2 Tblsp orange juice

2 Tblsp sesame oil

2 Tblsp peanut oil

1 Tblsp rice vinegar

1 Tblsp soy sauce, or more to taste

1 tsp ginger

1 tsp orange zest

Black pepper and salt to taste

Add the dressing to the other ingredients immediately before serving.

Beet and Fennel Salad

Reprinted from June 13 2005 newsletter.

3-4 medium beets

1 tsp Dijon mustard

salt and pepper to taste

1/4 cup olive oil

2-3 Tbsp balsamic vinegar

1 fennel bulb

chopped pecans or roasted pine nuts (optional)

Cook the beets as you prefer (boiling, steaming, or roasting), and slice them to a comfortable bite size. Slice the fennel as follows: Slice a thin slice from the base of the bulb. Remove the outer layer or two if they are tough or stringy. Cut the bulb in half, through the base, and with a sharp knife cut out the triangular core which you will see in each half. Then lay the flat side of each half down and slice into thin pieces. With the core removed, the pieces will fall apart easily as you slice them.

Mix the mustard, oil, vinegar, salt and pepper together to make the dressing. Stir together the beets, fennel, nuts, and dressing, refrigerate, and serve chilled.

Apple Vinaigrette

Try this dressing on a lettuce salad with some of these toppings: chopped walnuts; grated cheese; a bit of minced red onion; cooked, sliced, and chilled beets; and/or thinly sliced fennel. The dressing stores well in the fridge.

2 cups apple juice

1/3 cup cider vinegar

2 tsp good mustard

1 clove garlic, crushed

1/2 tsp salt