



From Far Afield

A newsletter of the Tolstoy Farms CSA - September 16 & 19, 2015

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IT WAS A BUSY DAY ON the farm today. The weather prediction in our area is for lower temperatures tonight (Tuesday the 15th) than last night, which means we are going to get frost, probably lower temperatures than the last frost we got a week and a half ago. So we harvested all of the winter squash from the field, wiped it off, and moved it into a pile in the field, where we covered it with blankets and tarps. This will protect it for

the time being from both frost and rain. We also moved the garlic and onions which were bagged to our storage shop building, and covered the uncleaned onions in our onion cleaning barn with blankets. This was all in addition to our regular Tuesday harvest and CSA box organizing, so if my grammar is poor or I sound a little loopy, do excuse me. Long day...

Oh yeah, speaking of our winter squash harvest, you can see pictures of the pile on our facebook page. This is the URL <https://www.facebook.com/Tolstoy-Farms-307893470588/timeline/>, though it is probably just as easy if you haven't liked our page to do a search bar search on your facebook page for Tolstoy Farms.

Sticking with squash for a bit longer, allow me to talk about **Buttercup**, your winter squash this week. Buttercup was first bred in the early part of the last century at the North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station. It has a creamy, sweet, nutty flesh, somewhat reminiscent of sweet potato, for which it can be substituted in many recipes. It is good roasted or steamed, and makes very good pies, due to its smooth, dense texture. Buttercup is a good source of several B vitamins and omega-3 fatty acids, a very good source of minerals such as copper, potassium, and manganese, and an excellent source of fiber, vitamin C, and vitamin A. One of our summer workers, Dee, says he likes to cook buttercup by cutting it in half and scooping out the innards, then chopping the top off a head of garlic. He puts the garlic cut side up in the

center of a cast iron or heavy-bottomed pot, then inverts a squash half over it. He puts about an inch of water in the bottom of the pan and puts a lid on it, then cooks until the squash is tender. He then squeezes the cooked garlic into the squash and eats. If there is room in the pot he will put some carrot and potato in the pot on the outside of the squash and let them steam at the same time.

You have round red beets and Cylindra beets. Cylindras are the longer narrower beets. I believe you have had them in your box before; if not use them in the same way as regular red beets. My wife Diane likes cylindra beets because they roast faster than the round red beets.

You are getting an early registration application for next week both in print at the stand and as an attachment in your email. Returning the application before the end of November will ensure your space on the CSA roster for next year as well as keep the 2015 price for yourself in the event we decide to raise the price for 2016 in the off season. We do this so that the current CSA folks have a chance to get their shares reserved before we send out CSA applications to new CSA inquirers.

Both of your onions this week are yellow keeper onions. As their name implies, these onions have very good storage qualities, So if you do not use them right away, put them somewhere dark and relatively cool and they will last a long time. If you find yourself with excess car-

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In Your Box

- 2 pound Carola potato
- 1 Buttercup squash
- 2 turnips
- 1 kohlrabi
- 2 pounds tomatoes
- 2 leeks
- 1 bunch carrots
- 1 bunch red & cylindra beets
- 2 yellow keeper onion
- 1 head garlic
- 1 lettuce
- 2 cucumber
- 1 pound mixed summer squash
- Small bunch arugula
- 1 bunch chard
- 1 bunch flat leaf parsley
- 1 sweet pepper
- 1 Jalapeno pepper
- 1 Serrano pepper
- 1 poblano pepper

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rots or beets you want to save for later days, break off the tops and store them in the refrigerator or somewhere else very cool and somewhat humid.

Flat leaf parsley is your herb. Enjoy your produce.

Curried Buttercup Squash & Apple Soup

- 1 1/2 cups sour cream
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 2 teaspoons salt, plus more to taste
- 1 cup pumpkin seeds, or pepitas, shelled
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, plus more for pan
- 2 buttercup or small butternut squash, sliced in half lengthwise
- 2 medium onions, roughly chopped
- 3 celery stalks, roughly chopped
- 3 medium carrots, roughly chopped
- 1/4 cup packed dark-brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 4 apples, peeled, cored, and roughly chopped
- 2/3 cup brandy
- 1/4 cup honey
- Freshly ground black pepper

Heat oven to 350 degrees. In a small bowl, whisk together sour cream, maple syrup, 2 tablespoons water, and a pinch of salt. Cover; refrigerate.

In another bowl, toss pumpkin seeds with 2 teaspoons salt. Spread evenly over baking pan. Toast in oven until seeds are golden and begin to pop, 7 to 10 minutes. Set aside.

Butter a 9-by-13-by-2-inch baking dish. Place squash, cut side down, and 1/2 cup water in dish. Bake until tender, about 1 hour. Let cool 45 minutes. Remove seeds, peel, and set aside.

In a large stockpot over medium-high heat, melt butter. Add onions, celery, and carrots; cook, stirring, until onions are translucent, about 10 minutes. Add brown sugar and spices; cook, stirring, 5 minutes. Add apples and brandy; cook 10 minutes. Add squash and 12 cups water; simmer 1 hour. Let cool 30 minutes. Puree in food processor until smooth. Add honey, salt, and pepper to taste; pulse to combine.

To serve, garnish with a dollop of maple cream, and sprinkle with pumpkin seeds.

Roasted Beet and Arugula Salad

- 2 1/2 pounds small beets, preferably a mix of red, golden, and Chioggia, trimmed and scrubbed
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Coarse salt
- 4 cups arugula
- 2 teaspoons cumin seeds
- Flaky sea salt, such as Maldon

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place beets on foil lined with parchment. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil; season with coarse salt. Wrap foil into a sealed pouch. Roast beets on a rimmed baking sheet until easily pierced with a skewer, about 45 minutes. Carefully open pouch; when beets are cool enough to handle, rub off skins with paper towels. Halve beets (or quarter, if desired).

Arrange beets and arugula in a serving dish. In a skillet, bring remaining 3 tablespoons oil and cumin seeds to a simmer; toss with beets and greens. Sprinkle with sea salt and serve.