



# Sweet Top Farm

CSA Newsletter, Week 9

August 15, 2012

GIANT Tomato Horned Worm

## Mother Nature's Sweet Treat

### In your box this week

**CANTALOUPE:** These are the first cantaloupes of the season, and they are ripe and ready to eat. We included two varieties: Minnesota Midget (small and should be **eaten right away** or put in your refrigerator immediately) and PMR Delicious (dubbed by us as "Pretty Much Really Delicious").

**Beets:** Either loose or bunched red beets. Try this week's salad or shred and put in a tomato sauce for a nutritious change.

**Broccoli:** The first of the "fall" broccoli is here. Store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator until you are ready to use it.

**Carrots:** A yummy snack. Try this week's salad or shredding and putting in your salsa.

**Corn:** EAT YOUR CORN TODAY FOR THE BEST FLAVOR; otherwise, it gets starchy and loses its sweetness. Delicious raw or boiled for one minute. Try cutting the raw kernels off the cob and adding them to the salsa recipe.

**Cucumbers:** Try a few peeled slices in your water with sliced lemon, ginger, and mint. Visit the website for additional recipes using cucumbers.

**Green and Wax Beans:** A mix of beans for a change of pace. Cook as you normally would green beans. Toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper and throw on the grill in a basket.

**Red Onions:** A few red onions that are small but have great flavor.

**Yellow Onion:** This is a fresh onion and should be kept in your refrigerator.

**Peppers:** Finally some color! We included two bell or Italian peppers that have some color as well as a **yellow Hungarian Hot Wax (hot pepper)**.

**Yukon Gold Potatoes:** Yippee for Yukons! These are delicious any way you cook them and don't need a lot of help from other ingredients as the flavor is so good. The potato skins are starting to thicken and have a longer storage life, so it is fine to keep them out of refrigeration.

**Summer Squash and Zucchini:** It has been a tough year for our squash and zucchini due to squash bugs and cucumber beetles. This might be some of the last squash that you get in your box this season.

**Slicing, Heirloom and Mixed Cherry Tomatoes:** Here come the tomatoes! See page two for more information about the tomatoes in your box.

**Cilantro:** This is the perfect addition to salsa, fajitas, cucumber salads, and chili. Wrap in a damp paper towel and keep refrigerated in a plastic bag.

Adam stated this weekend that "there is nothing more rewarding than sitting out in the field eating a melon that we grew." As beginning farmers, every plant that produces something as delicious as a cantaloupe or crunchy as a carrot seems like a miracle of nature. Perhaps a few years from now when we are more experienced we won't always treasure every last cherry tomato or red pepper, but for now, we think there is something very special happening in the fields on Sweet Top Farm. We hope that you taste what we are talking about in this week's harvest.

As the day length shortens and the temperatures cool down, work on the farm slows as well. We celebrated transplanting the last of the fall seedlings (head lettuce, bok choy, and scallions) from the greenhouse on Sunday, which leaves just a little more direct seeding of spinach, arugula, and salad greens. On Monday morning, we cultivated with Belle, and what used to take us an hour and a half now takes only 30 minutes because most of the plants can take care of themselves. By no means are we twiddling our thumbs these days, but it is nice to eat dinner at a normal hour and enjoy a little time off the farm (we went to our first St. Paul Saints game on Saturday which was quite entertaining and very fun).

Another critter reaping the benefits of the vegetables is pictured in the upper left hand corner of the newsletter: a Tomato Horned Worm. While crawling through the tomato rows weeding last week, Megan came upon this giant larva of the five-spotted hawk moth (which is the size of a hummingbird). Not a fan of squishing caterpillars in general, she passed the removal off to Adam's mom who thought it was cute. The tomato horned worm avoided death and is now in the loving care of Grace and Cecelia, the two young girls that live on the farm.

**Enjoy this week's harvest! –Megan and Adam**

**REMINDER:** We have additional shares available for **canning tomatoes** that are perfect from making salsa and tomato sauce.

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# Recipes

Find these and other recipes by clicking on the link below:

[CSA Newsletter and Recipes](#)

## **Raw Carrot Beet Salad**

***From your box: carrots, red beet, red onion***

In a mason jar, shake until well mixed: 4 teaspoons lemon juice, 4 teaspoons red wine vinegar, 1 minced clove of garlic, ¼ cup of minced red onion, and ¼ cup olive oil.

Using a cheese grater or the grating attachment on a food processor, shred several carrots. Put in a large bowl and mix with half of the vinaigrette dressing. Shred one or two peeled, raw beets. Gently fold this into the carrots just until mixed—too much and everything will turn pink. Add more dressing if needed, season with salt and pepper, and garnish with chopped walnuts and feta cheese.

## **Pico de Gallo**

***From your box: tomatoes, onion, cilantro, Hungarian Hot Wax pepper***

Ingredients:

2 cups ripe tomatoes diced (about 4 medium tomatoes)

1 clove of garlic, minced

1/4 cup diced onion

1/4 cup chopped cilantro

1 hot pepper, seeded and diced (optional or substitute bell pepper for a mild salsa)

1 lime, juiced

1/2 tablespoon olive oil

Salt to taste

*try adding corn or shredded carrots*

1. Mix all the ingredients and let it sit for half an hour.
2. Serve immediately or store in the refrigerator. Drain juice as needed.

*Adapted from <http://homesicktexan.blogspot.com>*

## **Prosciutto Wrapped Melon** (great hors d'oeuvre)

***From your box: cantaloupe***

Cut melon into chunks. Wrap with strips of prosciutto. Secure with toothpick and serve.

## **Holy Tomato!**

The tomatoes are here! We grow a variety of tomatoes from the typical red slicing tomato to the flavorful, “ugly” heirloom tomatoes. It is best to keep your tomatoes on the countertop shoulder (stem end) side down and to eat the ripest tomatoes first. The heirloom tomatoes—which range in color from purple to yellow and orange striped—tend to have cracks on the shoulders that you can cut off or cut around. While these cracks are unsightly, heirloom tomatoes are renowned for their wonderful flavor and are delicious additions to sandwiches (especially BLTs).

### **What to do with too many tomatoes:**

Here is a fantastic way to freeze tomatoes without too much work involved

(thanks to Turnip Rock Farm for the idea)

“If you find yourself overrun with **tomatoes** that are getting too ripe before you can eat them, try this trick that one of our long time CSA members passed on...Score the tomatoes with an x shape on the bottom. Remove the core by cutting in a cone shape around it. Put the whole tomatoes in a freezer bag. Put them in the freezer. When you want to use them in a soup or stew or sauce later in the season, simply pull the bag out, let them defrost. The skin will peel off easily when you run the tomato under some hot tap water.”