

In the basket . . .

We have one new item to share this week, and a wide variety of other vegetables you've seen before.

Spaghetti squash – new this week!

Spaghetti squash has the flavor of a summer squash but is a winter squash. It has a yellow-orange flesh.

Winter squash are notoriously hard to cut. You're best bet is probably a cleaver and a mallet or a big chef's knife.

You can bake these squash whole or cut. To bake, wash the skin. For smaller squash, bake them whole at 425 degrees for 45 minutes to an hour. For larger squash, cut them up and remove the seeds. Either wrap them in foil or place them cut side on an oiled baking sheet for 1 hour at 350 degrees.

To roast the seeds, bake on cookie sheets at 350 degrees for about 20 minutes.

Store in a cool, dark place. They will keep for up to 4 months. You can't freeze raw winter squash, but you can freeze the cooked puree. Peel and cube. Place cubes in a large pot with about 1 cup of water (you don't have to completely cover the squash). Cover and cook over medium heat until soft, about 20 or 30 minutes. Drain and puree in a blender or food processor. Then place in freezer-safe container.

You'll find lots of other things in your basket as well, including ...

Eggplant

There is a variety of Asian, white, and purple eggplant this week.

Green Beans (organic)

You'll find greasy beans, half runners, or pole beans in your basket. All of these varieties have strings and will be very tasty if you give them plenty of cooking time.

Zucchini or Yellow Squash

Zucchini is one of nature's most prolific summer vegetables. This week, we've included a soup recipe to try or grate some, drain the water, and freeze.

Sweet Colorful Bell Peppers (organic)

Here's a suggestion for an easy and fast weeknight meal. Sauté some kielbasa or some Elmwood Stock Farm brats or Italian sausage. After a few minutes, add

Swap Box – In the swap box this week, we have both Serrano and Jalapeno **hot peppers**. Also remember you can swap out anything for something else another member put in.

some sliced bell peppers and onions. The bell peppers and onions are sweet and refreshing in this dish.

Red Celery (organic)

This variety of celery tends to be more leaves than stalk. The leaves actually have more nutrients, including vitamin C, calcium, and potassium, than the stalks, so they're the healthiest part of the plant.

You can use the raw leaves in salads, or you can add the leaves to soups, stews, casseroles, and stir-fry. One way you can use them in soups, for example, is to pulverize them in a blender and add salt. Then you can use them as a seasoning.

Use the leaves as quickly as you can, preferably within a day or two, because they don't store well.

Tomatoes (organic)

There is a reduced amount of red and colored tomatoes to choose from this week. The cool temperatures for the past week along with cloudy days have slowed the ripening and growth of many summer crops. These October-like days in September are a surprise!

Green Tomatoes

We haven't put these in the baskets in a little while, but they are such a fabulous summer treat that we thought they'd be a great addition to the basket this week. If you are interested, Kay has a recipe for canning them so that you can enjoy them over the winter for pan-frying. Just phone or email for the recipe.

Sweet Basil (organic)

Use the basil in the soup recipe below or make some pesto and freeze it for the winter.

Brussels sprouts (organic) – regular and robust baskets only

We've included a tasty recipe from the experts at the Food Network.

Okra (organic) – regular and robust baskets

We gave you a recipe for fried okra a couple of weeks ago. That's the traditional Southern way to fix it. But you can sauté okra as well.

Recipes to enjoy . . .

Spaghetti Squash Gratin with Chanterelles

This recipe comes from Local Flavors: Cooking and Eating from America's Farmers' Markets.

1 large spaghetti squash
1-pound chanterelle mushrooms
5 tbsp unsalted butter
sea salt
freshly ground pepper
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 cup half-and-half
freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Lightly butter a shallow baking dish and preheat the oven to 375°. Poke a few holes in the squash and bake until brown and soft, about 1½ hours.

Meanwhile, clean the chanterelles with a brush. Slice or dice them into small pieces. Melt half the butter in a skillet. When foamy, add the mushrooms and cook over medium heat until tender, 10 or 15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Add the garlic and half-and-half. Simmer gently until the cream and mushroom juices are reduced by about a third, about 10 minutes.

When the squash is done, cut it in two and scoop out the seeds. Pull away the flesh with a fork, heaping it into spaghetti-like strands. Toss with the remaining butter and season with salt and pepper.

Spread the squash in the baking dish, spoon the mushrooms and cream over it, and cover lightly with the Parmesan. Return to the oven until heated through and the top is crisped and brown in places, about 15 to 20 minutes.

Zucchini and Basil Soup

CSA member, Maggie M, shared this recipe.

6 slender zucchini, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces
1 medium onion, cut into 1-inch pieces
6 cups chicken stock
½ tsp salt, or to taste
1/8 tsp pepper, or to taste
½ bunch basil, stems removed

In a large saucepan, combine the first five ingredients. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, and partially cover. Simmer for 20 minutes, or until the vegetables are very tender.

Add the basil and, with a ladle, press them into the liquid. Let the soup sit for 10 minutes.

In a blender, puree the soup in batches. Taste for seasoning and add more salt and pepper if desired. Reheat, stirring often, just until the soup is bubbling at the edges. Ladle into bowls.

Brussels Spouts with Bacon

This tasty, easy dish comes from the Food Network. You might reduce the amounts since your basket won't have 3 pounds of sprouts this week.

3 pounds medium Brussels sprouts
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
8 thick slices bacon (about 8 ounces), cut crosswise into 1/2-inch strips
2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more as needed
Freshly ground black pepper

Bring a large pot of water to a boil and salt it generously. Trim the bottom end of the Brussels sprouts, leaving the core intact, and pull off the outer dark leaves. Halve through the core. Add the Brussels sprouts and cook, uncovered, until tender, about 6 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold running water. (This can be done a day ahead.)

Meanwhile, put the oil and bacon in a very large skillet or stewpot, and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the bacon is crispy. Remove the bacon with a slotted spoon and set aside. Increase the heat to medium-high, add the Brussels sprouts and cook, stirring occasionally, until they brown and the edges get crisp, about 10 minutes. Stir in the vinegar, salt, pepper, and bacon. Serve warm.

News from the farm . . .

The much-needed rains finally arrived over the past 10 days. Although it affects several things in early September, we can't complain since we were getting very, very dry. Wet soil means that potatoes were not dug this week. In addition, tomatoes are not ripening on schedule and growth on squashes and peppers has slowed. Rain does mean that lettuces are establishing nicely and we can get the fall crops sprouted and up quickly.

Last week, we mentioned that some had expressed interest in a **fall and winter season mini-CSA and a meat CSA**. We are trying to gauge the amount of interest, so please e-mail or call the farm **859-621-0755** and let us know if you're interested in either a **fall and winter mini-CSA**, which would include winter vegetables such as braising greens, root crops, cole crops and lettuces or a **meat CSA**, which would include organic beef, chicken and eggs. We'll let you know more to come on this later!