



Week 12

Farm News:

We are at the start of the cross roads between summer and fall vegetables which is a little earlier than normal because of the wetter conditions this year. We have had a lot more humidity followed by rain and clouds that have brought in all of the fungal diseases earlier than normal this year. Our cucumbers, melons and summer squashes have been hit especially hard. Our cucumbers are done for the season and this will be the last week for our summer squash and zucchini (we might not even have squash this week). The good news is that it looks to be a great fall season of greens and cool weather crops.

This Week's Share (probably):

Watermelon and/or melons

Beets

Tomatoes

Green Peppers

Onions

Swiss Chard

Garlic

Vegetable of the Week:

Melons

There are an amazing amount of melons out there in the world, and we are growing cantaloupes (or muskmelons), french cantaloupes (also known as charentais melons), honeydews, and watermelons. Cantaloupes or muskmelons have a yellow rind and netting on them. Charentais melons have little to no netting and are faintly ribbed with smooth gray-green rind and dark green sutures. Honeydews have a smooth skin with a yellow hue, and can sometimes have cracking on the skin. We are also growing three types of watermelons: gold flower (small, oblong with yellow flesh), sangria (larger, ripening later with red flesh), moon and stars (dark green with spots on it, and red flesh).

Determining if your melon is ripe depends on the type of melon. There are three ways to determine ripeness in watermelons: 1) the tendril nearest the point on the vine where fruit stem attaches is browning/dead (you only see this when harvesting); 2) the spot where the fruit rests on the ground is yellow; and 3) you hear "punk", as opposed to "pink" or "pank", when you flick the melon with your fingers. Honeydews have subtle

color changes (ours go from white to yellow) and feel slightly different when they are ripe. The cantaloupes we are growing are ripe when the netting has developed across the whole melon and the color has gone from green to tan/orange. So when you are picking out a cantaloupe or honeydew melon you should smell it (if it is aromatic, chances are good it is ripe), and it should have a little give at the vine and blossom ends but not too much. We pick our melons when they are ripe, which means that you need to eat them sooner rather than later.

This year we have had a lot of trouble with downy mildew in our cucurbits (cucumbers, summer squash, melons and winter squash). The melons (cantaloupe and honeydews) and cucumbers have been most affected. A combination of the downy mildew and wetter weather have affected the sweetness of our melons. While the texture and flavor are great, they aren't very sweet this year. Our watermelons, however, were not as affected and are sweet.

Recipes of the week:

There are a lot of fun recipes out there for melons. I have just included one salsa recipe (there are many including a great cantaloupe and cucumber salsa), but you can also make sorbet, smoothies, cold melon soups of all varieties, and so much more.

Watermelon Salsa

Ingredients:

2 cups diced and seeded watermelon

1 avocado, peeled, pitted and diced

¼ cup diced red onion

2 Tbs lemon juice

½ habanero pepper, seeded and minced (optional)

1 ½ tsp fresh parsley

Salt to taste

Preparation:

Combine all of the ingredients in a bowl; refrigerate until chilled (about 15 minutes) and serve