



BLACKBROOK FARM

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What's In the Box:

Well, we have officially gone from more daylight than darkness to more darkness this past weekend. The solstice is sort of symbol of winding down for us here at the farm. But since we are growing in our high tunnel over the winter and growing some overwintering crops in our fields, it does not really mean that we are coming to the end of the growing season. There are only three weeks left of the CSA. We will most likely be offering a fall box a couple weeks after our last box for members who are interested. We also urge you to check out our mentors', Foxtail Farm, winter share CSA. Next week we will be including a flyer in the box for you to look through about their program. For further information go to their website at foxtailcsa.com.

Since the CSA is soon coming to an end, we are starting to think about next year. With our new farm and all of the tillable land it offers, we have decided to increase our CSA quite a bit. We would like our farming business to keep us employed all year rather than having to find winter jobs during the off season. In order for this to be possible, we need to increase our size. We have decided to expand our CSA and wholesale accounts. It's a hard business to run, because as soon as you want to grow you need to invest more and the more you invest, the more you need to grow in order to pay for those investments. However, with CSA there is an economy of scale that makes for a more sustainable business if we can get there. Right now we have 36 members, but we could easily be doing 75-100 on our scale. Next year, we would like to shoot for 150 members, and with that increase we will not actually have to increase our acreage that much.

In reality the infrastructure that it takes to run our farm at our current scale has not been maxed out. Therefore, we

Delicata/Kabocha Squash-Full Share received both, Small Shares received the *delicata* only

Salad Mix- This lettuce should be a bit less bitter than the summer stuff.

Swiss Chard- It's back! We take a break during the summer because the chard starts looking pretty wilted and burnt with the heat.

Parsley- italian flat leaf or curly italian varieties.

Leeks- We are just thrilled to have had a successful leek year. We have heard other people say it was a great year for their leeks, too. Maybe it was because of the cold spring.

Sweet Peppers- We keep saying last week on these, but it's got to frost at some point, right? These peppers are a little smaller than the other because we just went through and cleared all the plants out, even if they were a little small.

Kennebec Potatoes- We just picked our first kennebecs this week and we are pleased with their size this year. These are



We cleared out the cukes from the high tunnel



Grrr...

Colcannon traditional Irish potato and cabbage recipe

1 1/2 pounds white potatoes
 4 cups cabbage, finely shredded
 2 leeks, pale-green and white parts only, cut into 1/2-inch dice
 1 cup milk
 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg salt and peppers
 Preheat broiler. Peel and quarter potatoes, and place in a medium saucepan; add enough cold water to cover. Bring to a boil over high heat; reduce heat to a simmer; and cook until tender when pierced with a fork, about 15 minutes. Drain potatoes and return to saucepan. Mash with a potato masher or pass through a ricer; cover pan to keep warm.

Meanwhile, in another saucepan, combine cabbage, leek, milk, 2 tablespoons butter; and nutmeg; season with salt. Cover, and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until cabbage and leek is soft but not browned, about 15 minutes. Stir into potatoes. Spread mixture in an 8-inch square baking dish. Make a small well in the center, and place under the broiler until lightly browned on top, about 5 minutes. Remove from broiler. Place remaining 2 tablespoons butter in well. Serve immediately, spooning melted butter from well onto each serving, if desired

What's in the Box

will not be as fully profitable as we can be until we have scaled up to maximize that infrastructure. For instance our walk-in cooler is 8x8x8, which is large enough to cycle through a lot more produce than we do right now. Also, our cultivation equipment has made it plausible to grow much more of a given crop without expending a great deal more labor. So here again, to max out profitability, we need to put more crops into production. "Economy of scale" does not mean that we have to grow 1,000 acres of spinach in order to be profitable. That is the current and rather misguided definition that America's major farms go by. For us, it simply means that we put the investments we have already made to full use so that we may have some hope of retiring at the age of 90! We also intend to ensure that the economics of what we do do not compromise our underpinning goal of sustainability. I doubt you will ever hear those words out of the corporate operations that dominate our America's food system, for corporations are legally bound to continue to increase returns for shareholders. Hopefully you, our shareholders, are happy with your returns—frankly, there's no more room in the box!

On another note, our egg layers have finally started laying eggs! We raised them from chicks and they are now 5 months old, or about 25 weeks. The eggs are small yet but incredibly good, seeing as how they eat bugs and food scraps all day long. The yolks are orange in color and very flavorful. We are excited- for right now we only have enough chickens for the crew, but we are thinking about adding to our flock in order to sell eggs as an add-on to the CSA next year.

Thanks for being great members!

James and Ayla

a white storage potato, like a russet, that is great for baking. These are our favorite potatoes. We call them Kennys, after our intern.

Onions- Yellow storage.

Green Cabbage- These are huge!! We don't know why! We weighed one it was 6.5 lbs!! We never even irrigated these, because they are in our contour plot. Keep for weeks in the fridge.

Cherriette Radishes- Radish season is here again. We hope you like them. I don't really, but these cherriettes really do hold up the best in the field and come out looking really nice in bunches. Top them and keep in water in the fridge for crispness.

Hakurai Salad Turnips- These are everyone's favorite. They are like a spicy, sweet apple. Slice up and put onto a salad or eat straight up. Our friend eats them with peanut butter and swears by it.

Spicy Kabocha Soup

crumbblog.com

2 medium-sized kabocha squash
3 tbsp olive oil, divided
Salt and pepper
½ cup finely diced onion
2 tsp red Thai curry paste
1 can (14 oz) coconut milk
4 to 6 cups water or chicken broth
2 tsp lemongrass paste
Chopped cilantro (for garnish)

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 375F.

Carefully cut each kabocha in half. Rub the cut surfaces with 1 tbsp oil and sprinkle generously with salt. Place on a baking sheet, skin sides down, and roast in preheated oven for 45-60 minutes or until the squash is very tender. Set aside to cool.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining 2 tbsp olive oil in a large, heavy-bottomed pot over medium-high heat. Add onions and saute for 8-10 minutes, or until soft and golden. Add red curry paste and cook for 1 minute longer; or until fragrant.

Using a spoon, scoop the flesh from the cooled squash into the pot. Stir in coconut milk and 4 cups water (or broth) and lemongrass paste, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 15-20 minutes to let the flavours blend. Remove from heat.

Using an immersion blender or food processor, process the soup until you have a thick, smooth puree (if it looks too thick for your tastes, stir in more water/broth, a half a cup at a time, until you reach your preferred consistency). Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper; garnish with cilantro

Roasted Delicata Squash

2-4 delicata squash, depending on size (~1.5 lbs)

2 tbsp olive oil

salt to taste

Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

cut delicata in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Cut each half into 1/2 inch segments, creating moon-shaped pieces.

Arrange the pieces in a single layer in a metal baking pan and coat in 2 tbsp olive oil. Salt gently.

roast 10 minutes. Using a spatula turn the squash in the

Continue roasting, turning every 7-10 minutes until both sides of the squash pieces are golden brown and the texture is creamy to the teeth all the way through, about 25-30 minutes. Adjust salt.