

# Intentional Eaters Community Supported Agriculture

Well, it finally happened. After weeks of relentless rain, the soil has taken up more than its fair share of water and the fields have begun to flood. These most recent downpours left medium sized lakes over the driveway and most of the lawn. We had to cross gushing trenches and sloop through 8 inch high water to get to the gardens on Tuesday. Luckily, most of the garden is safe, but several beds suffered from at least some flooding. Only the strongest of the tender greens have survived the battering of rain drops.



But we just keeping on going. The crew has been busy with property maintenance and we run into the garden whenever we get the chance. Thanks to our core group, there are many fun activities lining up for the second half of the summer. You'll have to check the Google Group for news of an upcoming movie night, but I'm looking forward to a night out at the big screen!

Isn't it great to play with bright, colourful vegetable? I'm very happy to offer a few new things in your bags this week. Thank you all for your enthusiasm, your recipe ideas, your feedback and for your support of our core group's efforts.

-David and the gang



# Today, you will find in your shares:

**Romaine Lettuce:** Huge heads of crispy, green romaine lettuce.

**Leaf Lettuce:** This stuff is a little more tender and adds colour to your salads or toppings.

**Red Chard:** One bunch of this beautiful and flexible green. Mince it into salads, saute it lightly, or throw it in a soup. Or stir fry it, blend it in a smoothy, make it into pesto, put it in pasta sauce... You get the picture.

**Bok Choi:** A staple of asian cuisine, this is a stir-fry Super Star! You can also eat it raw, steam it, whatever. Just remember that if you cook it for more than 30 seconds to 1 minute, it will turn into a soggy mess.

**Basil:** Here's more basil for your sauces, sandwiches, meats, etc.

**Cilantro:** Yummy herbs! Some people might be weary of cilantro, but give it another try! It gives a wonderful, fresh flavour to soups, eggs and vegetable dishes. Its strong flavour blends the most if added at the start of cooking and will stand out the most if it is used fresh or at the end of a recipe.

**Carrots:** Cause they're grrrrreat!

**Hakurai turnip:** They're starting to get pretty big now, aren't they?

**Broccoli:** This week, Riverglen and Wellington pickups get their first taste of broccoli. Please only take the amount indicated!

**Zucchini:** Green summer squash... summer! It is very important that you **only take the amount indicated!** You can't leave your lettuce behind and take extra zukes or some people (such as last week) will go home empty handed.

**Cabbage:** Take your pick between a green or red head of cabbage. I've had alot of fun fermenting sourkrout, but you can easily use your cabbage in stews, soups, coleslaw or rolls. Yum!

**Green beans:** Another fruit of the summer! These hearty beans are delicious raw or cooked. I love steamed green beans with lots of butter...

# How do I handle my veggies??

We are sending a great variety of vegetables your way, and you may not know how to handle all this food. Keeping vegetables fresh is actually rather simple if you learn to recognize what type of vegetable you are working with.

## 1) Tender leaf crops

Most kinds of lettuce and asian greens are in this category, but herbs and the tops of root crops are also dealt with in the same way. They are characterized by tender, fragile leaves that are eaten raw or cooked. The key to keeping these veggies for any length of time is to **keep them cool and humid, but not wet.**

**Move to the fridge ASAP.** Bags of cut greens should be folded over. Unbagged heads or bunches of herbs should go into your **crisper** or into a **plastic bag**. The ultimate way to keep your leaves crispy and handy is to **rinse under cold water, dry, and place in a bowl. Cover with a paper or dish towel.** You can even plop your bunch of cilantro in there. This way the greens stay fresh the longest and it becomes quick and easy to pluck a few leaves for an instant meal.

## 2) Hardy leaf crops

Here we find tougher greens like chard, kale and cabbage. These leaves are much thicker, larger and crispier. They can be tossed around a little more without bruising and the key is mostly to keep them from going limp.

**Move to the fridge ASAP.** Bunches of chard or kale can slide **into a plastic bag or go into the crisper.** If something doesn't fit, just cut it in half. Remove any discoloured or slimy leaves as they occur.

## 3) Root crops

Carrots, radish, turnips and beets are all dealt with in a similar fashion. In all cases, the tops should be removed immediately.

Then decide if you plan on eating the tops. If you don't, dispose of them or they'll just get yucky. If you're into eating things like **beet and turnip greens**, you should also remove them immediately and deal with them like a **leaf crop**. (see above) Since roots are the **storage organs** of plants, they will last for several days in the **fridge**. You can even leave them on the **counter** for a few days if they're out of the sun.

## 4) Vegetable fruits

You might know that vegetables like cucumber, tomato, bean, pea, zucchini, squash and corn are actually fruits. A fruit is the organ of a plant that contains seed, and it is the only part of the plant that is actually designed to be removed and consumed by something else.

This food is designed by nature to keep long enough in order to be eaten. Keep your fruit in cooler temperatures to slow ripening and put them in warmer temperatures to speed ripening. Green fruit like cucumber, peas and zucchini tend to last a little longer in the fridge, while tomatoes and squash develop a fuller, sweeter flavour when left on the counter. Whatever you decide, put them in a bag if they're in the fridge and in an open basket if they're on the counter.

**Friendly tip\*** This whole thing works much better when using a clean, uncluttered fridge.