



# Summer Ripens from the Bottom Up

## TABLE OF BOX CONTENTS

- **First of the Season Surprise: Eggplant or Green Bell Pepper**— These summer treats are only just barely trickling in, so much so that we do not have enough of either for all of you to have one. **Green Bells**, although really just unripe bell peppers from our yellow, red, & red plantings, are wonderfully crisp and refreshing. The first **Eggplant** of the season is tender as can be, not a whisper of bitterness to be heard, just full of umami brought out when roasted.
- **Italian Parsley**— This potent herb is actually quite sweet, a lovely addition to any salad, slaw, or made into a simple herb pesto.
- **Green Cabbage**
- **Garlic**
- **Zucchini**
- **Sweet Slice Cucumbers**
- **Head Lettuce**
- **1 Bunch Carrots**
- **Frisée Endive**—See recipe on back!!! I've guiltily made it four times in the last three days...
- **Willamette Sweet Onions**— Freshly dried onions are still moist but have condensed sugars and an incredible flavor.
- **Siletz Slicer Tomato**
- **Huckleberry Gold Potatoes**— Everyone's favorite purple on the outside, golden delicious on the inside. Nice & waxy like a yellow Nicola, perfect for roasting.
- **Boysenberries**

Hello veggie lovers,

Welcome to week 4 of your CSA. Suddenly June is almost over and summer is upon us! Solanaceae, the night shade family, is home to many of the sun-loving crops that scream summer in the Pacific Northwest. In your box this week, you've got Solanaceous crops such as tomatoes, eggplant, green bell pepper, and potatoes.



*A young eggplant snuggled up at the base of the plant underneath a flower about to become another fruit. Photo by our Business Manager, Joey*

For heat-loving crops such as tomatoes and cucumbers, the first fruits of the season always ripen from the bottom of the plant up. That means that all the early season summer veg that you'll find in the box and at farmers markets this time of year was cut almost at ground level.

As we weave our way through tomato houses with teenage vines getting cocky and overgrowing their trellising, we maintain a permanent downward bend, held strong by the legs (not the back), eyes peeled for any sign of color that isn't green. We may walk five or ten feet, crouch down, approach the rare eagerly ripe tomato cautiously with scissors, and snip it so that it falls gently into the palm of the hand, flipping it over and placing it into the flat on its strong shoulders. Then we pick up our flat again and continue to walk bent down the row on the search for the next hidden gem. Each tomato & cucumber is cut this way.

As the season progresses, so will the angle at which we maneuver our bodies as we harvest. There's such embedded energy in the food we eat, so much care, so much deliciousness.

—with love, your vegucator, LB  
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We'd love to see what you're doing with your CSA box! Tag us on social media @gatheringtogetherfarm!

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## **THE BEST FRISÉE SALAD EVER—THE SECRET IS BACON.**



—I adapted a recipe from <https://www.bonappetit.com/recipe/frisee-salad-with-warm-bacon-vinaigrette> I love this recipe, it really allows the sweet crisp yet slightly bitter Frisée to shine, balanced perfectly with good fats from the bacon and the egg, brightness & sweetness from the balsamic vinegar, and creaminess from the sweet caramelized onions. It's sort of like a BLT salad. —LB

### **INGREDIENTS**

- ½ head **Frisée Endive**
- About 6 thick bacon slices or bacon ends, chopped
- 1 **Sweet Onion**, sliced
- ¼ bunch Fresh **Italian Parsley**, roughly chopped
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- Bread (end of a loaf will do) torn into croutons (or pre-packaged)
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- Salt and Pepper taste (plus pepper at the end for pretties)
- 2 eggs, poached (Before this week, I never poached an egg. And you know what—it's easy. Y'all should try it.)

### **DIRECTIONS**

1. Heat up olive oil in a skillet over medium, add torn bread and toss to coat. Sprinkle a couple pinches of salt and cracks of pepper. Stir until golden brown & crisp, 4-5 minutes, then transfer to a plate to cool.
2. Return skillet to medium heat and toss in chopped bacon, stirring frequently until just halfway to crisp, 3-4 minutes. Add onions and continue to cook another 3-4 minutes. Stir in about ¼ cup balsamic vinegar, scraping bottom of skillet to collect all the yummy bits. Taste, add more vinegar if needed.
3. Place chopped Frisée & parsley into a big bowl. Pour the onion-balsamic-bacon magic over the Frisée, toss until mixed well, then toss in croutons.
4. Top with a poached or soft-boiled egg (see link for tutorial on easy egg poaching). But basically, just crack two eggs into a little bowl, bring a pot of water to boil, turn off the heat, & gently roll two cracked eggs into the water, one at a time, don't touch it for 2.5-3 minutes, then remove carefully. Poached. It does help to crack the eggs first over a mesh strainer to drain off excess white.

## **SAMIN'S ROASTED VEG AND WHITE BEAN SALAD**



—Adapted from <https://www.today.com/recipes/roasted-vegetable-white-bean-salad-recipe-t144350>

### **INGREDIENTS**

- 1 bunch **carrots**
- 2-3 **zucchini**
- 1 large **eggplant** or 1 large **green bell pepper**
- 2 cups cooked white beans, such as butter, cannellini, or navy beans, draining the liquid off & save for later.
- 4 ounces Feta cheese, broken into large crumbles
- Olive oil
- Salt, preferably coarse and flaky
- 1 cup loosely packed **Italian Parsley** leaves
- Red Wine Vinaigrette\* (see below)

### **DIRECTIONS**

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Chop your carrots, zucchini, and eggplant into large chunks, and place each separately on their own sheet tray, that way you can control cooking time best for each vegetable. Toss them in oil and salt & pepper first, and drizzle about 2 Tbsp oil on the sheet tray before transferring the vegetables onto it. Avoid overcrowding the vegetables—they should not touch. Use another pan if ya need.
5. Place vegetables into oven and cook until tender and caramelized, about 26 to 30 minutes. Check after about 12 minutes. Rotate the pans to ensure even browning.
6. When the roasted vegetables are brown on the outside and completely tender when pierced with a knife, remove them from the oven. Set aside to cool for a few minutes.
7. Reserving the cooking liquid, drain beans and place into large bowl. Dress with 3 tablespoons vinaigrette and season with salt and 1 teaspoon za'atar. Add a little bean liquid to make it juicy. Taste and adjust dressing and seasoning as needed.
8. To assemble salad, layer zucchini, eggplant, and carrots on a large platter. Drizzle with vinaigrette, sprinkle with za'atar, then spoon beans over vegetables. Sprinkle with large crumbles of feta. In a medium bowl, lightly dress parsley leaves with 1 tablespoon vinaigrette and salt. Place atop salad and serve immediately.

**\*For the Red Wine Vinaigrette:** In a small bowl or jar, let 2 Tbsp finely diced shallot sit in 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar for 15 minutes, then add 6 Tbsp olive oil, a generous pinch of salt, and a small pinch of pepper. Stir or shake to combine, then taste with one of the vegetables and adjust salt and acid as needed. Cover and refrigerate leftovers for up to 3 days.