

Week 13 - Full & Half share members pick up this week

Dear CSA friends,

I'd like to start this newsletter by saying "happy autumn!" but other than having football on TV on Sundays, there's not much out there right now that is heralding in the fall! This past week of upper 90's and high humidity have been a killer for Scott as he tries to keep everything watered and stays tuned to the weather forecast in hopes of some rain. And the irony is not lost on us when we recall that just a few months ago we were watching the weather forecast to see when the rain would end!

And while some of the plants definitely produce better or worse based on the weather, they all produce based on the length of the days. So even though you'd think the tomatoes would up their production with this heat (which they thrive in), they also sense the shorter days, with less sunlight and slow down production. And conversely, those veggies that continue to produce with less daylight - our fall and early spring crops, definitely suffered this past week with the heat. Less daylight means cooler temps, normally, and the broccoli and lettuces do not like this intense Indian Summer we are having. Luckily the end is in sight with a break in the temperature and back to normal by Wednesday.

We pulled all the winter squashes yesterday and you'll see those in your bags this week, as well as the usual....potatoes and peppers. Onions, believe it or not, are actually coming to an end. This may be the last week of them. What else is still in the field? Turnips, carrots, kale, mustard greens and arugula, eggplant, and maybe one more week of summer squash. We are eagerly awaiting the sweet potatoes, and because there is a good chance the season may not go 16 weeks this year (sadly it would be the first time in our 10 years), we may dig up the sweet potatoes and give them to you with instructions on how to cure them for a couple of weeks before eating them. The curing process, which is basically storing them in a high temperature/high humidity environment (about 80 degrees/80% humidity) for 4 days to 2 weeks, will enable the starches to turn to sugar, giving your sweet potatoes their delicious flavor. We'd like to give them one more week to grow, so aren't quite ready to dig them up yet.

After next week (week 14) we will start letting you know on a week to week basis if there will be a pickup or delivery. Returning members are familiar with how we end the season, but for new members, once we officially end the season, you may at some point get an email from us saying we have certain things available that just became harvestable. If that happens, then all members, whether full, half or 5 week share members, as well as Crystal Lake and Gurnee members are invited out to the farm to share whatever remaining harvests are available. We're not sure how this year will end, just given that it's been an abnormally not-great season, but hopefully we will either a) get to 16 weeks or b) call you back to share in a final harvest.

In any event, we have so appreciated your support and patience this season and hope to see many of you back with us again next year. We will officially open the 2018 CSA sign up on October 1, with a \$25.00 discount for members who sign up and pay by the end of the year. But more details will follow in next week's newsletter.

Now...for the rest of this hot, humid Sunday, I'm going to start chopping and freezing onions and peppers, and wedge and freeze potatoes! I hope you all have been able to do some of the same!

Yours in health,
Farmer Scott & Kathy