

Hello from Great Oak Farm!

It seems so fitting that we finally have our first “real” snow of the season for the first delivery of the winter shares. Sunday morning, the ground was brown and the world was a dreary grey, a very few light flakes of snow drifting lazily down through the bare trees. But by lunchtime, the world had turned white and snow was accumulating enough for the kids to build a snow family out in the yard! The first snow is a busy time for all of us farmers – we’ve all got a huge to-do list to wrap up as we race the clock to get as much done before Mother Nature declares that winter has officially arrived. Sunday afternoon, our boys Caleb and Danny lent their arms to help me haul the onions (which had been drying down in the greenhouse on racks) into the winter storage room. Stacked between bins of squash, those bags of onions will last all winter.



The crop cycle never fails to amaze me, and onions are particularly impressive. These onions, started in the greenhouse the last week of February, transplanted out in the field in May, and harvested in September, will last through March the following year! We will have onions in storage at the same time as the new crop of onions is growing green and proud in the greenhouse while the world outside is frozen and snowy. Adding onions to a dish not only adds flavor – onions have vitamins (including folate, a B vitamin), minerals, dietary fiber for healthy “guts,” and complex sugars for a healthy metabolism. It’s funny how something so pungent and spicy that makes us cry when we cut it can be slowly sautéed and caramelized into something so sweet!

Overall, most of the “doing work” is done for the season here at our farm. The root cellar is stocked up with carrots, cabbage, and beets, which will be getting sweeter as they store through the winter. We have one hoop house that is planted fully to spinach now, and another one that will be planted in February next year for a nice crop of early spring spinach. Now, as the snow falls, I can begin to turn my focus on the “thinking work” of the farm. I enjoy diving into the numbers, analyzing crop production for the past production season, and trying to find ways to become more efficient at feeding more families in our communities.

Along that line, we are beginning the search for an additional CSA drop site over in East Duluth. If you know of a business or church that would be willing to host a drop site next year, get in touch with our CSA manager Evan - we’d love to hear your suggestions!



Continued on the next page...

And if you signed up for any CSA boxes this past summer season, PLEASE-please-PLEASE! fill out the survey which will be coming your way shortly! Whether CSA just isn't for you or you are ready to sign up for another season already, we truly value your feedback. Your honest feedback has helped to improve this CSA for the past 10 years, and we read each and every comment. Those surveys help us to better plan for the coming production season, and believe it or not we'll be ordering seeds in no time. So let us know what you think!

We're also going to start working on better recipe coordination this winter between the meat boxes and the veggie boxes, and our goal for the 2019-20 season is to have the whole diet boxes be basically 2-3 dinners per week (outlined with detailed recipes!) for a family. I know most afternoons around here, the question we are all asking ourselves, usually at about 4 pm, is... "What's for dinner?" We hope that having our meat and veggie boxes (and plus items, too!) better coordinated with detailed recipes will make cooking dinner after work using locally grown, healthy ingredients something we can all look forward to! I'd love for each of you to email us your favorite recipe using meat and veggies from the CSA boxes. If you are a Facebook user, post it on the Lake Superior CSA Recipe page, and check out the great recipes other folks have posted there as well. I just put a great simple coleslaw recipe on there (a fresh and refreshing side dish for meat dishes all winter long), as well as my Nana's famous homemade biscuit recipe. Nothing says "dinner's ready!" like warm biscuits fresh from the oven - here's to a tasty winter season ahead!



Yours in community,

Chris Duke

Great Oak Farm

FRIENDLY REMINDERS!

- Please return your boxes after each delivery, we will reuse them as long as they're sturdy—and it saves use a lot on supply costs!
- When you return your boxes to your pick-up location, please be courteous and break them down. There are many sites where boxes stack up quickly and take up a lot of space. Thank you!

RECIPE CHALLENGE!

Like Chris said, we would love if over the next couple of weeks you would take the time to post your favorite dish that could be used with CSA ingredients—meats, veggies, fruits, etc. We will use these as we begin work on our meal planning!

WHAT'S IN THE BOX

VEGGIE BOXES

~ Great Oak Farm ~

Carrots, Onions, Butternut Squash, Cabbage

~ River Road Farm ~

Salad Mix OR Spinach

~ Yoman Farm ~

Potatoes, Leeks, Cilantro

~ Twisting Twig Gardens ~

Garlic

MINI VEGGIE

~ Great Oak Farm ~

Carrots, Cabbage, Onions

~ River Road Farm ~

Salad Mix OR Spinach

~ Yoman Farm ~

Potatoes

MEAT BOXES

~ Hidden Vue Farm + Griggs Cattle Co ~

Assorted Beef

~ Maple Hill Farm ~

Assorted Pork

MINI MEAT BOXES

~ Hidden Vue Farm + Griggs Cattle Co ~

Assorted Beef

~ Maple Hill Farm ~

Assorted Pork

PLUS ITEM

~ Heritage Acres ~

Maple Syrup

November 7th + 8th, 2018

How To Store Your Produce

Carrots: Tightly seal unwashed carrots in a plastic bag in the coolest part refrigerator.

Cabbage: Cabbage will store well for a long while in your refrigerator. Peel back outer leaves if they begin to wilt or yellow and use what's left.

Cilantro: Trim the bottom of the bunch and place in a half-inch of water with a plastic bag over the top. Keeping Cilantro this way in your fridge will last upwards of a week.

Leeks: Store unwashed in a plastic bag in your refrigerator. Use within a week for freshest flavor.

Onions: Choose a cool, dark place to store your onions. The space should have a temperature maintained between 40 to 50°F.

Potatoes: Colder temperatures lower than 50 degrees such as a lower level pantry.

Salad Mix: Keep in plastic bag with a dry paper towel, place package in crisper drawer of fridge.

Squash: Winter squash will last up to a month in a cool (50 to 55 degrees F) dark cellar or storage area, but only about two weeks in the refrigerator. Ideally, only cut or cooked butternut squash should be refrigerated.

Recipe on the next page!

SNEAK PEEK at
November 14th, 2018

VEGGIE BOXES

~ Great Oak Farm ~

Carrots, Acorn + Delicata Squash

~ River Road Farm ~

Salad Mix

~ Yoman Farm ~

Potatoes, Turnips

~ Northcroft Farm ~

Head Lettuce

~ Twisting Twig Gardens ~

Garlic

MINI VEGGIE

~ Great Oak Farm ~

Acorn + Delicata Squash, Carrots

~ River Road Farm ~

Salad Mix

~ Yoman Farm ~

Potatoes

~ Twisting Twig Gardens ~

Garlic

MEAT BOXES

~ Hidden Vue Farm + Griggs Cattle Co ~

Assorted Beef

~ Maple Hill Farm ~

Assorted Pork

MINI MEAT BOXES

~ Hidden Vue Farm + Griggs Cattle Co ~

Assorted Beef

~ Maple Hill Farm ~

Assorted Pork

~ Heritage Acres ~

Whole Chicken

PLUS ITEM

~ Happy Hollow Creamery ~

Cheese

~ White Winter Winery ~

Spritz

Turnip and Leek Soup with Kale and Toasted Walnuts

Ingredients: 1 Tbs. Olive Oil, medium Onion, 2 cloves Garlic, 1/2lb Leeks, 1lb Turnips (peeled, cut into wedges, 1/4lb Potatoes (peeled, diced), 6 cups Vegetable Stock, 1 Bay Leaf, Salt + Pepper to taste, 6oz stemmed Kale, 1Tbs. Walnut (or Hazelnut) Oil, 1/3 cup Walnuts (toasted, chopped)

In case you missed it, this recipe was shared in our Facebook Recipe Group last week and it is fantastic! Check out the posting on line for more information, but find the recipe below! Thanks to all who share and interact in our online group. Great inspiration for the kitchen!

Step 1: Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy soup pot or Dutch oven over medium heat and add the onion. Cook, stirring, until tender, about 4 or 5 minutes.

Step 2: Add the leeks and continue to cook, stirring, until they begin to soften, about 3 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook, stirring, until the garlic smells fragrant, 30 seconds to one minute.

Step 3: Add turnips, potatoes or rice, water or stock, bay leaf and salt, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat, cover and simmer 45 minutes to an hour. The turnips should be very tender. Remove the bay leaf.

Step 4: While the soup is simmering, blanch the kale in boiling, salted water until tender, 1-1/2 to 2 minutes, or steam for about 3 minutes. Transfer to a bowl of cold water, drain and squeeze out excess water. Slice the kale into thin slivers and toss with the walnut oil.

Step 5: Using an immersion blender, or in batches in a regular blender, puree the soup. Strain the soup to remove any fibers from the turnip and return to the pot.

Step 6: Heat through, stirring, and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Step 7: Ladle into bowls and top each serving with a spoonful of greens and a sprinkling of walnuts.