



The Com Post

A weekly Post for our Community Supported Agriculture Members

June 25, 2015

Volume 10, Issue 2

Week B

PLANNED for This week in the box:

Bok Choi
Romaine Head Lettuce
Salad Mix (Standard & Lg)
Popcorn
Pea Shoots
Spinach or other Greens
Kale
Radishes (Small & Lg Shares)
Strawberries
Potted Herb: Thyme
Potted Herb: Parsley
Potted Herb: Onion Chives

Next week's box— Our best guess!

Bok Choi
Kohlrabi
Peas
Broccoli ?
Romaine and/or Salad Mix
Radishes or Turnips
Greens
Dinosaur Kale
Strawberries?
Scallions

On the Farm

To Wash or not to Wash; To Last or not to Last by Nicole

Do WE wash your produce? The simple answer is yes.

Should YOU wash your produce? Definitely.

We wash most crops. Crops like lettuce, cabbages, root crops, and others, are washed immediately after harvest. A few crops, like fresh herbs and pea shoots, do not get washed after harvest or you'd end up with a mushy mess or a vegetable that deteriorates quickly.

Other than the obvious, to get off the dirt, we are washing the vegetables to remove field heat. This hydro cool-down results in a vegetable that will last much longer for you.

While "same-day" harvest sounds awesome and like you are getting the "freshest" produce possible, it is not always the best practice for long-lasting produce.

Salad mix that has been harvested a day or two before delivery, hydro-cooled and has had an entire day to cool down completely in the cooler to a crisp 34 degrees Fahrenheit, should last 7-10 days or more. Salad mix harvested the

morning of delivery, having no time to get cold to the core, may last only a few days.

I know that I want my salad mix to last a long time. If I don't eat it up in a couple of days, I want to know it will still be there fluffy and crisp when I finally do get to it later in the week (minus a few leaves that may have succumbed to the organic nature that will ultimately take its course. I'm fine pulling out a few bad leaves, but throwing out an entire bag after a couple of days is unacceptable.)

I often find a bag of salad mix in my crisper drawer approaching 2 weeks of age that is still edible. Again, I may need to pluck out a few yuck-leaves, but generally its good to eat.

By using this cool-down process for our crops you get vegetables that will last.

Next step for long-lasting produce: Your part.

You need to take care of your veggies.

The process we implement to keep your produce lasting long won't work if you don't do your part. If you leave your veggies out for hours when getting them home or if you leave them in a hot car or if you leave the bag open and expose the greens

to the open fridge air, the plan falls apart. Sometime they will rebound, but they probably won't last that long.

Each week I make suggestions on the second page of the newsletter for ways to store your produce. Following those suggestions will help your veggies store better and last longer.

The other reason we wash, and again the most obvious, is to remove field dirt. We do our best with the time we have to get out the dirt. For certain crops, its tough to get out every bit. Which means some of that dirt travels to your home. That means part of the washing job falls on you. Crops that have deep creases or multiple leaves attached at a base often have dirt stuck inside. After a heavy rain fall especially—the dirt just bounces right up onto and into the plant, settling down deep in the grooves.

So, washing at the farm is essential for a few key reasons: cooling a crop and cleaning a crop.

A third significant reason is food safety. It's a smart reason, and the reason we suggest that you wash your produce, too.

Wishing you long-lasting and great-tasting food!





PLANNED for this week in the box: Details & Descriptions

Remember to visit [Local Thyme](#) to sign up for the recipe service we will be offering our members this season. You'll need the secret code word we emailed you. Get the most out of your CSA box!

Crop	frig?	Storage Specifics	Unless otherwise noted, all of the produce comes from our farm. Comments:
Bok Choi	Yes	Store in bag or wrap in a damp towel, store in crisper.	A crazy and fun way to use Bok Choi other than in a stir fry would be to chop and sauté it in a little oil with some onions and mushrooms, then top a homemade pizza and bake! Get creative with cooking! Local Thyme is also great resource for recipes.
Romaine Head Lettuce	Yes	Store in a bag or damp towel in the crisper.	Caesar Salad! Try this link to a Classic Caesar salad recipe.
Salad Mix (Only Standard and Large Shares this week)	Yes	In the bag	A lovely mix of several different lettuces. Try our favorite dressing (it's simple and so good!) Olive Oil Vinaigrette: whisk/blend together 2 T. white or red balsamic vinegar, 1 t. Dijon mustard, 6 T. extra virgin olive oil. Adjust all to taste
Heirloom Popcorn: Black	No	In the pantry or cabinet.	Heirloom popcorn from our farmer friends at Steinke Popcorn in Juneau. Our family has been eating this popcorn for years and we love it. The "black" heirloom is my absolute favorite! The crunchiness and flavor will blow you away. Steinke's popcorn is not certified organic.
Pea Shoots	Yes	In the bag	AKA pea tendrils. If you've never had pea shoots, you're in for a surprise. Pea shoots are simply the first young shoots of pea plants. This green is packed with goodness and a lovely pea flavor. Eat in a salad, top on a sandwich, eat 'em raw! They can even be sautéed.
Spinach (Standard) or Vitamin Green (Small and Large Shares)	Yes	In the bag	This week some of you will get spinach and some will get Vitamin Green. What is Vitamin Green? It is an entirely different and delicious leafy green. It is related to mustard greens but the tender leaves are flavorful and not at all mustardy.
Kale	Yes	In a bag	Rinse and put into a bag immediately upon arrival. Kale will last for weeks if stored properly. A little moisture on the kale when putting in the bag is good. Red Russian Kale this week! Check out Local Thyme for recipes.
Radishes (Small and Large Shares only)	Yes	See comment	Separate the greens from the roots immediately and store in bags separately. The roots will get soft and wilt if left attached to the greens too long after harvest.
Strawberries	Yes	In the container they arrived in	From both our farm and our neighbors, Mischler's strawberry farm just down the road from us. Mischler's berries are not certified organic.
Potted Herbs: Thyme Onion Chives Parsley	No		These will last a few weeks before they need to be put into larger pots. See page 3 for details. Add some beauty to your yard (or deck or window) and a little taste to your meals all season long.



We wash the produce, but so should you!



Pea Shoots

Pea shoots are simply the early tender growth of pea vine that pea pods grow on.

Harvested young, about 14 to 21 days old, these delicious greens make a wonderful flavor addition to many dishes.

Pea shoots can be eaten raw or stir-fried.

A few fantastic ways to use them include:

- Pea shoot pesto (recipe below)
- Pea shoot Pasta (recipe in the June 23, 2011 Com Post)

- Mixed in with salad greens
- Added to a sandwich
- Enjoyed as an afternoon snack! (Many a time have I gotten an email from a member whose pea shoots never even made it home—all of them were snacked on during the drive home after picking up the CSA share!)

They really have an amazing pea flavor. Enjoy this late spring treat!



Pea Shoot Pesto

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 bag GEF pea shoots (any other green works, too!)
- 1/2 cup toasted nuts
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 c. olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS:

Place the pea shoots, nuts, & cheese in the bowl of a food processor.

Process until combined and the mixture looks like a paste.

With the processor running, drizzle the olive oil from the top. Add more oil if the pesto seems too dry.

Taste and season with salt and pepper.

Great as a sandwich spread, cracker dip, or used as you would classic basil pesto—on pasta.



Happy June!



MORE TO KNOW

Flavor Essentials : Herbs, Week 2

Considering that herbs are an essential part of cooking, we're including indispensable herb plants for you to have on hand throughout the growing season. They were started just for you a few months ago. Every-Other-Week members will receive 3 different herbs and weekly Small, Standard and Large Shares will receive 6 different herbs: 3 last week and 3 this week.

They will last for several weeks in the pots we provided, but will do better and last all season long if you plant them into larger pots or in an herb bed in your yard. They should be kept in full or mostly-full sun. Besides a garden they could be kept on a porch, by a sunny window, or on a deck. Keep them well watered and they will prove to be a summer-long culinary delight. Your taste buds will be happy!

This week's potted herbs are

- **Thyme** - A tender **perennial** that is a key ingredient in a bouquet garni. Because the leaves are so small, they often don't require chopping.
- **Onion Chives - Perennial** (comes back year after year) Usually one of the first plants to pop up in spring! An oniony delight. Perfect for soups, stews, salads, and more.
- **Parsley - Biennial** (comes back in second year in order to create a flower and seeds.) "It's the workhorse of the herb world and can go in just about every dish you cook. Parsley's mild, grassy flavor allows the flavors of other ingredients to come through." Epicurious.com

You won't regret giving these tasty little treasures a chance to grow!

[Herb growing basics](#)

An important note about your share and which box to take from

The Small Share is in a 5/9 bushel small **WHITE** box.

The Standard and EOW Share are in **BROWN** boxes.

The Large Share is in a 1-1/9 bushel large **WHITE** box.

In addition, Add-ons like mushrooms and bread are only for those members who have purchased them. They are in clearly labeled boxes.

Please remember to bring your own bags to transfer your produce into. Farm boxes should not leave the site. We reuse them—so after transferring your produce please carefully disassemble the box (it will lay flat). Thank you!

