



BLACKBROOK FARM

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The Value in a CSA Box

Dear Members

This is actually the third box delivered already this month and there's still two to go! That happens occasionally, where there are five weeks in one month. For a month with five deliveries, it's still moving pretty fast for us out here on the farm. July is when all our earlier cultivation (weeding) errors come to life in frightening form. The heat just makes those weeds race for the finish line, except that this finish line involves producing seed in copious amounts that will seriously encumber our next crops on those fields. Despite how fast the weeds are growing this year, we're pretty on top of it thanks to a few investments in better tractor cultivation.

On another note, we wanted to take part of this newsletter to convey our thoughts about CSA box value for our customers. Our foremost goal as CSA farmers is to provide a great value to our customers. Part of this means really high quality produce that is grown organically, carefully selected and washed, and delivered with care. The other part of the value that we are committed to delivering is a very competitive cost. If you add up the (organic) retail value of all of the veggies in all of the boxes we deliver throughout the year, you will get a number somewhere around \$800 to \$900 dollars for a full share. If you consider your cost was \$570, you can figure that we are giving you over a 30 percent discount over what you would have to spend for the same produce in a Coop or natural food store. And this price comparison doesn't even account for how much larger our bunch sizes are than what you find at the store. Check out a bunch of Kale

What's in the Box:

Broccoli and/or Cauliflower- There is never enough cauliflower to go around at once! James says it is the sasquatch of vegetables-very hard to find!

Winterbor/Redbor Kale Bunch- Nice big bunch for all your kale needs! Store in plastic bag in the crisper.

Spring Mix- Full Share #1, Small Share .5 lb. We had a big succession come in, so we thought we would load you up this week! Stores for about a week in the bag it came in. As always, we recommend that you wash it again just in case a bit of grit is in there.

Fresh Sage and Thyme Bunch- We planted our herbs in plastic mulch this year, and we are really happy with how happy they look! Recipe included. Store in water in glass in fridge or in plastic bag or dry by hanging upside down.

Ailsa Craig Fresh Onions- We love these onions! Keep these in the fridge and eat the whole thing, stem and all. They are sweet and tasty!

Tasty Snow Peas- 1 quart Although we ordered Sugar Snap Peas, they turned out to be some sort of snow pea, but they are really sweet! Eat the whole pod, just like a snap pea or steam or stirfry. Store in plastic bag in fridge.

Mixed Snap Beans- Full Share ONLY. We love beans around here as a snack. Sula Dog does, too! Great steamed or chopped up in a stirfry.

Zucchini/Summer Squash- Get used to these tasty and versatile numbers! Recipe Included. Store in a plastic bag in the fridge for longest storage.

Cucumbers- These are looking so great out in the high tunnels! Only expect more in the coming weeks.

Mixed Cherry Tomatoes- Rotating by



Box #5 Full Share (with cherry tomatoes)



Your bearded farmer washing the snap beans!

Crispy Kale Chips

from mapleleafarmcsa.com

6-8 cups fresh kale, stems removed, chopped and dried
 2 TB olive oil
 ½ tsp. kosher salt
 ½ tsp. grated parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place parchment paper on cooking sheet. Spread kale on sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and toss to coat. Place on lowest oven rack and bake for 10 minutes. Flip over kale and bake additional 10 minutes. Chips should be lightly brown and crisp. Remove from oven and immediately sprinkle with salt and cheese.

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or radishes at the store once—our bunches are about twice the size!

Although there are a lot of great CSA farms out there, we want you to know that we spend a lot of time thinking about the value we are providing you. We know that this is not the only reason you choose to spend your food dollars on a CSA share from us and that you are also very keen on supporting sustainable, local, organic food and the farmers who grow it. But nevertheless, it is the power of Community Supported Agriculture that we can attain a direct relationship between customers and farmers and because of this we can reduce costs and therefore deliver a better value to you, our customers—our members.

In a way, we're making this speech as a bit of an apology. This year has been really tough! We'd like to see a little bit more going in boxes than we have been able to provide. The endless torrents of rain this spring have definitely taken their toll on a lot of crops we'd like to have been harvesting over these last few weeks. Even so, we keep a sharp eye on the value of the product going out to members, and we're just an item or two shy of what we'd like to see in your boxes. Overall, we are weathering the transition to summer crops well, but we hope to really load folks up as we move into the summer season and away from this crazily inundated spring season. This is really all just a way of reminding you that we aim to provide you a great value, not just in terms of ethical food but really in terms of your food dollars too. There are a lot more great veggies to come!

On a side note, we were able to send fifty-four lucky members cherry tomatoes this week and we were also able to send thirteen other lucky members our first ever-bearing strawberries this week. We hope that you enjoy them. For those of you who did not get one of those, do not despair. As these items are just coming into season for us, we will be divvying

dropsite. If you did not get this this week, you will get them either next week or the week after. About 7 different varieties of cherry tomato in there for full visual effect!

Portola Strawberries- WASH FIRST! These are in plastic and have a lot of backsplash from all the rain. *Rotating by dropsite. We do not have very many of these this week, but will keep them coming so that everyone is able to get them.*

up the harvest by drop site. So, we will give these items to each member by groups of drop sites, rotating which drop site gets them until everyone gets these items once, and then we start the rotation all over again! Once these crops are in full swing we may be able to give everyone a delivery all at once.

Anyway, we really thank you for choosing to spend your food dollars with our farm. We intend to reward your decision by showing you the bounty Western Wisconsin has to offer!

Bon Appetite!

James, Ayla, and the Little Farmer to Be

Zucchini Chocolate Chip Cookies

From Animal, Vegetable, Miracle by Barbara Kingsolver

(makes about 2 dozen)

1 EGG, BEATEN
 ½ CUP BUTTER, softened
 ½ CUP BROWN SUGAR
 1/3 CUP HONEY
 1 TBSP. VANILLA EXTRACT
Combine in large bowl.
 1 CUP WHITE FLOUR
 1 CUP WHOLE WHEAT FLOUR
 ½ TSP BAKING SODA
 ¼ TSP SALT
 ¼ TSP CINNAMON
 ¼ TSP NUTMEG

Combine in a separate, small bowl and blend into liquid mixture

1 CUP FINELY SHREDDED ZUCCHINI
 12 OZ CHOCOLATE CHIPS
 Stir these into other ingredients, mix well. Drop by spoonful onto greased baking sheet, and flatten with the back of a spoon. Bake at 350°, 10 to 15 minutes.

Brown Buttered Sage Sauce

Rich and savory sage brown butter sauce is a quick way to dress up roasted poultry, pasta, and vegetable dishes. It tastes especially luxurious drizzled over caramelized butternut squash or simple mashed potatoes.

8 tablespoons butter (1 stick)
 1 clove garlic, crushed and chopped
 1/4 cup coarsely chopped sage leaves
 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

Melt the butter in medium sauce pan set over low-medium heat. When the butter begins to get just slightly bubbly, add the chopped garlic clove.

Stir the garlic in the butter for 1 minute. Add the chopped sage to the garlic butter and continue stirring and cooking the mixture for 1 to 2 additional minutes, until the butter has turned very light brown and has a rich, nutty aroma.

Season the sage brown butter sauce with ground black pepper and serve it hot.

This sage browned butter sauce recipe makes 4 to 6 servings.



What's in store for next week?

these are some of the crops we are hoping for next week:

Zucchini/Summer Squash
 Cucumbers
 Cilantro or Parsley
 Beets?
 Cabbage

Cherry Tomatoes- rotating
 Strawberries-rotating
 Swiss Chard
 Broccoli/Cauliflower
 Snap Beans/Snow Peas