



Stones Throw Farm

CSA Newsletter

Season 8 - Week 18

October 11th and 14th

www.stonethrowfarm.biz

Welcome to Week Eighteen...

We have another delicious week of eating ahead. We're continuing to work in new cool weather vegetables while simultaneously taking advantage of a mild fall that has allowed for extended harvests on things like peppers, eggplant and tomatillos. The mild fall has been a boon to these crops as our cold wet August had slowed and suppressed their initial harvests. Sweet peppers continue to be excellent and the eggplant these past few weeks has quite possibly been the best of the season. This week we also have the first turnips of the season. Purple Top White Globe is a classic turnip that came into popularity in the 1880's. Though the general popularity of turnips has certainly declined in the past century this variety has maintained a near cult like following amongst growers, gardeners and turnip lovers alike. It is known for its tender, sweet, fine-grained flesh. Turnips are great roasted, boiled and mashed, included in gratins, soups, etc. Just this week a review of the newly reopened fine dining Krebs Restaurant in Skaneateles included a dish incorporating thin sliced pan-fried turnips. We also have the first winter squash of the season this week. These are called Delicata and they are very sweet and have dry fine-grained flesh. Simply cut these lengthwise remove seeds, cut into half rounds and roast in the oven until tender.

Thanks,

Brian, Megan, Reed and Willa Luton

This Week's Share:

- Fresh Herb Bunch
- Red Onions
- Potatoes
- Beet Bunches
- Turnip Bunches
- Leeks
- Hot Peppers
- Sweet Peppers
- Carrots, Eggplant, or Green Beans
- Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage
- Lettuce Heads
- Shunkyo Radish or Tomatillos
- Delicata Squash

The Farmers Drivel:

Ohhhh Leeks!! Here is a vegetable that in many ways I have a love hate relationship with. I love to eat leeks. They have a delicious - mild onion runs into garlic Earthy goodness - and they make for all types of wonderful eating. Potatoes and Leek soup is of course incredibly popular and for good reason! We also use leeks extensively in stratas, quiches, and on flatbreads and pizzas. Amidst the many ways one can use a leek it's easy to overlook simply roasting or braising them with a bit of butter and fresh herbs until tender. With so much to like about Leeks in the kitchen my "hate" - which admittedly is probably too strong a word - comes exclusively from having to grow and harvest them. Leeks require a lot of dedication to produce. We seed leeks in the greenhouse in early March and tend them there in until around mid to late April when they get transplanted into the field. Leeks require a fair amount of fertility and

even moisture throughout their growth. More than anything however leeks require a lot of weeding and cultivation over a loooooong season. Leeks start very slowly and don't compete well with weeds. They are typically hand weeded with stirrup hoes and hands multiple times throughout the season. This is in addition to a few passes with tractor cultivation to cover the tire paths, rows, etc. Pests and diseases are mostly managed through our plant positive approach of soil fertility and biocatalysts such as seaweed/fish emulsion applications. Thrips – a small sap-sucking insect – can be a problem during the summer months and those are scouted for and managed with a number of organic spray options as deemed necessary. Harvest doesn't bring any relief from the "burden" of leeks, as they are a fairly slow and time-consuming crop to harvest. Leeks root fairly aggressively so first they are individually lifted with a pitchfork. The roots are then trimmed close to the base of the plant and the bulk of the leaves are removed. The leeks then go to the wash area where they have their lowest leaves stripped off individually. As this leaf pulls down and off the shank or stalk it removes damaged outer surfaces and soil with it. After all the leeks have been stripped we use a blast of water from the hose to remove stubborn soil from the remaining roots before bunching the leeks for CSA pick-up. All said it takes about a day of harvest work just to put leeks on table for the CSA week. In spite of the time and energy that goes into producing, harvesting and washing leeks I can't imagine a fall without them. They are a delicious addition to the late fall share and with some cold hardy varieties we'll continue to have some leeks for our late season program and/or our kitchen into the winter months ahead.
