

BROOKFIELD FARM SHOPTALK

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Distribution Week #11

What's new this week

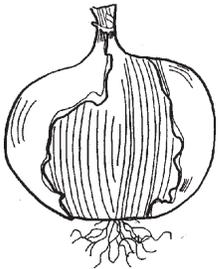
WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM

Summer, Sweet Summer!!

Sweetness and Sunshine

Sweet Onions: Sweet onions are a summertime treat. In addition to the "gold coin" cippolinis, the spicy hot red torpedos, a few round and flat red onions, we now have beautiful sweet white onions. These are juicy and round and milder. Enjoy all of these onions

grilled, chopped into a salsa, sliced on your hamburger, pickled with your cucumbers, etc. and notice their subtle differences in flavor, heat and sweetness. The diversity is a real treat. Store these onions in the refrigerator and use within a few weeks.



Sweet Italian Parsley: This flavorful and versatile herb is in the same family as carrots, cilantro, and dill. Put a bunch, along with other herbs of your choice in the food processor with some vinegar, olive oil, water and garlic for a simple sauce for summer slaws, steaks, even eggs!

WHAT'S ON THE WAY

SWEET PEPPERS
LACINATO KALE
MELONS

BULK PRODUCE

CUCUMBERS, BEETS
\$1 / LB

SWEET CORN:
\$3 / DZ

SWISS CHARD,
GREEN KALE: \$2 / LB

Tuesday morning was time our first sweet corn harvest. Mist and foggy windshields, counting corn stalks to place the barrels in the right place, picking ears down the rows. There's nothing like corn to make you feel tiny. We planted these seeds and now they tower over us. After hour of picking ears and lifting barrels full of corn, we have one more job left: test the corn. We test every morning after the pick to keep tabs on the flavor, ending the harvest on a really sweet note. Yum! We go to breakfast with our sweet tooth already satisfied.

Sweet is the word of the week. We'll continue our sweet corn routine, busy mornings that will structure our days for 7 or 8 weeks now. The sweet onions were ready and we harvested them in bulk - over

2000 lbs! in this week's sunny summer afternoons. How rare this year to be hot! Also sweet were the amazing notes we recieved from shareholders after we got late blight in the cherry tomatoes. Pulling cherries just as the fruit is ripening - all the work put in and none of the rewards reaped - can be a low moment. It can also feel like a long time to wait when we have less eggplant than we planned for because of this cooler weather, when each summer crop is a at least a week late because they need heat to fully ripen and sweeten. But just then, on come the great onions, corn, and mountains of field tomatoes ... the sweet reality that all those tiny transplants we tucked in in the spring grew this?!

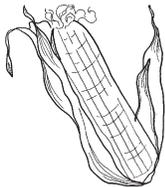
The shareholders come with the magical reality that the time we've spent together grows these kinds of relationships?! And we're cruising through a big harvest day shouting for joy - sweet sweet summer!

Farm shares - so much more of an emotional experience than a trip to the grocery store. In a world where we could choose to just go buy pretty much anything the minute we want it, I think that (along with the picked-this-morning freshness) it's that road of reality we've all been traveling that makes this corn so sweet. We hope you enjoy the harvest.

Your Farmer,
Zoe
(for Dan, Karen, Abbe, Rebecca, Sunny and Ellen)

BULK SWEET CORN

This is a great year for our sweet corn! We have lots of nice big ears coming out of the field. We should have sweet corn for the next 7 weeks, and this week we also have enough to sell bulk corn in the shop.



Gazpacho

1 cucumber
3 lbs ripe tomatoes
1 sm onion, diced,
1 jalapenos, seeded and minced.
1/4 C chopped fresh basil
Salt and pepper
2 T champagne or white wine vinegar
A few basil leaves for garnish

Peel the cuke, half, scoop out seeds and dice. Peel the toms. (Boiling water method: Score the bottom of each with an X. Drop into boiling water ~10 secs. Rinse under cold water, then slip off skins.) Cut toms in half and core. Place mesh strainer over a bowl. Squeeze out juice and seeds. Save the juice and discard seeds. Puree half the toms in blender and coarsely chop the rest. Combine the toms, juice, onion, cukes, chilies, and basil in a lg bowl. Scoop out ~ 3 c of the mix and puree again in blender. Return mix to lg bowl. Season with 2 tspn salt, 1/4 tspn pepper, 2 tbsp vinegar. Stir. Refridge and let sit for > 1 hr before serving. Add salt, pepper, and more vinegar if needed. Serve chilled. Garnish with basil leaves. If the soup is too acidic, add a few pinches of sugar. Makes about 6 c. *From our shareholder Erika Zekos who says this is perfect for high summer when the tomatoes are going crazy and it's too hot to cook! If multi-colored tomatoes are available be sure to include a few and chop them for beautiful contrast.*



Pic of The Week
Early Morning Corn Picking Under Mt Norwottuck

HOW WE FARM

The Weeder Crew

Every year, the weeds grow. We plow the earth. Plant the seeds. And then the earth plants a few billion more. It's tempting to think that we could just coexist on the earth, that all living things can just "get along" together. We could grow plants. The earth could grow weeds. We could get our crops out. The earth could make a few more weed seeds. And we could all live in the sweet ever-after. Heck, we could even stop working so hard and maybe take a few months off in the summer to sit under the tree and ponder our existence. Just doesn't seem to work out that way. If left on their own, the weeds would grow and grow and choke out all of our crops.

Of course, this is what has brought us the industrial agricultural chemicals of our time. They are immensely useful. Imagine planting a field of onions. Then seeing some weeds emerge. Then spraying the crop once and seeing all of the weeds die while the onions magically live on. Now that seems like good magic. It's just that the earth doesn't usually let such force just go "unanswered." There usually is a balancing force that has another, unintended effect. For instance, you may kill the weeds, but also leave carcinogens that cause rampant cell growth in other beings - causing unintended harm.

On our farm, we try and find a balanced approach. Plow the earth. Plant a seed. Cultivate the rows (with a small 13 hp tractor). And that's where the weeder crew comes in. After we are done with the primary cultivation of our plants, we "crawl" the fields. Plucking (not so gently) all the remaining weeds that have emerged to compete with our plants. This can be very difficult (like when the steady rains germinated the carrots quickly so we missed "flame" weeding them and they were extra weedy). When you've got to keep 27 acres of vegetables clean, it can take a little while. 27 acres of crops, one row at a time, comes out to about 343,000 feet of row. ***You try crawling 64 miles!*** That's why we need an entire crew.

Every year, we hire some folks who want to work hard, be outside, and help us produce food that's good for you to eat! We're very fortunate to have lots of eager high school & college-aged people around who fit the bill. We only have them work from 8am to 12pm so that they can do other things with their time, and not get burnt out from too much of a good thing. You should know that these folks work their tails off for your food. We all simply couldn't be eating all of this without them.

We open our jobs to anyone who wants to apply. We pay competitive wages to other summer jobs. And we have a good old time on the farm. This summer with the weeders has awesome, so good we wrote about them once already! On a weedy year because of lots of rain, it's hard to over-emphasize their importance. The farm looks good thanks to Emilia, Lukas, Ryan, Augusta, Jacob, Caleb, Harry, Sara, Morgan, Sam, Oli, Zofia, Kendal, Meghan, Izzi, Bethany, Livvy, Emmy, Noah, Sydney, Amalia and Orion and many special-guest pinch-hitters when the going got toughest!

They have kept our farm clean and abundant all summer long. It was a mostly wet summer, with lots of great germination weather for weeds. Didn't matter - they came and they pulled, tugged, plucked, and just kept moving around the farm staying ahead of the rain, which was working hard to keep us stocked with fresh weeds! Next week is their last as they have mostly weeded every crop. We show appreciation by taking the whole crew down the Deerfield river on tubes one afternoon next week. We'll pack a picnic and float the afternoon away. Time to enjoy each others company before we start fall harvests and they start school or other work. So if you see them around the farm before they go, give them a shout and say thanks for the cucumbers. The carrots. The kale. The melons. The onions. Couldn't have done it without them. As they would say, "Weeds be warned!"