



What's in your Box this week:

Box A: peaches 14-20, 2-lb new potatoes, 2-lb tomatoes (could be a variety), 1 jar of pickled squash AND a surprise striped (Korean) melon!

Box B: grape or cherry tomatoes, new potatoes, watermelon, sprite melon, spaghetti squash, cucumbers or squash, 2 striped (Korean) melon, field peas or sweet pepper

Box C: grape or cherry tomatoes, new potatoes, 2 butternut squash, watermelon, sprite melon, peaches, 2 striped (Korean) melons, heirloom or yellow tomatoes

**MID SEASON SURVEY SUMMARY
PART ONE**

Thanks so much to all of you who took a few minutes to answer the questions on our mid season survey. I really wanted to get a "big picture" of what your thoughts were on quality, (corn and peaches, specifically) and any BIG changes we need to make immediately.

Well, we got a FANTASTIC response from over TWELVE HUNDRED MEMBERS!! WOW! So here are some of the results:

More than 85% of you said either that your boxes have been fine, or your produce had blemishes small enough that you didn't need a replacement. The rest of you asked and received one either the next day or with your next box.

The same ratios held true for peaches and corn, specifically. Most were fine, and those that weren't, we replaced. So that's good. One member commented, "We had one ear with a worm, we just picked it out and cut that end off. It was no problem. All other corn has been excellent. We prefer produce not to be sprayed and we'd much rather deal with the small occasional problem than have perfect produce covered with chemicals." And many others echoed that sentiment.

Most members do NOT feel they need the "every other week skip" option, but some WOULD like it (about 25%)...so we'll weigh that against other website suggestions and prioritize it based on interest.

Interestingly, about 45% of members suggested buying "regionally" (from surrounding states) when a crop goes bad in this area. Some parts of South Carolina are closer than the mountains of North Carolina, so we'll take some time to travel a little to the border and meet some of the good local folks down there this fall.

Finally, we got some GREAT comments about the season so far, and some GREAT questions about why we do things the way we do AND suggestions about new ways to do it (fruit boxes delivered without ordering A, B, C; add-on boxes with no produce; and organic options. I'll be answering those in the next newsletter.

I'm just SO pleased! ☺ Such a large number of responses tell me that you all are fully engaged in helping to create this new "local food system" and that is inspiring. It's an amazing thing and I'm convinced we're doing the right thing, thanks to you.

~ Courtney

from the fields...

The summer's previous hot, dry weather has landed many Piedmont counties on the N.C. Drought Monitor's list last week. That did not surprise Marshall or Ronald, who have seen the effects on their crops and vegetables. Although they have irrigation on the property to help out during dry times, there just isn't enough water to make up for the lack of rain. "You can't water enough unless it rains," they say. "It's certainly causing plants to be a little unhappy and confuses the peaches- that's why we had some issues earlier with the cooler nights, then really hot days, then hot nights- they weren't sure whether to ripen or not!"

The dry weather particularly affects bean crops and cucumbers, both of which succumb to high temperatures and a lack of moisture. But with rain falling, the Lees will have a chance to do some late planting, to be ready for the fall season.



“This is our daughter Ada, 16 months old, enjoying the Canary melon that was we got in our Box this week!”

Fresh Melon Salsa (Box C)

Ingredients

2 cups chopped Korean, sprite and/or watermelon

1/4 cup chopped sweet onion
3 tablespoons lime juice
3 tablespoons finely chopped, seeded fresh jalapeno peppers
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon snipped fresh cilantro

Directions

In a medium mixing bowl stir together peaches, onion, lime juice, peppers, garlic, and cilantro.

Cover and chill for 1 to 2 hours.

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Karen, in Clayton says:

Want more great ideas, quick tips and recipes? Then check out these blogs:

[Meals with the McRackans](#) by member Jessica McRackan

<http://jessica.mcrackan.com>

[Get Fresh Eat Local NC](#) by Area Manager Laurie Rosenfeld

<http://getfresheatlocalinc.blogspot.com>

Potato, Zucchini and Tomato Gratin (Box B)

Ingredients

Serves 4.

- 5 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 pound Yukon gold potatoes, peeled
- 1 medium zucchini, (about 8 ounces)
- 2 vine-ripened or other ripe tomatoes, (about 3/4 pound), sliced into 1/4-inch rounds
- 1/4 teaspoon coarse salt
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh thyme leaves
- 2 ounces finely grated Cantal or cheddar cheese

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees with rack in upper third. Coat a 9-by-13-inch gratin dish with 1 teaspoon oil, and sprinkle with garlic. Using a mandoline or a very sharp knife, slice potatoes and zucchini as thinly as possible into rounds. Arrange potatoes, zucchini, and tomatoes in overlapping layers in prepared dish, and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Drizzle with remaining 4 teaspoons oil, and sprinkle with thyme and cheese.
2. Cover with foil; bake until potatoes are tender, 35 to 45

Butternut Cheddar Shells (Box C)

C)

Ingredients:

12 ounces large pasta shells (not jumbo)
1 1/2 pound butternut squash -- peeled, seeded and cubed
2 teaspoons butter
2 teaspoons olive oil
1/3 cup minced onion
2 tablespoons flour
Salt -- to taste
White pepper -- to taste
Nutmeg -- to taste
2 cups buttermilk
5 ounces reduced-calorie mild cheddar -- grated
Cooking spray or oil

Directions:

Set a large pot of water to boil (salt, if desired), and preheat oven to 350 F. Lightly spray or brush a 9 x 13-inch baking dish or similar size casserole with oil.

When water boils, add pasta and cook to nearly al dente. Using a slotted spoon, remove shells to a large bowl. In same boiling water, cook squash cubes until tender, about 5 minutes. Drain and transfer to bowl with cooked pasta. Set aside while you make the sauce.

In a large skillet, over medium heat, melt butter, add oil and onions, and sauté 2 to 3 minutes, until tender. Stir in flour, salt, pepper, and nutmeg, and cook another 2 to 3 minutes.

All at once, add the buttermilk and all but 2 tablespoons of the cheese. Cook, whisking constantly, until sauce thickens and cheese melts, about 8 minutes.

Pour sauce over pasta and squash, and toss to distribute evenly.

Transfer mixture to prepared dish, sprinkle with reserved cheese, and bake about 15 minutes, until bubbly and heated through.

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“I just unpacked this week's box and read the note you sent about the little **white baskets**. Here's a suggestion that helps me remember: the day my produce arrives, I put the fruit/vegetables from the **white baskets** into other containers - plastic bags, bowls, whatever is appropriate. The **white plastic baskets** go right back into the empty Produce Box, ready for next week. That way, I don't have to try to remember throughout the week, or search for them the night before my produce delivery.”

~ Great idea, Karen! Thanks! ☺