



BROOKFIELD FARM WINTER SHARE NEWS

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CELLAR CONDITIONS

Loaded and Looking Great!

The cellar is now 45F and 95% humidity (eventually dropping to it's ideal of 36F and 95%). Here's the initial view of our storage crops:

Carrot, Beet, Celeriac, Rutabaga, Gilfeather Turnip, Radish (Black, Watermelon, and Daikon): Most of these produced very well this year and should last through March. We will NOT have parsnips this winter due to a crop failure (drought).

Potatoes: We have more sweet potatoes this year than white potatoes, but we have good quality that should last us all the way through March. These don't want to be wet, frozen, or subjected to light. They will do well in a paper bag in a cool dry spot.

Cabbage: We have harvested a good crop of cabbages that range in size from small to very large. We will start with the small ones and leave the biggest ones for long-term storage. We store them, with the onions in a dry, insulated space upstairs. We also wrap all of the Feb - March cabbage in newspaper to absorb excess moisture and minimize rot. If you do get a cabbage with a rotten outer leaf, simply peel it off and put the cabbage in the fridge.

continued on reverse....

December Distribution Hours

Dec 5-11
(Mon-Sun)
8am - 7pm

Dec 19-25
(Mon-Sun)
8am - 7pm

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM

And Finally, Some Rest

After a very memorable growing season, we brought the last of our beets and celeriac out of the field on Friday. We sorted the cabbage in the harvest shed, packed the squash and sweet potatoes into the walk-in warmer (used-to-be-cooler), organized the root cellar and called this outdoor season over. It's almost hard to remember all of the drought struggles of this past growing season, but with over 40,000 lbs of beautiful produce in the safety of our winter storage, we are ready to head for a rest and share the remaining bounty of this season with all of you until March.

The apprentice crew began their hibernation mode, following winter pursuits both near (John & Sunny) and far (Rebecca). Abbe continues to work in the office, making sure that checks are deposited and bills are paid. Karen, Zoe, and I are laying the ground work for next season as we clean up the remains of this one. We still need to mulch our strawberries & garlic (to protect them from the likely frost-heaves of winter), and then store all of our machinery under cover, clean out the barnyard at Snyder Farm, and move the cows into their winter lair. But we will get these jobs done in due course, without nearly the hustle and bustle of June.

And then, eventually we will start to take a tally of all that happened around the farm these past months. Counting pounds of produce. Counting dollars and cents. Counting cows. Counting tons of compost. But first, we will start by counting sheep. As many as possible. And in between we hope to see you in the root cellar.

We hope you enjoy the winter bounty,

Farmer Dan
(for Karen, Zoe, Abbe, John, & Sunny)

Black radish shredded raw with apples, carrots, lemon and mint

- 1 black radish
- 1 carrot
- 1 apple
- lemon juice
- olive oil
- mint

Black radishes are a bit spicier and tougher than most types, but combined with the sweetness of carrots and tartness of fresh apples, they're a pleasant complement. I used lots of fresh lemon juice and let it soak in for a while, along with good olive oil, and finished it with a few mint sprigs for extra refreshment

From the Huffington Post - one of many recipes on a great page - Three Ways to Cook One Tough Radish - http://www.huffingtonpost.com/cathy-erway/black-radish-recipes_b_2617652.html - with everything you need to know about a black radish, including recipes, pictures, and some history. Thanks to our shareholder Barbara Martin who shared this with us!

We'll put a great recipe here in the newsletter each month - plus you can find many more on our website <http://www.brookfieldfarm.org/recipe-index/>



WINTER SHARE GENERAL INFO

Get Ready For A Great Winter of Eating!

If you are new to the winter share (or just want a refresher), please read on for some answers to frequently asked questions.

Welcome to our root cellar! This space was created in 2004 to be an environmentally sustainable food storage space for a large amount of local produce. It uses minimal electricity to keep cold. The cooling power of the earth (and one single fan to keep, powered by photovoltaics, to keep air circulating) keeps over 40,000 lbs of organic / biodynamic vegetables stored safely for at least four months. There's a few things you'll need to get used to (cleaning dirty veggies, coming down to the cellar, picking through lugs of unsorted veggies), but for the most part, people have found this experience easy to get used to, economical, and delicious all winter long.

After twelve winters we have learned how to use our cellar and are very confident that we will have great food for you all the way through March. Here's a few things you might be wondering which may help make your winter share a fantastic way to stay fed all winter long....

How do I get my share?

Just like in our regular share, we will post the amounts of each crop to take on one chalkboard in the cellar. All amounts will be either by volume (bags provided or please your own re-usable bag of a similar size), by the piece, or by weight (use the hanging scale next to the table). Each crop is marked with a sign, in case it's difficult to identify and there is a map on the other chalk board to help you find everything. We will stock the cellar every couple of hours. If you find the lugs looking a little low, feel free to open the bags behind the lugs and help yourself. We will try to keep the lugs filled. In addition, we will have locally produced items for sale (yogurt, eggs, syrup, greens, etc) on the tables in the cellar. You can pay for these items by dropping cash into the black "how-we-doing!?" box, or by sending a check to Brookfield Farm (address above).

When can I pick up my share?

The root cellar will be open every other week (from Mon - Sun) to pick up your share. The distribution calendar is posted on our website. All posted share amounts are for a single share. If you only want to come to the cellar once a month (every other distribution) feel free to take double the posted amount. Please check off your name on the clipboard (on the table). If you take a month's worth of produce, please mark down for two distributions. Using this check-off sheet will help us keep track of our vegetable stocks and make sure that we have plenty of food for the entire winter.

What do I do with all of this food?

If you feel like you get more than will fit in your fridge, don't worry! In general everything in this root cellar will keep best if it's kept around 34F and 95% humidity. The closest place to

Onions, Leeks, Garlic: We have a good, but somewhat small onion crop, this winter. So, we will start off December with leeks and garlic, which don't store as well. We should have garlic through January and onions through March

Winter Squash: We have a very good crop of very sweet squash this year (Butternut, Buttercup, Pie Pumpkins, and Delicata). In a change of pace for us, we plan to store & distribute the squash through March. Since the butternut stores best, we will distribute more of the other varieties earlier. This crop wants to be dry and not so cool (around 55F) which is why they aren't stored in our cellar (too moist and cold). We'll bring enough down for each distribution, but if you get more than you can use, you should store them in cardboard underneath a bed in your coldest room, or in a dry basement if you don't use them all

Kale & Collards: We have a bigger-than-average (Pick Your Own) crop this year which should be available for December and into January (weather permitting). Check the chalkboard in the cellar for field locations. Pick into a plastic bag and store in your fridge. Once these are gone from the field, we will have fieldhouse grown kale and collards for sale (as supplies last) during the winter share distributions.

approximate this in your home besides your fridge, is in your garage or an unheated part of your basement. A little insulation (foam, sand, blankets) is all you need to make sure that your crops won't freeze. If you have a couple of buckets or boxes to drop the produce in and then a wool blanket to cover them, in a cold spot (garage, etc) they should be just fine. These crops are HARDY – that's why they store well. We have lots of recipes on the website to help make your winter cooking interesting and delicious.

This stuff is dirty!

We don't wash the roots because they keep better that way and we don't have the facilities to wash them in the winter without freezing our pipes and/or our hands! Put them into the fridge (without washing). When you are ready to use them, scrub them with a veggie brush, and they'll be all set. If you are going to eat the carrots raw, and want them bright shiny orange, you will need to peel them. Yes, that will take some of the nutrients away (with the skin), but we consider that a small price to pay for organic carrots, stored with no refrigeration, for sweet eating into March!

How is this working for you?

If you ever have a question or comment, don't hesitate to call, email, or leave a note in our "How We Doing?" black box on the table in the cellar. One of our goals for the winter is to get some rest after a long season of farm work so you might not see us around all that often. Still, we will probably be around the office during the day, and certainly every morning at 8am during our distribution weeks. We want you to let us know how things are going as we are very committed to making this winter share work for you and your family.