

Two Onion Farm

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Week of July 5, 2009

We're glad to see the weather warming again. Our warm season crops like squash, tomato, pepper, eggplant and green bean grew very slowly last week with the unseasonably cool, overcast weather. On the positive side, the cool weather did slow down the weeds as well and give us a chance to catch up with weeding.

There has been no rain here for the past two weeks, and we've been irrigating steadily. We irrigate all of our vegetables other than garlic with a line of drip tape laid beside each vegetable row. (Drip tape is an extremely light, thin-walled hose which slowly drips water along its entire length). Drip irrigation conserves water compared to overhead, sprinkler irrigation. With sprinkler irrigation, much of the water evaporates into the air before it ever reaches the ground. Sprinkler irrigation also waters an entire area, even paths and aisles where there are no vegetables growing, whereas the drip irrigation specifically targets the vegetable rows.

We're using about 10 miles of drip tape this year, and much of that will be used twice, on both spring and fall vegetable plantings. Our water supply does not allow us to run water through all of those drip lines at once, so our field is divided into zones, and each morning and evening we shut off the water to some of the irrigation zones and turn it on to some new zones.

We did upgrade our well pump, pressure tank, and water lines at the beginning of the spring, which means that we can water more rows at once than we could in the past. The enhanced water supply has also benefited our packing shed, where several of us can now wash vegetables at once.

Beets. At this time of year we like to cook our beets, then marinate the cooked, sliced beets in a vinaigrette and eat them with lettuce salad. A good vinaigrette for marinating the beets is 1 ½ Tbsp red wine vinegar, 2 tsp balsamic vinegar, 1 tsp Dijon mustard, 1/8 tsp salt, black pepper, 3 Tbsp olive oil, and 2 Tbsp walnut oil. That makes enough for about 4 or 5 medium beets.

We printed another very nice beet vinaigrette, made with raspberry vinegar, in our 7/18/2005 newsletter:

www.twoonionfarm.com/Newsletters/July_18_2005.pdf

We know three ways to cook beet roots: (1) slice them about ¼ or ½ inch thick and steam them; (2) boil them whole or sliced; or (3) roast them whole at 350 degrees, covered or wrapped in aluminum foil, until they are tender, usually over an hour. Steaming or boiling is faster; but roasting yields a better tasting beet. If you object to the skins, whole beets are easy to peel once they've been cooked.

Kohlrabi. We're starting to harvest our second kohlrabi planting this week. It's still a bit small for the Tuesday boxes this week; so we're planning to give it out on Friday this week and Tuesday of next week. For those of you who are unfamiliar with it, you can eat kohlrabi raw, as a finger food or in salads. Peel the skin before eating. Sliced kohlrabi can also be cooked in stir-fries. We like very much to grate the kohlrabi and cook it with butter and parmesan cheese – see the recipe at the end of this newsletter.

Electronic newsletters. This is the second week of our electronic newsletters. Instead of including a paper newsletter in each box, we are emailing the newsletter to all members for whom we have email addresses. We are leaving paper newsletters each week on the clipboard at each delivery site. Anyone who wants a paper newsletter can take one from there. If you find that your site is running short of paper newsletters, let us know and we will bring more in the future. Anyone who wishes to not receive the email newsletters can opt out now or at any time by contacting us at farmer@tweenionfarm.com; 608-762-5335.

In this week's box:

Vegetable	Refrigerate?	Store In Plastic Bag To Retain Moisture?	Approx. Storage Life	Comments
Beets	Yes	Yes	1-2 wks	
Broccoli	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Carrots	Yes	Yes	2 wks	
Cucumber	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Green Onions	Yes	Yes	1 wk	
Kohlrabi	Yes	Yes	1-2 wks	Friday boxes only
Lettuce	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Romaine or Summercrisp
Snap pea	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Probably the last week for peas
Summer Squash	Yes	Yes	1 wk	Yellow-green bicolor and/or zucchini

Grated Kohlrabi

2 kohlrabi bulbs
 1 Tbsp unsalted butter
 2 Tbsp grated Parmesan cheese
 Salt and pepper

Peel the kohlrabi and grate it with a hand grater or in a food processor. Melt the butter in a pan; add the kohlrabi and cook, stirring frequently, until the kohlrabi is tender, about 6-10 minutes. Add the cheese, salt, and pepper, stir, and continue cooking until the cheese melts. Serve warm.

Zucchini Carrot Stir Fry

1-1/2 or 2 lbs zucchini or summer squash
 2-3 carrots
 1 Tbsp salt
 1 Tbsp olive oil
 1 Tbsp sesame seed
 1 Tbsp fresh ginger root
 1 minced garlic clove or 2 garlic scape very thinly sliced
 2-3 sliced green scallions

Slice squash lengthwise in both directions several times to make thin spaghetti-like strips 6" long or less. Do the same with the carrots. Place squash strips in a colander and sprinkle with salt. Toss to distribute salt and let sit for 15 minutes. Rinse very well, drain well, and gently squeeze dry in a paper towel.

Heat wok with oil in it. Add and stir-fry ginger, garlic, carrots, onion and sesame seeds for 3-4 minutes. Add squash strips and continue stir-frying until they are tender. Serve hot.