



What's in your box this week:

Box A: 10-12 peaches, 1 personal seedless watermelon ,6-8 ears of corn ,1 pint blueberries, Tomatoes (could be any kind grape, cherry, roma, regular...) 2 sprite melons

Box B: 6-8 peaches, 6 ears of corn , spaghetti squash, eggplant , 2 bell peppers, blueberries, personal seedless watermelon ,

Box C: Squash and/or zukes Cucumbers , 8 ears of corn , 1 canary melon, 1 seedless personal watermelon , Blueberries, Red Potatoes 2 bell peppers,



When I visited the farm yesterday, Marshall said some of you who get Box A will have a new melon instead of the Sprite: Galia's. They are a cross between a cantaloupe and a honeydew. So they stay green inside, even though they are ripe. Here's the one I tasted yesterday with a pocketknife. 😊 Delicious!



I also took a drive to see Alan Bundy's peach orchards yesterday (also has 45 acres of pecan trees...look for those in the fall). He has TWENTY different varieties of peaches, all coming off at different times of the season....from April until September. Starting with cling peaches, then moving to freestone. And mid-season, his favorite white peach is coming: a . He's been working with peaches since 2004 and is a great example of a small farmer doing everything he can to create a livelihood from the land. Growing peaches, harvesting pecans, making candy from the extra nuts, making preserves from the peaches, and even forming a co-op of growers so that they can supply larger buyers when needed.



Bushels and Bushels of RIPE TOMATOES!!

Here's Ron Lee, Marshall's brother, standing in front of many bushels of red, ripe tomatoes. So...why are we getting some less-ripe ones in the boxes? It's on purpose. We've had both sets of comments about tomatoes: either members can't eat them fast enough and they go bad, or they aren't ripe enough.

As they are packing and the boxes coming down the "rolling line", Marshall's wife, Ellen, has three sets of tomatoes, one really ripe, one less ripe, one "breaking" in between ripe and not. She puts a little of each in your box, so that you can enjoy a couple now, and let the others ripen.

So how does Marshall know when things are ripe? I'm always curious about that and thought you might be too:

CORN: when the tassel turns brown, it's ready to pick. If the kernels don't develop, it's due to the heat a week and a half ago.

Sprite Melon: when it gets a yellow spot or has small cracks in the skin

Watermelon: when the vine curls closest to the fruit

Cantaloupe: when the fruit can be pulled easily from the stem

Food is Alive and it should Die”

This quote, made by Michael Pollan, says a lot. How much food do we consume that doesn't die? Twinkies, for example, could last years before they start going bad. Being conscious about the things we put into our bodies is a healthy practice. Do we need to be consuming these never dying "food" items? We are made to digest real whole foods packed with nutrients and vitamins, not chemicalized food replicas. Interestingly enough, the grocery store is set up in a certain way where most of the long-lasting foods are found in the middle, while the fresh foods such as eggs, milk, meats, and produce are strategically placed on the outskirts of the store. In every grocery store I've been to, the most frequently purchased items, milk and eggs, are always at the back of the store, causing you to walk down the aisles and see your favorite junk foods... in the hopes that you reach out and grab that bag of chips on your way to the milk. My challenge for each of you is to spend a minimal amount of time down the aisles and instead stay as close to the outskirts as you can. You will notice a big difference in the items in your cart!

One Curious Eater,

Kate Hosey (The Produce Box Intern)



What in the world is a SPAGHETTI SQUASH????

If you picked Box B this week, you're getting my FAVORITE vegetable!

Averaging from 4 to 8 pounds, the cylinder shaped spaghetti squash is generally available year-round with a peak season from early fall through winter. A true spaghetti squash is pale ivory to pale yellow in color, it has a mild flavor that is easily enhanced by the food served with or on it. A dieter's dream, a four-ounce serving of spaghetti squash has only 37 calories.

Spaghetti Squash can be stored at room temperature for about a month. After cutting, wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate up to 2 days. Spaghetti squash also freezes well. Pack cooked squash into freezer bags, seal, label and freeze. Partially thaw before re-using, then steam until tender but still firm, about 5 minutes.

Bake It -- Pierce the whole shell several times with a large fork or skewer and place in baking dish. Cook squash in preheated 375°F oven approximately 1 hour or until flesh is tender. **Boil It** -- Heat a pot of water large enough to hold the whole squash. When the water is boiling, drop in the squash and cook for 20 to 30 minutes, depending on its size. When a fork goes easily into the flesh, the squash is done.

Microwave It -- Cut squash in half lengthwise; remove seeds. Place squash cut sides up in a microwave dish with 1/4 cup water. Cover with plastic wrap and cook on high for 10 to 12 minutes, depending on size of squash. Add more cooking time if necessary. Let stand covered, for 5 minutes. With fork "comb" out the strands.

Once the squash is cooked, let it cool for 10 to 20 minutes so it will be easier to handle, before cutting in half (if it wasn't already) and removing the seeds. Pull a fork lengthwise through the flesh to separate it into long strands. (See photos.) You can do these steps ahead of time, then prepare spaghetti squash recipes whenever the mood strikes.

Peaches and Peppers last week in Box A: We had a miscommunication "hiccup" with the farm last week on the quantity of bell peppers in the box. Marshall had originally wanted to put jalapeno's in and I asked for bell pepper(s), not just one. Peaches seemed low in quantity to some members as well. They WERE bigger than previous weeks, but I should have said "two quart basket", not two quarts in the menu. Sorry for the confusion and we're making sure this week's A looks extra good.



WHAT I DID WITH MY BOX THIS WEEK

Wow! What creative members we have at The Produce Box! It was not an easy decision choosing which box was the winner. There were over 20 great submissions for the contest. In the end, we tried to pick something creative, using as much as possible in some "not as common" ways we usually use our box contents. Sure wish this would have been a "taste test"!!

1st

Our winner used TWO boxes along with extra zucchini and eggplant!

Congratulations to Dorie Crocco!

We receive two boxes each week so it was challenging trying to use everything by Monday evening...but we did it!! I received extra zucchini and eggplant also. The items I made:

1. I cut the 2 personal watermelons and the 2 sprite melons into large bite size pieces, mixed them together and ate as a snack.
2. I made what the Italians call "eggplant timbale". It is made in a spring form pan. The eggplant is grilled and then lines the bottom and sides of the pan. It was mixed with sausage, ground turkey, zucchini, onions, garlic (from a previous box), parmesan cheese and marinara sauce. The eggplant is folded over and baked. My husband doesn't "like" eggplant and had 3 helpings. My 17 year old said "ewww" when she saw it and had 2 helpings. It was different looking but delicious.
3. My daughter and husband were eating the peaches so fast when they came on Thursday I had to ask them to stop so I would have enough for my cobbler.
4. I made a recipe from a previous week.. the peach cobbler. There were a few slices from the 2 containers of peaches that we received and my husband and I split them while the cobbler cooked.
5. I cooked the zucchini I had left whole and then scraped out the insides and cooked it with a couple peeled and diced eggplants, onions, more garlic from a previous week, bell peppers and a couple peeled tomatoes. I mixed some cubed mozzarella and stuffed the hollow zucchini.
6. I made cucumber and tomato salad mixed with balsamic vinaigrette and topped with feta cheese.
7. I made "creamed" corn with six of the ears of corn we and with the other six I am baking "skillet corn bread pudding" from one of the recipes we received in our news letter.
8. Last but not least...we had BLT for lunch one day using more of the tomatoes and the 3 seeded bread from a previous week.

2nd

Second Place used everything in 2 days!

Congratulations to James Michael & Jennifer Perkins!

My boyfriend (James Michael) signed up for the Produce Box in addition to having a garden. I was worried I wouldn't be able to use it all! We've just started, but I blew right through everything!

Here's our menu from last week's Box B, with eggplants, corn, peppers, grape tomatoes, sprite melon, new potatoes, green tomato. Sprite melon didn't make it a day! Just cut up and it disappeared.

Awesome Snack: Baba Ganoush--Halved and grilled all eggplants. Removed skin and put in food processor with 4 cloves of garlic, chopped, a handful of chopped cilantro and one chopped cayenne. Added salt, cracked pepper, ½ cup of tahini, a tsp. of cumin, and then drizzled in olive oil while food processor was blending until consistency was creamy.

Night 1: Salad and Quiche! Roasted about 10 grape tomatoes in the oven until the skins burst. Whisked tomatoes together with Dijon mustard, red wine vinegar and olive oil. Folded in romaine lettuce. Chopped two potatoes and an onion, sautéed until soft, put in pre-baked pie crust with a little shredded cheese, whisked together three eggs and 1 cup of heavy cream, salt and pepper, poured over potatoes and onions, baked for 30 min at 350 degrees.

Night 2: Chicken Kabobs and corn. Cubed chicken and skewered with green and white peppers, par boiled potatoes, squash and onion. Sprinkled with ginger, grilled and brushed with homemade BBQ sauce (warm in sauce pan ketchup, a little brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce and 2 tsp veg oil). Served with roasted corn and sliced tomato.

Angela Wiseman wrote:

For this week, we kept it simple with corn, watermelon, and Sprite melon. We sliced the watermelon and Sprite melon and kept it out on a tray. Kids and adults alike kept grabbing and eating in passing, before meals, after playing outside! For the corn, we steamed it and slathered it with butter.

We had tons of peaches because we bought peaches from a local farmer before getting the box.

Blueberry-Peach Cobbler Recipe: The top is like a blueberry muffin and the bottom is where all the peaches are. Yummy! When my 6 year old tried this cobbler, he said, "Mommy, when I'm feeling sad, just make me this. It makes everything seem wonderful."

Waffles with Peach Sauce for Sunday morning for breakfast. These pancakes made the whole house smell so good!

Roasted Potatoes: I roasted the potatoes with ranch dressing mix and a little bit of olive oil. This was a simple, quick, and kid-friendly recipe. When I took them out of the oven, my kids said, "Mommy, I smell French fries!" I thought to myself, "Oh, so much healthier than French fries!" The left-over potatoes can be used in breakfast tacos (sauté them in a pan) with some cheddar cheese and salsa on top. Wrap in a tortilla and it's a great breakfast!!!

Gazpacho: The secret to good gazpacho is to make the soup at least 12 hours in advance and give it time. I made this the night before my guests came for lunch. I served it in coffee cups with croutons over the top. It was refreshing and went well with a chicken-dill salad that I served over a bed of lettuce.

Magee Jaski received box A for the week:

Our peaches do not make it past the front porch. The first thing my 3 boys and I do when the box comes is sit on the front porch and look through it. If there are peaches...they never even make it inside we eat our peaches while we look through the box.

I took 2 ears of corn and cooked them and cut the kernels off chopped up the bell pepper and a tomato and made a cowboy steak salad. The rest of the corn and tomatoes went to the 4th cookout, tomatoes went on our burgers and corn as one side. The other side I took my sprite melon, watermelon and a pint of blueberries from the previous week and made a red/white/and blue fruit salad and I loved the taste of the sprite melon.

I didn't use all my watermelon so I take it and cut it in little wedges and freeze them individually wrapped in plastic wrap. When the boys want a popsicle from playing in the heat I pull out one of the frozen watermelon and they love it.

Mike Munger & Donna Gingerella had a "Box C" and a dinner party! Our menu was:

1. Boiled up the corn with garlic flavored butter.
2. Cooked the eggplant with curry, turmeric, ginger, a jalapenos, and sesame oil for a spicy eggplant curry.
3. Orange cherry tomatoes went into a salad, with another box of red cherry tomatoes. Split all the cherry tomatoes with a knife. Add 1/2 cup of finely chopped onion, 1/2 cup of chopped cukes, 1 chopped green pepper, & 1/2 cup of small cubed Emmentaler cheese. Top with a dressing of 1/2 cup white sweet balsamic vinegar, 1/4 cup EVOO, 1 t "Herbs de Provence", 1 t sea salt, & chopped fresh basil that we are still harvesting from those little plants we got from The Produce Box in early June.
4. Jalapeno poppers: cut chilies in half, place cut side down (rounded side up) on foil on a baking pan. Drizzle with EVOO, sprinkle with a little Adobo powder. Broil for 5 minutes, or until skins of chilies are blistered and browning. Remove from broiler and turn the chilies over. Add a chunk of each yellow cheddar and white gouda, to the cavity of each chili. It will melt and spread out, sprinkle again with Adobo powder. Return to broiler until cheese is melted and starting to brown. Remove from broiler and let "rest" for five minutes. Sprinkle chopped cilantro over poppers and serve.
5. Made a whole wheat honey-zucchini bread, with the remaining zucchini.
6. Used watermelon and blueberries, along with fresh peaches from farm stand near our house, to make a fruit salad for dessert.

Heidi Sico submitted:

The arrival of Wednesday's box meant we were having Squash and Zucchini Burritos. I used 2 of the yellow squashes, the 2 zucchinis and one of the green peppers to make this meal. Meanwhile my girls enjoyed snacking on the sprite melon over the course of Wednesday and Thursday.

Thursday's dinner used 3 of the ears of corn for corn on the cob and I made herb roasted potatoes with 1/3 of the red potatoes to accompany an oven roasted pork tenderloin. Friday's cheeseburgers were topped with one of the juicy red tomatoes.

Sunday I made Sour Cream Bacon Potato Salad with another 1/3 of the red potatoes and the last of the tomatoes as well as grilled corn on the cob with the remaining ears of corn. Monday's menu will use the last of my Produce Box contents. We will be feasting on Stuffed Rice and Sausage Acorn Squash which will use the remaining squash and bell pepper. Accompanying the acorn squash will be Grilled Garlic Red Potatoes.

From Lora Turner:

Corn, tomatoes & green bell pepper - Hot Corn Salad

Potatoes - Sliced thin, drizzled with olive oil & kosher salt, then grilled in foil packet

Blueberries - Breakfast smoothies

Green bell pepper & Jalapeno pepper - Green pepper relish

Acorn squash - Topped with maple syrup, kosher salt, pepper & butter then grilled

Sprite melon - Wrapped slices in prosciutto and eaten with Parmigiano Reggiano cubes

Great ideas everyone! We hope this inspires you to find an adventure in your box today!