



Onions waiting to be harvested. Our onion crop this year turned out excellent. Growing onions in Wisconsin is a long process starting with their seeding inside our greenhouses in February. They're transplanted to the field in April and finally the harvest begins now in late August. Post harvest handling involves topping, drying, cleaning and finally bagging.

What's in the box today?

Apples—from Barthel's

Beets

Bush Beans

Fennel

Red Cabbage

Shallots

Pepper, Sweet Bell

Summer Squash

Tomatoes

## Rare Earth News

Greetings once again! Haven't heard us complaining lately about getting no rain. That's because we've been getting some nice rainfalls in just the right amounts. It's been a great help to everything. We've been patiently watching the tomatoes and also the melons. Both need consistent rainfall. After watching and caring for these crops all summer it is quite exciting to see some begin to ripen. If the weather stays moderately warm for the next month we should have an outstanding harvest of both.

One other crop that's looking good and is close to harvesting is our sweet corn. Corn is a pretty labor intensive crop. There are many tasks to be tended to throughout the entire growing process in order to get anything to finish for our deliveries. Now we're close to harvesting -possibly next week. We have no machinery for harvesting so all the picking is done by hand. Another challenge with the corn season is keeping the raccoons from ripping us off. This year we've installed a solar powered electric fence that hopefully will help ward off this pesky creature. Raccoons have an incredible sense and liking for sweets. Sweet corn is one of their favorites. It's easy to tell when the corn is ripe and ready to pick because raccoons won't eat it until it's at that perfect state. With only an acre planted for our CSA if we want any to eat ourselves it's pretty important to keep it well guarded from these bandits.

Well I guess that's all for now so enjoy delivery number eleven and have a nice week!

Steve & Debra Jo



## Shallots

The small onion-like bulbs in your box today are "shallots". We plant them here in the spring just like all of our other alliums, and then they're harvested in early August. We pass out most of what we harvest and keep a small percentage here in storage until next summer when once again we'll plant them to start a new crop.

The shallot is a relative of the onion, and tastes a bit like an onion, but has a sweeter, milder flavor. Some recipes specifically call for shallots, but you can use them in any recipe where onions are called for. The size of the bulbs vary so some of the smaller ones can be somewhat time consuming to prepare. If you have a good garlic press you can mince the small bulbs with the press and then incorporate them into your recipe.

One of the nicest features about shallots is they have an incredible shelf life. Kept in a cool dark place they'll store well for several months. Enjoy the shallots!



## Apples

In today's box you'll find apples from Barthel's Fruit Farm located in Mequon. Knowing Bob Barthel personally for many years we've become familiar and actually very impressed with his orchard and his farming philosophy. Although Bob's farm is not certified organic, he does utilize many practices that organic growers use for insect and disease control.

The variety in today's box is an "Early Gold". This variety is mainly considered a fresh eating apple but its pretty good for baking too. These apples by their character have a shorter shelf life than some other varieties so use them up soon. Be sure to refrigerate your apples as this variety will not hold up in a bowl on the table or counter.

We plan to have a few more deliveries of apples of different varieties as they become available. Bob's orchard will open their doors to the public on Labor Day weekend. You can buy apples and pears already picked, or you can pick your own.



## Attention Home Canners!

Our roma tomato crop is getting closer to harvest time. Right now they're all still green (upper left photo). The lower left photo of ripe romas was taken last year. Soon we hope they'll be ready to pick. Every year we sell romas in bulk to our home canners to make a little extra money for the farm. If you, or anyone you know would like to buy some this year we're now taking orders for our San Marzano romas. The cost is listed below. To place an order send us an e-mail with your request. We will notify you via e-mail when they'll be ready. At that time you'll need to send us a check for the total amount of your order. Your order will be delivered to your pick-up location on our normal delivery day. Payment must be received first before we ship. Thank you!

Cost: 1.75/lb (1-15 lbs)

1.25/lb (16-49 lbs)

.75/lb (over 50 lbs.)

## Crop Progress Report

- Tomatoes. A few starting to ripen up. From here on we should have some form of tomato until the first frost
- Sweet Corn. Cobs are fattening up. We may start harvesting a few cobs for each member next week.
- Cantaloupe. Fruit sizing up well. Picked a few stray ripe melons. Ripe melons will be sent to pick-up locations in a cycle rotation until we can get enough ripe and picked for a complete delivery.
- Eggplant. Harvest is increasing but still not enough for a full delivery to all members. Eggplants are being distributed in a "cycle rotation" to different pick-up locations each week.
- "Edamame" (Edible Soybean). Pods are loaded on plants. The beans inside will take another one to two weeks to size up.
- Onions. We have begun harvesting our onion crop. Onions will be in next week's box and most likely every box there after. **Don't buy any more onions from the grocery store!** We'll have plenty to distribute starting next week.

Lights in the night! With the days getting shorter cultivating at night is sometimes necessary to still keep up with the weed pressure. Guided solely by the lights mounted on the tractor the operator gets the job done with the same precision as in normal daylight.



## Apple, Beet, and Avocado Salad

3 medium **beets**

4 cups mixed salad greens

1 onion, sliced into thin rings

1 **apple** - peeled, cored and thinly sliced

1/2 avocado - peeled, pitted and sliced

1/2 cup toasted chopped walnuts

3/4 cup apple cider

2/3 cup cider vinegar

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

1 teaspoon prepared mustard

1/4 teaspoon celery seed

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Wash beets, and place in a baking dish with 1/4 cup water. Cover and bake for 1 hour or until tender. Remove from oven and set aside to cool. Whisk together the apple cider, vinegar, oil, salt, pepper, mustard and celery seed. Peel and slice the beets, combine with the vinaigrette and refrigerate at least half an hour.

Divide the greens among four salad plates. Drain beets, and reserve dressing. Decoratively arrange overlapping layers of beet, onion, apple, and avocado on the greens. Drizzle with reserved dressing. Sprinkle on the nuts, and serve at once.

## Red Cabbage and Caramelized Fennel

- 1-1/2 tablespoons fennel seeds
- 2 medium **fennel**, with tops
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon sea salt, plus to taste
- 6 cups **red cabbage**, sliced into 1/4-inch strips (about 1/2 medium head)
- 3/4 cup water
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon mirin (rice wine)

In a heavy saucepan over medium heat, toast fennel seeds until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Transfer seeds to a clean coffee mill; grind to a powder. Set aside. Trim top and bottom of fennel; reserve fronds in a bowl of cold water for later use. Core fennel; slice bulbs into 1/4-inch slices. In a deep, wide sauté pan over medium heat, warm the oil; add sliced fennel and salt. Sauté 10 minutes, or until fennel begins to caramelize. Add the red cabbage, water, and apple cider vinegar. Raise heat to high to bring to a quick boil. Cover, reduce heat to low, and cook 20 minutes. Uncover and stir in the mirin and ground fennel seeds. Cook over high heat, stirring occasionally until liquid evaporates. Remove from heat. Just before serving, roughly chop reserved fennel fronds; stir into cabbage mixture. Salt to taste. Serves 8



Fennel has a way of growing on you. The more you eat it the more fond you'll become of it's distinct flavor and its variety of uses. Sautéed is one of our favorite ways to use it. Cut the bulbs like the upper right photo and remove the core. What's left (the top part of the bulb) is the most tender and tasty part of the whole plant. The core can still be used but it's best to chop or grate it and then incorporate it into your recipe. The top of the plant called the "fronze" can be dried and used for making a delicious tea. Hope you enjoy the fennel. We will have another delivery in about two weeks.

## Roasted Beets, Apples, and Fennel

- 5 medium **beets**, peeled and quartered
- 5 **apples**, cored and chopped
- 2 heads **fennel**, trimmed and thickly sliced
- 1/2 cup honey Dijon salad dressing
- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon sea salt

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Place the beets, apples, and fennel in a large roasting pan. In a small bowl, mix together the honey Dijon salad dressing, apple cider vinegar, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Pour the dressing mixture over the beets, apples, and fennel and mix well. Roast in the oven for 1 hour or until the beets are tender.