

Schreiber & Sons CSA

It's a Culinary Adventure

Schreiberandsons.com

August 3, 2009

Week XIV-The CSA season has reached its half way mark!

In this week's box, from your farmer you can expect:

- Kale
- Squash medley
- Cucumbers
- Peppers, bell
- Peppers, hot
- Tomatoes
- Fennel (medium, large shares only)
- Sweet corn
- Eggplant
- Watermelon
- Melon

It is important to remember that what we send out on the Monday updates is a best guess of what will be going in the boxes, but it is highly likely that the box content may end up being different. We try to put the exact box contents in the box sheet. If items in your box is different from the box sheet it can be due to a variety of reasons; we may have made a mistake, we ran out and had to make a substitution, we gave you extra produce or perhaps you misidentified an item of produce. Sometimes, we get certain items to an organic share member and a different item for the conventional members. There was some confusion last week because we give different share types different items of produce. In the end, if you have a question, send us a note.

In this week's box, the squash in the organic box is conventional-we have at least temporarily ran out of organic squash. The conventional squash is completely pesticide free. The reason for the shortage of organic squash is noteworthy. The organic fertilizer that we are using was a very oily fish based product. For crops grown on drip (e.g. squash), we fertilize through the drip line so we only fertilize exactly where we need it. Unfortunately, we found that the fertilizer plugged up the emitters on the drip line and prevented us from irrigating some of the crops, most notably much of the organic

squash, which we lost due to dehydration. We have switched to another brand of fertilizer and are happily irrigating the organic produce, but the squash is a casualty.

What's Happening On The Farm. It has been hot, hot, hot and then hot some more. This means everything is ripening very quickly and we have lots and lots of produce. The amount of produce you are getting is limited by the size of the box you have. With this heat, it means irrigation is critical, we are watering 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We are deep into melon and eggplant harvest. Eggplant harvest is pretty incredible. We have an eggplant picking machine that takes 20 people to operate, but it works like a dream. On this Thursday, we host the Washington asparagus industry for their annual field day-all you want to know about asparagus and then some. We are actually going to have the Director of the Washington State Department of Agriculture on our farm.

Surplus Produce. We have extra watermelons, cantaloupe and some exotic and unusual melons, Italian eggplant, Japanese eggplant, squash and cucumbers if you are interested in purchasing extra items. The melons are particularly good right now.

Meat. Below is a list of the meat that we have available as of this moment. I have an animal on order that is scheduled to be slaughtered on Thursday; it will take at least a week to ten days after that before that meat is available. I really encourage you have some hamburger-we still have lots of it available. We got a review, a very thorough review from a CSA member on the meat. This is the first and only review we have received on the meat.

	6/29/2009	
Cut of Meat	Week	Ten
	Quantity	lbs
Rump Roast	3	7
Chuck Roast	18	42.25
Sirloin Tip Roast	0	0
Sirloin Steak	0	0
Top Round	27	15.75
Round Steak	0	0
Rib Steak	4	5
T-Bone Steak	4	5
Tenderloin Steak	0	0
Ground Beef	118	189
Total	174	264

Our first member review of meat.

After many weeks of cooking, eating and trying out new recipes for your wonderful organic beef, I am very happy to write you and tell you that I heartily recommend the meat to all your clients. The main reason? The flavor is incredible and even tastier than other organic beef I have purchased.

Quite honestly, organic beef is expensive. And since it is an extra expense, I feel that it is very important that if you decide to spend the extra money on organic, as a consumer, you should "get what you pay for." Not only do you get what you pay for with this beef, you get meat that is more flavorful than expected. Organic beef is delicious, but this organic beef is very delicious. It truly possesses an unusually fantastic flavor.

I am very curious to find out what the cows are fed. Their meat is very very good.

Roasts

We have cooked both a sirloin roast and a round roast. Both cooked VERY well, had great texture once cooked, were tender to the point where they cut easily with a FORK, (I cook my roasts in a crock pot), and had exceptional flavor. I slightly preferred the sirloin roast, but that is probably because I am a sirloin steak fan in general. Some folks may prefer the flavor of the round roast which had mellower taste and takes on more of the flavor of the stewing juices and veggies, but a round roast is much harder to cook to a tender point. This one was tender and flavorful!

I have one more roast in the freezer and will cook that one by traditional oven methods and will send you an email and let you know how it turned out.

Steaks

I am a New York Steak fan. Not because I come from New York (okay, I'm not a very good joke teller), but because I love the particular flavor of a New York, the fat content (not too little, not too much) and therefore the tenderness. A New York is an expensive but delicious cut. It's worth the cost if you're a steak enthusiast.

The New York Steak we had from you was great New York flavor and I could only say I would love to see a thicker cut.

The surprise we all heartily enjoyed was the t-bone! I have to say that I think it even had better flavor than our favorite New York. It was tender-tender with a richer flavor than I can recall ever enjoying with a T-bone. We all commented heavily on its great taste and enjoyed that meal very, very much.

The sirloin steak is the only steak with which I had difficulty. I am not quite sure why yet, but I will tell you how I cooked it. I cooked it on the grill as a regular steak, not too

long, and it was tough. I also cooked it in the broiler in the oven and it was tough. When you buy organic beef, the steaks are usually cut thinner since the cows are not artificially "beefed" up. The beef is more costly too, and so the thicker cuts of organic beef seem outrageously expensive. I usually buy sirloin steak as a much thicker cut and it helps with the fact that a sirloin is a very lean steak. A thicker cut may help this organic sirloin beef when cooking. One night, when we had some tough sirloin, we had lots of leftovers. I took the leftover steak two days later, cut it into small pieces, and quickly stir-fried it. It worked very well this way and the toughness seemed to dissipate. I haven't quite figured this out yet so I will get back to you on the sirloin again.

I would say the sirloin has great "sirloin" flavor (yum), but needs to be cooked very carefully to avoid the toughness. It is just a super lean cut because its organic. I recommend it for stir-fry because of the great flavor that can hold its own with strong Asian sauces! I have a little more sirloin I am going to cook again, and I'll give you another report.

The Rib steak again had great flavor and was highly marbled. With a rib...you don't have to be as careful with cooking because it has so much fat to make it tender. Personally, I get frustrated with Rib steaks because you have to do so much carving through fat to get your beef. MOST PEOPLE DO NOT FEEL THIS WAY. I think this rib meat flavor was really good and would take a barbecue sauce well. I myself would choose the T-bone over the rib and get more meat. But again, the flavor was excellent and true to the cut of beef.

Other Cuts

In keeping with all the other cuts we have eaten, the ground beef just plain had excellent flavor. The thing I love about organic ground beef is that it reminds you and tastes like the beef you had as a child. IT ACTUALLY TASTES LIKE BEEF. Non-organic ground beef tastes flavorless to me these days, plus its full of garbage. This meat makes a yummy burger, and with mixed with other cuts of meat in recipes it provides a heart flavor addition. One thing I thought was interesting, the lots of ground beef had very different fat levels. This is fine for me since I always pour off the fat when I cook it. When you cook a burger, the fat level determines the degree of shrinkage.

I either cook my burgers on the grill or I bake them in the oven. I never fry burgers in the fry pan any more. This beef made great baked burgers and because it has good strong flavor, it holds up to the spices I add to my burgers. This beef also did well with my taco, enchilada, burrito recipes. Yum! I can never have enough ground beef in the freezer.

Top Round. Again good flavor. I had to watch the toughness a little bit but that is par

for course for the cut. It really all depends on the way you cook it. When I cook it again, I will try a different approach and let you know.

Bottom Round. I am really looking forward to having this cut again in another recipe. Last night I served it in a beef stroganoff and my family went crazy for it. Again, I cut it into thin small slices and cooked it all day in the crock pot in a beef broth mushroom sauce. At the last minute, I added the sour cream and blended and served over firm pasta. Wow was everyone happy. The beef was exceptionally tender and the flavor was INCREDIBLE in the beefy mushroom sauce. A huge compliment for a bottom round!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

So that is my first beef report. We have simply loved the beef and we are picky beef people. I will send more beef reports on a meal by meal basis if you wish! Let me know if you want me to send any of the recipes along. It's been a happy beefy summer for the Eatons!

Thank you, we have just loved it!
Penny (of Will and Penny Eaton)

Fennel Salad with Whole Potatoes

Fennel (any amount) - sliced 1/4 inch
Small onion - sliced 1/4 inch
12-18 Small potatoes
Fresh basil or other herb of choice
salt
pepper
olive oil
red wine vinegar (can be substituted with other kinds)
4 large carrots
favorite salad dressing (vinaigrette, Italian, Caesar)
Salad dressing - 1/4 cup.

Microwave or bake potatoes until you can pierce with a fork.
Heat oil in pan at Med-High heat. Add potatoes (large ones should be cut into bite size pieces first), carrots, fennel, onion, basil.
Stir and cook for 10 minutes. Salt and pepper.
Put on low until carrots are done (slightly crunchy).
In a bowl toss salad, salad dressing and potato mixture.
Serve warm.

From CSA Member - Michelle Murphy

Kale

Botanical name: *Brassica oleracea*

Group: *Acephala*

Kale was grown by the Greeks and the Romans and hasn't changed much since then. It is probably the most respected representative of the Old World cabbages. Latin *culis* (stem) is the root of the group of words for cabbage. *Acephala* (headless) is the designation that separates most kale and collards from other cabbages, for the two grow in the form of a loose bouquet, not in a tight head. The leaves of the kale plant provide an earthy flavor and more nutritional value for fewer calories than almost any other food around.

Nutritional Value: Kale is a leafy green vegetable that belongs to the Brassica family, which has gained recent attention due to health promoting, sulfur-containing phytochemicals. It is virtually loaded with calcium, potassium, indoles (cancer-fighting substances), beta-carotenes, and other antioxidants. Collards have the same nutrients, but in lesser concentration.

Selection: Choose comparatively deep-colored bunches with moist, small to medium leaves. Avoid dried, browned, yellowed, or coarse-stemmed plants. It is best when not too crisp.

Storage: Wrap kale in plastic or an airtight container and keep very cold – near freezing if possible – or it may acquire a pronounced elderly cabbage taste. It should not be refrigerated more than a few days or it loses its fresh green flavor. To avoid yellowing, keep kale far from climacteric fruits (ones which continue to ripen), such as apple, avocado, banana, peach, pear, plum, tomato and most tropical fruits.

Kale is underused except by people of Northern European stock, where these overwintering cabbages have been used extensively in cookery since the Middle Ages. It needs no explanation in Scandinavia, Germany, the Netherlands and above all Scotland, where "*come to kail*" meant an invitation to dinner, with or without the green.

Preparation: Kale leaves that are very small or will be long-cooked need not be stripped from the stems; cut off the base of the stems, then slice leaves to suit and wash. For larger leaves or shorter cooking, either hold a stem with one hand and run a knife long each side to cut off the leaf halves; or hold the folded leaf halves together and pull them free of the stem.

Use: If they are miniscule, raw curly kale leaves make excellent additions to salad mixes (*you may have found some in the mixed greens you receive*). When cooked, mature leaves develop a well-rounded, sweetish taste and a springy texture more delicate than is typical for the cabbage group. Whether steamed, boiled, or blanched and sautéed, kale

can be cooked until meltingly soft in traditional style, or until crunch-tender in the newer mode.