



Summer CSA: Week 4



Our annual president's lunch took place this Tuesday on the farm. This event is put on by Townes Harvest Garden and the Culinary Marketing MSU summer class. Produce from THG was prepared into a variety of dishes by the Culinary Marketing class. About 80 people were fed at this event with MSU president Waded Cruzado and Governor Steve Bullock in attendance.



looks at a large beet that we harvested out of our field.

We're happy to grow beets here because of their storage potential, taste, and quality of their greens for cooking. Beets can be topped of their greens and stored in a cool dry place for months on end making them an integral part of our short Montana growing season. The greens are tender and tasty which makes them perfect in a salad or in a dish of mixed sauteed greens

Things to Remember

- CSA pickup is every Wednesday from 4pm-6pm.
- We do not distribute our CSA's in boxes, so please bring a reusable produce bag to transport your share home in. Small produce bags will be helpful too as we start distributing some vegetables without bags or ties.
- If you can't make it during this time, please email or call us to arrange another time to come get your share. Contact info can be found at the footer of this email.

"So, what's in the CSA for this week?"

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We could not be more thrilled to provide you with a bountiful share of hand harvested, hand washed, passion borne fresh vegetables

Mokum (F1) Carrots

Dark Star, Raven (F1) and Jackpot (F1) Zucchini

Cucumbers (many varieties)

Red Ace (F1) Beets

Marino Cilantro
Italian Flat Leaf or Curly Parsley
Aroma (F1) or Genovese Basil
Loose Lacinato, Redbor (F1), or Winterbor (F1) Kale
Rainbow Chard
A Choice of Either
Gypsy (F1) or Green Magic (F1) Broccoli
or
Snow Crown (F1) Cauliflower*

U-pick herbs readily available upon request

Oregano
Rosemary
Thyme
Lemon Balm
Marjoram

* = new this week

Student Biographies: Althea H.



written by Sophie K.

Althea is a Montana native from the Flathead Valley who enjoys gardening, outdoor adventures, and exploring with her Border Collie Turlough. She is a Sustainable Foods and Bioenergy Systems major in the Agroecology option. Althea loves growing her own food, wild crafting, and foraging from the bounty of Montana's wilderness. Her favorite vegetables include garlic and colorful vegetables like beets, and carrots - she loves raspberries as well! Althea currently works as the director of operations at Seasonal Montana, a farm to table catering company that prides itself on supplying only the best local and seasonal ingredients. She grew up on a half acre food forest where she learned about native Montana foods and developed an appreciation for food production. She is excited to bring her knowledge of native Montana plants to Towne's Harvest this summer, and learn more about small scale farming operations.



Tool of the Week

By James F.



The eye hoe is a large hoe with a wooden handle, and where the blade attaches to the handle there is a large opening called an eye. Other names include chopping hoe, grub hoe, peasants hoe, and Italian grape hoe. This tool is heavy duty and is made to take down mallow and other large weeds that have large roots that cannot be pulled or handled by a lighter hoe.

The eye hoe is heavy and takes a lot of effort to swing, but it always makes a good workout using the tool. While using the eye hoe I suggest that it should be used earlier in the day so that it's not exhausting work in the hot parts of the day. It also clears the roots of vegetables that are no longer needed so we can plant new vegetables. The fact that it is large and heavy makes it so the tool cannot be used for normal weeding tasks. If using the eye hoe to weed around vegetables there is a high risk of hitting one of the vegetables and injuring it.

This tool is my favorite because of the work out you get from using it. The eye hoe might not be an all around weeder like other hoes but it takes care of heavy weeds and can tear up a clearing where previous vegetables were planted. Even though the eye hoe has its drawbacks it is an essential tool to the farm and we could not get as much done without this amazing tool.

Crop of the Week

Squash!

By Larson W.



Growing squash in Montana can be a little bit challenging at times because the growth cycle can be pretty long and the weather here can change drastically in a matter of hours. However, it is still manageable. We have successfully grown both summer and winter squash. Winter squash has a growth cycle that ranges anywhere from 85-105 days. Whereas with summer squash, the growth cycles are shorter, averaging about 50 days. The days to maturity for squash is so wide because squash growth is dependent on heat. Jackpot zucchini is our earliest summer squash variety. Johnny's seed catalog informs us that its growth cycle is 42 days to harvest. We harvested our first Jackpot zucchini 41 days from transplanting it. It's also worth noting that our transplants got snowed on the week after we put them in the ground. We transplanted these back in May and had them in the Plant Growth Center (PGC) for two weeks prior to transplanting. Therefore, growing squash in Montana is very doable, but we are at an advantage because we get to start them in the PGC. If we direct seeded them, there may not be zucchini in this week's CSA share. Squash needs to have a soil temperature between 62 F and 70 F for the seed to avoid rotting.

Squash can withstand some frost, but most squash can only withstand 1-3 frosts

before getting substantially damaged. In fact, a little bit of frost may be beneficial. The zucchini plants at the farm did receive one or two episodes of frost, but most of the plants were able to recover. Right after we planted the transplants there was a frost. Eleven of the plants did not make it, so I pulled the dead ones and direct seeded my own in those places. The plants do well under floating row cover, so we kept them under that for several weeks.

However squash can face problems with some insects, including cucumber beetles, squash bugs, and vine borers. You especially need to watch out for squash bugs because they tend to lay eggs on the bottom of the plants' leaves, however if noticed, they can be easily crushed. We haven't had any major pest problems on our squash, thanks to planting our squash early in the season before pests were prevalent. By the time pests came around, our squash had already gotten so big that the insects aren't posing a threat to the plants. Also, the floating row cover helps keep insects away while the plants are still small.

As previously stated, winter squash takes much longer to reach maturity, so our winter squash is not ready yet - summer squash is what you are receiving in your CSA share. Summer squash can be direct seeded in Montana because of its shorter growth cycle. For my special project I chose to focus on zucchini because my dad has a squash farm back home and I wanted to closely observe the differences of growing it in Montana. We planted 112 zucchini plants and left them in the PGC for the seeds to germinate at a better climate. We planted two varieties Dark Star and Jackpot. Once the weather warmed up a little bit we transplanted all 112 of these zucchini plants. After about two weeks of these plants being outside, I went to the row and pulled all of the dead ones and put in seed for a Raven F1 hybrid. I wanted to see how the zucchini plant would do being direct seeded in the summer out in Montana. The direct seeded plants are doing well, however a few never sprouted. The zucchini in the CSA includes both the varieties of summer squash that we planted back in May and also the F1 Raven hybrid that I direct seeded in early June.



Need a great summer gift to give to family member, friend, or acquaintance?

Follow the link below to purchase the newest addition to our CSA program - harvest bucks! Harvest bucks are a gift certificate for our on campus farm stand. Harvest Bucks are unique because you receive an added value of 10% more than what you paid for! For example, if you purchase \$50 of harvest bucks you

will receive \$55 worth of coupons to use at our farm stand on anything that you'd like!

If you've already purchased harvest bucks and haven't already received them they can be redeemed at our campus farm stand during any hour of operations.

Farm stand is held every Thursday from 3:00pm-5:30pm at Montana State University in-between the Student Union Building and Barnard Hall.

<http://townesharvest.montana.edu/communitysupportedag/>



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Contact Dylan Fishman at
(847) 409-5567 with any questions