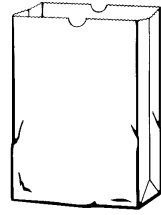


IN THE BAG
Potomac Vegetable Farms
August 20, 2008



Mini: onions, sweet corn, peppers, lettuce, parsley, cherry tomatoes, tomatoes

Regular: garlic, potatoes, sweet corn, peppers, lettuce, anise hyssop, tomatoes, celery or swiss chard

Robust: garlic, onions, potatoes, sweet corn, peppers, swiss chard, lettuce, basil, cherry tomatoes, tomatoes

We spend a lot of time in this space talking about the vegetables you have in your bag. But some of you may be wondering about the vegetables you're not getting. Wouldn't it be nice, you might be thinking, to get a nice normal carrot in the bag from time to time? Well, let us tell you a few things about carrots.

Carrots are really hard to grow. For one thing, carrots take 100 days to mature, which is much longer than the thousands of weeds that take over carrot beds before long. We have to go in and rip out two-foot tall weeds to protect our tiny, wispy little carrot plants. Worst of all, sometimes when you pull out a weed, a little carrot comes with it. They need to be coddled with lots of water and constant weeding to make it through those first weeks when we can barely even see them.

On top of all that, carrots are very picky about soil temperature when they are trying to germinate. We've already lost two beds this year because the carrots there didn't like something about the temperature. And they prefer sandy soil, which is much lighter than our heavy clay soil. So the carrots you see in supermarkets are straight and narrow – but the ones we grow look like old, gnarly fingers. They taste a lot better, because they have all the good stuff in our soil – but they are not much to look at.

So the carrots we manage to squeeze from the earth are few and ugly. Every now and again we'll have enough for the CSA, but it is hard to get them to your bags. You'll notice that it's rare to see a carrot at farmers' markets, too. Isn't it strange that such an ordinary-seeming vegetable could be hard to get?

Fettuccine with Sautéed Peppers and Parsley

(adapted from Deborah Madison)

2 large **peppers**

Salt and pepper

1 lb. fettuccine

2/3 cup chopped **parsley**

Grated Parmesan (optional)

Olive oil

Start heating a large pot of water for the pasta. Meanwhile, cut the peppers into strips about as wide as the fettuccine. Heat the oil in a large skillet over high heat, then add the peppers; give a stir, let

them sit for a few minutes, and stir again. Continue cooking like this for 10 minutes. Season with salt and pepper, add a ladle of the pasta water, and turn the heat to low.

Add salt to the boiling water and cook the pasta until al dente. Scoop it out and add it to the peppers, allowing some of the water to drip into the pan. Raise the heat and toss the pasta and peppers with the parsley. Serve topped with grated cheese.

Mustard and Coriander Roasted Potatoes

(adapted from *Bon Appetit*)

2 tbsp Champagne vinegar
1 tbsp mustard seeds
3 tbsp Dijon mustard
1 tsp coriander seeds, crushed
Coarse kosher salt
1.5 lbs. **potatoes**, peeled, cut into 1 1/2- to 2-inch cubes
3 tablespoons vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 425°F. Bring vinegar and mustard seeds to boil in small saucepan. Reduce heat; simmer until almost dry, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Transfer to large bowl. Add Dijon mustard and coriander. Season with coarse salt and pepper.

Place potatoes in large saucepan; add water to cover by 1 inch; sprinkle with coarse salt. Boil 3 minutes. Drain; return to pan. Cook over medium-high heat until dry, shaking pan occasionally, 3 minutes. Meanwhile, drizzle 6 tablespoons oil over large rimmed baking sheet. Place sheet in oven 10 minutes to heat.

Add potatoes to mustard mixture; toss. Spread potatoes on hot baking sheet (oil may splatter). Sprinkle with coarse salt and pepper. Roast 15 minutes. Turn potatoes; roast until browned and tender, about 15 minutes longer. Season with coarse salt and pepper and serve hot.

Tomato and Bread Salad with Red Onion (Tomato Panzanella)

(adapted from *Bon Appetit*)

1/3 cup red wine vinegar
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
8 ounces stale Italian or other white bread, cut into 2-inch pieces
8 cups (about) cold water
2 pounds ripe **tomatoes**, coarsely chopped (about 5 cups)
1 small red **onion**, thinly sliced
1 cup loosely packed fresh **basil** leaves, torn into bite-size pieces

Pour vinegar into small bowl. Gradually whisk in oil. Season vinaigrette to taste with salt and pepper. Place bread in large bowl. Pour in enough cold water (about 8 cups) to cover bread. Soak 5 minutes. Drain well; squeeze bread to remove as much liquid as possible. Coarsely crumble bread into same bowl. Add tomatoes, onion and basil. Toss with enough vinaigrette to coat. Season salad generously with salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate. Let stand 1 hour at room temperature before serving.