

Red Wiggler's CSA Newsletter

In your share:

Chard/Beets
Onions/Garlic
Sweet Peppers
Cherry Tomatoes/
Tomatillos
Red Tomatoes
Zucchini/
Summer Squash
Hot Peppers

In the PYO:

Tomatillos(L)
Sunflowers(U)
Nasturtiums (L)
Mint (L)
Lovage (L)
Stalice (L)
Sage (C)
Salvia (C)
Yarrow (C)
Winter Savory (C)
Anise Hyssop (A)
Bee Balm (A)
Chamomile (A)
BachelorButton (A)
Basil (U)
Parsley (U)
Sorrel (U)
Snapdragons (L,U)
Zinnias (U)
Wildflowers (W)
Cilantro (I)
Dill (I)

PYO Key:

L – Lower PYO
U – Upper PYO
A – Wedge A

In this week's share...

Keep an eye out for Lunchbox peppers, the newest member to our pepper family! Lunchbox peppers are super sweet and are snack size. They come in a variety of colors, starting green and then turning into red, yellow, or orange. However, it takes 2 additional weeks for the fully grown Lunchbox pepper to turn from green to a different color. We made sure these little guys had plenty of time on the vine to ripen before picking, so you should see plenty of color when you pick them up at the CSA. These peppers look very similar to our other small variety of sweet peppers; Lipstick. However, make sure not to confuse Lunchbox or Lipstick with the spicy hot pepper varieties; Padron, Ancho, and Jalapeño.

On the farm...(this week one of our interns, Eva Shpak writes about her experience)

From the perspective of an intern, there is much to learn while working at Red Wiggler. On Friday of last week, August 1st, the interns were able to see firsthand what happens when the harvest of one crop is complete. In this case, the crop to which we had to say farewell to was the 1st planting of summer squash. In the cooler, morning hours, many volunteers and growers hauled the deteriorating squash plants out by their roots and into the dumpster. The squash plant remnants were cast into the dumpster, not compost, in order to cease the spread any disease, pest, or pathogens that might have been present among these dying plants.

In order for the soil in the previous squash beds to retain its vital nutrients, the interns got a chance to plant daikon radishes, a cover crop. A 'cover crop' is used primarily to reduce soil erosion, maintain soil fertility and enhance soil quality. Daikon radishes are the perfect cover crop because they have a long, cylindrical tap-root that can grow up to 24 inches long and brings up vital nutrients from deep below the soil surface, such as phosphorus and nitrogen. The nutrients collected by the daikon radishes will remain in the soil and in the radishes themselves, even after the radishes die this winter. We will plant carrots and beets into the daikon residue (without tilling) in April.

Not to fear, our next 2 summer squash plantings are producing well –these are the Costata Romanesco variety, and the 3rd planting is just starting to produce featuring the patty pan squash variety.

Upcoming Events...

Red Wiggler goes on the road to Leisure World this Thursday, August 6, from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. This Farm Market is open to Leisure World residents and to the public (just tell the gatekeepers you are there for the Farm Market.) We set up outside the Interfaith Chapel every Thursday from now until August 28. The growers enjoy the interaction with the customers and the change of pace from the typical farm day, and the customers get to know who is growing the food they buy.

NOTE: CSA members are welcome to buy additional vegetables over and above what comes in your share. When you come to pick up your share this week, there will be additional zucchini, onions, tomatoes, garlic, beets, chard and cherry tomatoes available for purchase.

Pick Your Own...

New this week – tomatillos in the lower PYO and sunflowers in the upper PYO. Please limit yourself to one sunflower so that everyone has the chance to pick a sunflower! In the upper PYO, the zinnias are still plentiful and the cosmos are starting to come on. Basil, Cilantro, Parsley, and Dill are still available. Take the time to walk around the PYO and wedges and enjoy the busyness of the bees and the serenity of the farm. Check in with the volunteers and staff around the PYO for advice on how to select, cut, and use the plantings marked with a blue flag- these are ready to harvest.

Recipe: Refreshing Gazpacho

Makes 8 servings:

3 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped (about 3 cups)
1 large cucumber, peeled, seeded, and chopped (about 2 cups)
1 red bell pepper, chopped (about 1 cup)
1 medium onion, chopped (about 1 1/4 cups)
3 cups canned tomato juice
2 tablespoons fresh herbs (such as tarragon, thyme, or parsley), chopped
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
2 tablespoons tomato paste
Juice of 1/2 a lemon
Kosher salt
Cayenne pepper
1 cup croutons (to garnish)

1. In a bowl, reserve 2 tablespoons of the tomato, cucumber, pepper, and onion to garnish.
2. In the food processor or blender, purée the remaining ingredients (except the croutons) until smooth, adjusting the seasoning to taste with lemon juice, salt, and cayenne pepper.
3. Cover and chill thoroughly, at least 3 hours but preferably overnight. Adjust the consistency as desired with water. Serve in chilled bowls garnished with the reserved vegetables and croutons.

(from www.epicutious.com)