


THE PRODUCE BOX

One of the very nicest things about life is the way we must regularly stop whatever it is we are doing and devote our attention to eating. ~Luciano Pavarotti and William Wright, Pavarotti, My Own Story

Aug 24 &25, 2011		Find us on facebook! 		Volume 4: Issue 20	
BOX A* \$22	BOX B* \$22	BOX C* \$25	BOX O* \$26	BOX F* \$23	BUDDY BOX \$17
<i>Lots of fruit</i>	<i>Lots of squash and zucchini</i>	<i>Larger shares</i>	<i>Organic or pesticide free</i>	<i>Asian Pears!!</i>	<i>A great gift!</i>
Scuppermong Grapes	Heirloom Tomatoes (2 lbs)	Mini Eggplant Variety	Cucumbers	Watermelon	Watermelon
Field Tomatoes	Yellow Squash 1.5 lb	Watermelon	Grape Tomatoes (pesticide free)	2 sprite melons	Cucumbers (2)
Watermelon	Zucchini 1.5 lb	1 qt Scuppermong Grapes	Scuppermong/Muscadine grapes	2 qts muscadine grapes	Grape tomatoes
Large Eggplant	Hot pepper mix	Roma Tomatoes	Yellow Squash/zucchini mix	2 quarts peaches	Yellow squash/zucchini
1 quart Peaches	Cucumbers (2)	Cucumbers (3)	Bell Peppers (conventional)	1 lb Asian pears	Peaches
Cucumber (3)	Sprite Melon	Sweet Pepper Mix	Rosegold Potatoes or Yukon gold		
Bell Pepper Mix (3)	Watermelon	Yellow Squash/Zucchini Mix			
*Box contents listed		as Most Persishable	to Least Perishable		

New UPCOMING EVENTS for TPB members and guests!

We've got a good calendar of events coming up over the next two months and a few more in the works other than these.... The weather should be cooling off, kids are back in school and schedules are settling down from the summer vacations, etc. Here's an idea of what's in store:

Farm Visit to Chapel Hill Creamery: Sunday, October 2nd. This is always a big hit with kids AND adults. Last year we had over 150 members visit the farm to see the cows, oxen, taste the delicious cheeses and see the milking/cheese making operation firsthand. Portia and Flo have made some changes to the farm and have other animals to see as well, including pigs, chickens, roosters and a couple of yard dogs for good measure. Come spend the afternoon on the farm and bring a picnic lunch with you!

Farm Dinner at Relish Café: Monday, August 29th. Seatings at 5,6,7,8pm. The restaurant has a delicious menu planned, four courses, with local wine tastings and some new vendors with NC products to try out as well. We have about ½ of the reservations filled as of last night, but will open up RSVP's again on Friday with the new menu. Hope to see you there!

Brewery tour at Foothills Brewery Co. in Winston Salem: Wednesday, September 7th, 7pm. Free for TPB members and guests. This should be a really fun event! Appetizers prepared by the chef using our farm-partners' produce, and a tour of the facility with tastings included. A great opportunity to meet other members in the W/S area. I'll be there as well and can't wait to see you!

Farm Dinners in Cary, Wilmington and Charlotte: We are working on these now and should have info in the next newsletter. Also working on a restaurant in Downtown Raleigh to set up a dinner.

Asian Pears! Can you guess what else they are called? Did you guess apple pears? This is not a cross between the apple and pear, only a reference to the similar appearance. These pears differ from the traditional pear we are familiar with in the fact they remain firm and are crisp and juicy when ripe. Becky Enzor, our Asian Pear grower, says they are ready to eat...they are firm when ripe so don't mistake that for needing to ripen more. If you are not going to eat them right away be sure to keep them refrigerated and they will last several weeks.

Asian Pears are most commonly eaten raw and like an apple with brown with exposed to the air. TIP: Slow browning with a 50%-50% water & lemon juice solution. They are great added to salads and pair well with other fruits like mangos and papaya. How about pairing them with veggies like cucumbers? They are low-fat, sodium-free, and cholesterol-free and a great source of fiber and vitamin C.

MIDSEASON SURVEY OPEN NOW!! Don't forget to fill out our mid-season "temperature check" this week. We do this every year to get some new ideas from you guys and make sure we're on track with what you want for the rest of the season. I have a couple of interesting ideas and need your input...so take a moment to click on the link in your Saturday email I sent out and thanks in advance.

Everyone who fills out the survey is in the drawing for **ONE MONTH of free produce**, by the way, just in case you missed the contest at MARBLES last week.

THE PRODUCE BOX

Member-able Moments at Marbles Museum

Did you come on out to Marbles these past two Sundays? Then you know what a great time the many, many **PRODUCE BOX** families who took advantage of our Member Event experienced. Corn shucking, **BOX** building, veggie sculptures and tasting tables were just some of the activities sponsored by **THE PRODUCE BOX**. Missed it? Well, hang on—because we plan to do it again next season!

And a really **HUGE THANK YOU** to all who generously donated to the Backpack Buddies drive.



I won a month of FREE **PRODUCE BOXES!**



I won a month of FREE **PRODUCE BOXES!**



We won a month of FREE **PRODUCE BOXES!**



THE PRODUCE BOX

SPECIALTY ITEMS	EXTRA PRODUCE AVAILABLE
Sweet and Spicy Dill Pickles: \$4.50	Muscadine Grapes (1 quart): \$4.00
Blueberry Salsa: \$4.50	Grape Tomatoes: \$2.50 (GREAT PRICE!)
OBerry Center Sweet and Spicy peanuts: \$2.00	Shelled Field Peas (1 pint): \$4.00
OBerry Center Carolina Praline Pecans: \$3.50	Asian Pears (2lbs: approx 6 pears) \$8.00
Fireside Barbeque Sauce: \$6.50	
	THE PRODUCE BOX Gift Certificates: \$25.00 each
	Donation for low income families:\$1.00

AN "OLD FASHIONED" FARM WITH AWARD-WINNING PRODUCE...

Meet our farm partners, Bill and Barbara Walker

By Kristin Harper

The Walker farm is located in the northeast part of Randolph County, near the Piedmont area and Bill Walker grows a great variety of produce there. He is a strong seller at the Piedmont-area Farmer's Market and the Raleigh Farmer's Market. Peppers are his forte, as his State Fair awards would show you, but he grows a little bit of everything. "I especially like the weird, off-the-wall stuff just because I like to see it growing in my fields," Bill says. He is the farmer we have to thank for the *patty pan* and *bush baby squash* in addition to those *white eggplants* and *purple peppers*!

Bill has been in the business since birth, growing up farming with his father. He and his wife, Barbara, have three grown sons. Barbara grows herbs, flowers and raises some chickens on the farm and she is the one Bill credits with their success at the Piedmont Farmer's Market.

We asked Bill to give our members an idea of just what a day in the life of a hard-working North Carolina farmer might look like. "The days are long and the nights are short", he told us. (We think you'll agree!)

- 1 a.m. This is the WAKE UP CALL for Bill to head out on the drive to Raleigh to "run the farmer's line." This is where Bill sells their produce to various wholesalers. He also sets up his retail space at the Farmer's Market in Raleigh.
- 10 a.m. Home again... forced into a "small siesta" for an hour or so by a caring wife!
- 11:30 a.m. Out to check the guys in the field picking tomatoes and squash
- Then 'til dinner- "What's next and worst on my list!" That could be anything from checking crops badly in need of rain, to fertilizing, to digging out from under a load of paperwork that awaits Bill back at the house.

This is his schedule every Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Day off on Saturday? Heck no! He's taking orders and making deliveries, getting ready to start the whole thing over the next week.

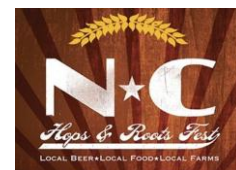
Bill Walker calls his farm "nothin' fancy" and an "old fashioned farm without any high-tech gadgets". But all we know is that with twelve different kinds- and colors!- of delicious peppers, plus ten different kinds of eggplant, assorted squash, and heirloom tomatoes – Bill is our kind of grower! We are looking forward to the roast-ear corn he planted just for us for our fall season, as well as his beans, peas, fall/winter squash and much more, from the Walkers this year.

U.S. retail prices for fresh fruits and vegetables during July rose by the most in nearly three years, fueling accelerating food inflation that's pushing grocery bills higher. That's the largest year-over-year increase for that category since a 7% rise in October 2008.

Rising produce prices partly reflect cold weather over the winter and spring that delayed harvests and curbed supplies of items such as beans, carrots and tomatoes, as well as MUCH higher than normal temperatures this summer. Compared to July 2010, prices for food at home rose 5.4%, the largest year-over-year increase since a 5.7% jump in January 2009.

SAVE THE DATE!

**Come on out
Saturday, September 3
and celebrate the**



NC Hops & Roots Festival!

The focus is on NC local and sustainable.

**Local Beer-Local Food-Local Farms
For more info, visit:**

<http://www.nchopsandrootsfest.com>

Charlotte Area Manager Melanie Underwood knows a picture is truly worth a thousand words. This eggplant she found in her **PRODUCE BOX** this week really says it all:



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STORAGE & USAGE *Remember, all TPB produce is very ripe. If you see a * eat this first!*

Great tip! Line crisper drawers with paper towels or newspaper to absorb excess moisture and keep veggies and fruits fresher longer!

Grapes-Avoid washing grapes before storing them. Check through bunches for spoiled grapes and remove them. Put the grapes in a plastic bag in your refrigerator. Store them for no longer than a week. Wash the grapes under cold water just before serving.

***Peaches**- Store peaches on the counter at room temperature until they are the ripeness you prefer. When ripe, peaches should be stored in the crisper bin of your refrigerator and will keep for up to five days. Easy freezing method: When freezing, peaches should be ripe and soft but not mushy. Wash peaches thoroughly in cold water (ice water is preferable for keeping the fruit firm). Peel and slice a small amount at a time, mixing about 1 teaspoon ascorbic acid (available at grocery and drug stores - is not harmful and will not affect the taste of the fruit) with 1 cup sugar, then sprinkle over sliced peaches. Pack in air tight containers or jars (suitable for freezing), and fill to 3/4 full, then freeze.

Hot & Sweet Pepper- Store peppers for short-term use by refrigerating them in the produce drawer of your refrigerator. Hot peppers can be frozen whole.

Watermelon or Sprite Melon- Ripe melons should be stored in the refrigerator. Once the melon has been sliced or cut into chunks, it should be kept in a sealable container in the refrigerator to keep it from drying out.

***Heirloom, Field & Cherry Tomatoes**- Unless you're planning to store your tomatoes for over a week, a windowsill, counter-top or bowl works fine. If you know you won't use them in the next few days, then lower temperatures (a cool entryway, the refrigerator) will help preserve the fruit. Contrary to our common practice in the US, storing in a refrigerator is not otherwise recommended, as the cooler temperatures can reduce flavor and cause mushiness. Your fresh-picked tomatoes will last longer on the kitchen counter than store-bought ones, which are probably a few days old when you get them.

Cucumbers- Store in a flat layer in the back of the fridge, on the bottom shelf.

Yellow Squash & Zucchini- To store summer squash, place unwashed in plastic bags in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Wash the squash just before preparation. As with most vegetables, water droplets promote decay during storage. The storage life of summer squash is brief, so use within two to three days.