

# Two Onion Farm

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## Week of September 21st, 2008

Lovely weather last week boosted our spirits and reminded us why we like doing this. We caught up with fall harvesting, temporarily, and began to disassemble irrigation systems and tear down trellising from our summer plantings which are done producing. It's important for us to clean up after these summer plantings promptly because we want to sow winter rye cover crop on that ground. The rye will cover the soil and reduce the chance of erosion over the winter, and also contribute organic matter to the soil when we till it under in spring.

We're harvesting fall beets for this week's boxes. Some of you will be happy and others... won't be. Beets seem to be a vegetable that people love or hate, without much middle ground. We love beets, especially roasted and chilled in salads. In our first few years doing this, we had only our own likes and dislikes to guide us in deciding what to grow, and so we grew lots of beets and included them in lots of boxes. The beet-haters spoke strongly in their end-of-season surveys and we've since reduced the amount we grow.

This week will probably be the last for peppers. The plants have produced very well this year.

Our fall spinach planting looks beautiful. We plant spinach every year at the very end of August for late October harvest. Spinach grows well and develops its best flavor in cold weather. However, the seed germinates poorly in hot or very wet soil, and in the last two years our fall spinach sprouted very poorly and we had little spinach to harvest in the fall. We're hoping for good yields this year, starting in another month or so.

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### In this week's box:

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Store In Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Acorn squash	No	No	2+ wks	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
Beet	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Broccoli	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Carrot	Yes	Yes	2+ wks	
Cauliflower	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Not in all boxes
Leek	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Oakleaf or Boston
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

**Beauty Heart Radish.** Biweekly members are receiving this for the first time of the year. It is one of our favorite veggies. 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.

## Pea Soup with Carrots and Leeks

2 cups dried green split peas  
9 cups water  
1 tsp dried tarragon  
1 bay leaf  
¼ celeriac root, minced (optional)  
¼ cup olive oil  
4-6 carrots, peeled and chopped  
3 leeks, thinly sliced  
1 ½ tsp salt  
Black pepper

Bring peas, water, tarragon, bay leaf, and celeriac to boil in a large pot. Simmer briskly until peas are soft and begin to dissolve. This can take 30 minutes to well over an hour, depending on your peas.

While the peas are cooking, sauté the carrots and leeks in oil until soft and beginning to brown.

Add the leeks, carrots, salt, and pepper to peas and continue simmering until soup is quite thick. Serve warm.

## Beet Salad with Pecans

About 6 beets  
¼ cup pecans  
½ red or other onion, thinly sliced  
¼ cup olive oil  
2 Tbsp red wine vinegar  
1 ½ tsp Dijon mustard  
salt and pepper to taste

Cook and slice the beets as you prefer. We think roasting is best: wash the beets and roast them in a covered baking dish or wrapped in aluminum foil until they are tender, which can be 45 minutes to 2 hours. Let them cool a bit, then slip the skins off, and slice the beets. You can also boil whole beets and then peel and

slice them, or you can steam beet slices. Both boiling and steaming are quicker than roasting.

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.

## North African Spiced Carrots

½ lb carrots, sliced into ½” slices  
Salt  
1 ½ tsp lemon juice  
1 Tbsp olive oil  
¼ tsp paprika  
¼ tsp ground cumin  
¼ tsp cinnamon

Boil or steam carrots until tender but not yet mushy. Drain the carrots and place in serving bowl. Mix together the dressing ingredients, pour over the carrots, and toss. Serve immediately or cool and serve at room temperature.

**Biweekly members**, looks at last week's newsletter for southwestern stuff squash – Acorn squash stuffed with sausage, onion, garlic, pepper, other veggies, cheese.