

Storage Tips & Tricks

Sweet Corn is picked early in the morning every day in season. Corn is best on the day it is picked or within a day or two of receiving. Place in a plastic bag and refrigerate until ready to use. For the best quality use in 2-3 days

Directions For Freezing Sweet Corn- Start with the fresh corn on the cob in your share or from our farm store, stand or farmers markets. It has been picked the day it was delivered. Keep the corn chilled in your refrigerator until you are ready to prepare for freezing. Sugar can turn to starch at room temperature. Fill a large pot $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water. Heat the water to a rolling boil and prepare an ice water bath. Husk the corn. Be sure to remove all the silk. Gently rub the corn with a terry or soft towel that will help to remove the silk. When corn is blanched the action of the enzymes is stopped. This process will help to maintain the color, flavor, texture, and nutrient value of the vegetable. Gently drop the corn into the boiling water, making sure that you do not drop the temperature of the water below boiling. Boil for 4-6 minutes. Lift the corn with a slotted spoon or drain. The cooking stops when you add the corn to the ice water bath. You may need to add extra ice depending on how much corn you are working with. Remove the corn to a towel. Allow the corn to completely dry.

Here are 2 methods you may use to remove the kernels from the cob. There are some special tools is you choose. Corn Cob strippers or kerneler are available on-line. A sharp knife will work just as well. Firmly hold onto one end of the corn, with the other end in the deep bowl. Run the knife under the kernels. The corn will drop into the bowl in strips that will break apart as you continue to work and pack.

Another method is to place the end of the corn in the center opening of an angel food cake pan. Run the knife under the kernels and they will fall into the pan. Portion the corn into zip lock bags. Be sure to push out as much air as possible. Placing a straw into the bag at the end of the closure. As you close the bag press out air. Draw air out with the straw and press to close as you pull out the straw. Eliminating air will preserve the quality of the corn. It can prevent freezer burn.

Always be sure to label and date the bags you are freezing.

When you are ready to serve the corn it will require the minimum of preparation in the microwave, a skillet or steamer or double boiler. It is ready to add to soups and stews

Mini onions- they can be stored at room temperature for a couple of days, longer than that they should be refrigerated in a plastic or paper bag. Wash and peel when ready to prepare.

Radishes and beets- and all root vegetables. When the root vegetable comes to you with the tops attached you should cut the tops from the root and store in two separate containers.

Tomatoes- should be kept at room temperature. Use them within 3-4 days. They can be placed in the refrigerator to hold them a little longer. Bring them back to room temperature for the best flavor before serving.

Basil- Remove dead stems and leaves, snip ends, if basil comes to you with the root attached, remove the roots, and gently pat dry. Place stems in container filled with water, do not submerge the leaves. Wash leaves as needed. If you change the water daily the herbs will keep for up to a week on the counter. The top of the plant can be covered with a plastic bag. Do not refrigerated basil.

Beans- Remove the beans from the plastic bag. Be sure that beans are dry before storing. Store in a paper bag or between layers of paper towel in a covered container. To prepare break at the stem end. Blanch for 3-4 minutes or steam for 8-10 minutes. The color should brighten, and they should be fork tender, yet crisp. Blanching or steaming will extend storage time and the beans will be ready to add to a recipe or make into a salad when you need them. Make a simple vinaigrette with oil, vinegar and a little mustard. Mix the green beans with some thinly sliced onion and chop up some mint from your garden. Even the chocolate mint will work in this recipe.

Storing blueberries- remove from the container. Do not wash, Place in a shallow pan or container lined with paper towel. The berries should not be washed before storage. Berries should keep for up to 5 days.

Remove stone fruits from the plastic container when you arrive home. If the fruit is not quite ripe leave some on the counter to ripen further, checking each day. If you refrigerate remove the fruit in time for it to come back to room temperature for the best flavor.

Garlic- should be stored in a cool dry place at room temperature

Eggplant – plan to use eggplant quickly. The best temperature for eggplant storage is around 50 degrees. You can keep it on the counter for a day or two if your house is cool and it will keep in the refrigerator for a day or two as well.

Broccoli will keep in the refrigerator in a plastic bag for 4-6 days. No need to wash before storing, clean as needed. To prolong the life of broccoli, steam 6-8 minutes or blanch 4-6 minutes and allow to cool refrigerate or freeze and it is ready to add to your favorite recipes.



Week 15 Fresh Inspirations August 1st—7th

It was so nice to see so many of you on Friday evening. Families were having fun touring with an antiques tractor pulling the hay wagon or they were taking hay wagons to pick fruit and vegetables. Children were on the hay bale pyramid and families were in the evergreen maze. Some adults tasted wine, and everyone tasted ice cream. By now some of you might be modeling your new Tee shirt. The band for the evening provided entertainment for everyone. I always enjoy meeting members so that I can see a face when I hear a name. Last week I asked if anyone had been with us for all of the 12 years of our CSA. We heard from Kathy Koch & Gene Slowinski and Virginia McDonnell, along with Lucy Karp & Lynn Walter who have been with us since the beginning. I heard them talking about when we did not have a list in advance and everyone came to pick up here in Chester and it was often said, unpacking the box was like opening packages on Christmas morning. I am wondering if anyone else has been with us for the 12 years. If so, please let us know!

There was a lot of activity during the day on Friday as well. It was a great day at the farm. The press came out in the morning for an educational tour of the farm with Farmer Kurt and Mary Alstede meeting us at the museum to talk a little about the historical pieces that have been collected over the years. The conversation touched on the history of the farm, farming practices and farm locations, a look at the cider mill, changes at the farm through the years, and some visions for the future. It was both interesting and informative, as usual we all learn something new at the farm, every day!

I am happiest in the summer when eggplant finally comes into season. It is one of my favorite vegetables. I guess if you agree with me then we live in the right state. New Jersey is number one in the country for eggplant production. Much of the wholesale business is in Cumberland county but here at the farm we certainly hold our own. In your shares during the season, we may have various varieties and colors from deep purple, to marbled, and of course the original and the reason for its name, white. The egg-shaped fruit would hang from the plant and resemble eggs. You may find a round Sicilian, globe shaped purple, marbled or white, the long thin aubergine, Asian, or even mini eggplant is grown here at the farm. All of the varieties will work in most of your recipes. They differ slightly in the color of the flesh, seed content, and acidity.

Something else new this week are mini onions. Most of them will be white, a few red will be mixed in. I am hearing that they are great grilled, roasted will also work and if you are in the mood for a treat there is a recipe for a bite size blooming onion this week. They may come to you with tops on and bunched or they may come in a container. Due to the very dry conditions many of the tops were broken during harvest. You can save the tops for stock, however, some of the green is tender enough to use like a scallion as well.

If you have questions about your share, contact Trish@alstedefarms.com or 908-879-7189. If you have recipes or ideas to share, contact me, jenn@alstedefarms.com.

Until next week, enjoy the freshness!

Jenn Borealo

Mediterranean Eggplant

Eggplant- about 1 ½ pounds eggplant, any variety

½-1 yellow onion chopped

1 bell pepper small dice

2 carrots minced

2-3 cloves minced Garlic

Spices and herbs from the garden, I used the bay leaf, basil, parsley, and oregano or: you can try dry bay leaf, dry oregano, sweet paprika (or smoked paprika if you prefer), coriander, cinnamon, hint of turmeric, and black pepper. This combination of earthy and warm spices is really what makes this dish so comforting. If you don't have all the spices, don't let that deter you from making this easy dish. You can omit some of the spices and do more of the ones you have.

Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Chopped Canned Tomatoes- one large can of chopped or diced tomatoes or fire roasted tomatoes chopped or a chopped fresh tomato or two as the season progresses. Add the juice as well.

1 –1 ½ cans Chickpeas- drained

A little water or vegetable broth

Fresh Parsley or mint to garnish

Serve with some chopped kalamata olives or capers, optional

Salting eggplant for this recipe is totally optional.

Cut up the eggplant into cubes or large bite-size pieces. Sprinkle with some kosher salt and leave in a large colander in your sink or over a bowl. Let it sweat for 20 to 30 minutes or up to 1 hour, then rinse and pat dry.

Sautee chopped onions, veggies, and spices

Warm up some extra virgin olive oil and add onions, peppers, and carrots. Toss these vegetables for a few minutes, then stir in garlic, bay leaf and spices. Season with a little salt and pepper. Allow to cook just briefly till fragrant.

Add chopped tomatoes with their juice, eggplant, and chickpeas, ½-¾ c broth, fresh herbs and bring to a boil. Allow to simmer for about 10 minutes.

Step 4: Cover the eggplant stew and transfer it to a 400-degree preheated oven. Let it cook to tender for another 45 minutes checking liquid/moisture about ½ way through the time. Add a little more water or broth as needed.

Serve with grilled pita, rice, couscous, as a main dish, or to side with grilled meats or fish

Adapted from: themediterraneandish.com

Week 15 Harvest!

Blueberries

Basil

Sweet Corn

Eggplant

Tomatoes

Beets

Kale

Leeks

Shiro Plums

Beans

Bell Peppers

Radishes

Broccoli

Garlic

Mini Onions

Cabbage

***Your actual CSA share contents will be listed on the label inside of your box and may differ from this list. Your share contents are based on your individual preferences and customizations that you make on your Harvie profile, as well as changes in availability.*

Mini Blooming Onions

Steps to prepping the onions for frying:

Remove the skin from the onions. Using a sharp knife slice through the onion to make at least 6 to 7 sections without cutting all the way through the onion. Place the onions in a bowl of cold water to help them open up.

Season the flour or gluten free flour with spices: garlic powder, paprika, cumin, oregano, salt, and pepper

Thoroughly mix the spices into the flour.

Take a few onions at a time and place them in the flour mixture. Try to get as much flour into each of the onion petals.

Transfer the lightly seasoned onions to the egg mixture and coat the onion throughout. Return the onions back to the flour mixture for a second coating. This helps the batter to stick to the onions.

Place all the onions in a prepared dish and chill for 10 minutes in the freezer before frying. This allows the batter to set before frying.

Use a deep fryer or a large skillet heat the oil to 350 degrees. Fry the onions in batches, until they are golden brown.

Transfer onions onto paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Quickly transfer to a cooling rack or serving plate and serve with your favorite sauce to dip.

