



PRAIRIE SUN FARM

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Friday Night Horror Show

Walking through the garden last Friday I ventured into the squash row. It was not good. The grasses and weeds had overtaken the separation rows. The vines were sprawling trying to stay above the undergrowth. Then I came across the infestations. Hundreds of squash bugs deep in the overgrown rows having a party, ravaging the squash plants. I attacked with all the vengeance of an Olympic gymnast going for gold. I squished and mashed, pummeled and pounded every squash bug that was in sight. This was not an easy task since I was standing like I was on a Twister board in order to avoid stepping on any of the vines. It was horrifying. How did we let it get so bad? Unfortunately it happens every year. The vines take off, the weeds grow like crazy and there's no hope of cultivation using a hoe or other tool. The only way to recapture the rows is to get in and start pulling weeds by hand while carefully unweaving the vines and putting them back in their rows. We spent hours this past weekend putting the vines back in their place and eliminating, well minimizing, the weed threat. When we were done we at least had rows we could walk up and down again. We exposed more squash bug infestations along the way but overall the plants are healthy and producing lots of squash. We attacked the bugs when we saw them and uncovered lots of cantaloupe, watermelon, acorn, butternut and long island cheese squash. We also found pumpkins we never knew we had. It will be a joy picking all these when they're ready and not having to play Twister to get into the rows. We're still not done with the weeding and the horror show but at least now we can see the big picture. I can't wait to see the ending.

WEEK 8 BOX CONTENTS

- Red Potatoes:** Yum! Fresh picked potatoes. They will keep at room temperature for a few weeks. For longer storage keep at 45-50 degrees and high humidity. Store away from light.
- Rosemary:** A few sprigs to roast with your red potatoes.
- Cherry Tomatoes:** Mix of mostly sungold with some red and purple cherry tomatoes.
- Tomatoes:** Mix of heirloom and round red. Some are ready to eat now and others will continue to ripen on your counter.
- Zucchini and Yellow Summer Squash:** Cut into long slices, drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and put right on the grill.
- Walla Walla Onions:** Famous for their sweetness. Store in the refrigerator.
- Garlic:** The garlic variety is called 'Music' and has huge cloves. It's one of our favorites. Store on your kitchen counter.
- Broccoli:** Fresh broccoli can be eaten raw, chopped into green salads or paired with a dip.
- Green Beans:** Steam or simmer fresh beans in boiling water for 5-10 minutes. Watch for beans to brighten in color and become tender, but not soft or mushy.
- Cauliflower:** White or orange. We tried a new variety called 'Cheddar' that are orange instead of white. However, about half of the heads are white and not orange. Must have been a mixed packet of seed.
- Sweet Peppers:** Bell peppers or red 'Carmen' peppers. Carmen peppers look like big chili peppers but are sweet and delicious.
- Green Top Carrots:** Slice, grate, chop or juice. Eat raw or cooked.

Farm News

Besides the horror of the squash bugs, there is an incredible amount of bug diversity in the field. There are good bugs, bad bugs, scary bugs, gentle bugs and every color imaginable. It's amazing what you see when you get your eyes down to dirt level and dive into the sea of plants that take over the garden this time of year. The heat and moisture continue to allow the plants to do their best. The field is different every year and plants produce at different times but the staples of the field are coming into abundance: potatoes, carrots, garlic, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers, summer squash, peppers, green beans and so much more. The sweet corn looks fantastic, so much better than last year. We've harvested a lot of rows out of the early parts of the garden so we will till and replant some of those. We'll start working up the cover crop areas in preparation for the garden next year. There are a lot of things to do at the farm each day. Luckily we've had good weather for picking weeds and kid help picking and cleaning all the vegetables. Enjoy!

From the Kitchen

Sautéed Zucchini/Summer Squash And Tomatoes

Ingredients

2 zucchini or yellow summer squash or a mix, halved lengthwise, then sliced into half-moons
2 medium tomatoes, large dice
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon butter
1 clove of garlic diced
3 tablespoons parmesan cheese, grated
1/2 teaspoon basil
1/2 teaspoon pepper

Directions

In large skillet, saute zucchini, garlic and tomatoes in hot oil and butter for 5 minutes.

Add parmesan basil, and pepper.

Stir to coat well. Serve hot.