

CSA Share Week 13:

2 sweet bell peppers
4 ears sweet corn
1 pound eggplant
1 Ailsa Craig sweet onion*
*fresh harvested onion, so eat within 1 week

1-2 sugar cube melons
zucchini or summer squash
2 little gem lettuces
1.5 lbs. New Girl tomatoes



About the Produce/Recipe Ideas:

Wow! There is so much summer in the share this week, I don't think you'll have any trouble knowing what to do with it. Nevertheless, here are some great suggestions:

We make this every year. It is so delicious:

[Roasted Eggplant and Pepper Spread](#)

The **New Girl tomatoes** are a firm, dense, sweet tomato that are less watery than the heirlooms. They are a great, versatile tomato that you can slice and eat raw or cook down for a fresh pasta sauce, or try these suggestions:

[Spicy Miso Roasted Tomatoes and Eggplant](#)
[Sweet and Sour Eggplant and Tomatoes](#)
[Tomato and Red Pepper Pasta Sauce](#)

If you didn't make this last week with the **fresh corn**, it's really good. We sauteed some **zucchini** to serve on top, too:

[Fresh Corn Polenta with Sauteed Tomatoes](#)

Recipe of the Week:

Roasted Eggplant with Tomato and Goat Cheese

This recipe, suggested by a CSA member, is perhaps the simplest possible thing to do with eggplant. Just more proof that anything you do with eggplant will taste good!

Slice **1 or 2 eggplant** into 1/2" thick rounds (no need to salt them). Drizzle oil on baking pan (9x12 pyrex casserole dish works), arrange slices, not overlapping, drizzle more oil and lightly salt. Slice **1 or 2 tomatoes** and place one tomato slice on each eggplant round. Dollop some **goat cheese** on top of each (about a tbsp, crumbled). If desired, add some pepper, a few drops of garlic oil to each, and place some rosemary sprigs around the slices.

Roast in pre-heated 400° oven for about 30 min. Add fresh basil at serving, if desired.

News from the Farm

If you were to ask me what's the hardest crop to grow on our farm, I'd probably say cover crops. Yet they are also the most beneficial thing we grow. Cover crops are what we grow in fields that are NOT in vegetable production. Rather than leave the soil bare and susceptible to erosion, organic farmers try to make sure that there is always something green and growing in the fields. These cover crops provide multiple benefits to the farm. Most of all they build soil organic matter that provides food for soil microorganisms that in turn release nutrients back into the soil for the next round of vegetable crops. Farmers call cover crops "green manures" because, like animal manure, they reinvigorate the soil with life and nutrients.



Pictured here is a cover crop of Sudan grass mixed with crimson clover that is growing on one of our main fields this summer. The little red flowers are the clover in full bloom, providing food for insects and bees and also fixing nitrogen in the soil for next year's crops. The Sudan grass grows tall and sends down deep roots that loosen the soil and improve aeration and porosity. In the fall, the Sudan grass will die at the first frost and slowly decompose all winter. The clover will survive and provide ground cover that we can easily work into the soil next May when it is time to plant crops.

It all sounds great, but achieving success with cover crops isn't easy. Researchers from WSU Puyallup seeded this crop with a fancy seed drill back in June that really helped us get good germination. We were lucky in June to get enough rain that this crop got well established. Unfortunately, there are way too many weeds getting close to setting seed out here, so I'm gonna need to mow this crop down sooner than I'd like to prevent major weed problems next season.

Getting rid of a cover crop can be as problematic as getting it started. In a wet spring, a winter cover crop may have grown 6 feet tall before the fields dry enough to mow it down. Then we have to quickly incorporate the residue to prepare fields for planting. One spring I had a cover crop that wouldn't die and ended up suffocating our spring carrots. I still have so much to learn about cover crops, but the benefits are worth the effort.