

# Wholesome Harvest CSA

Fort Atkinson, WI – [veggies@wholesomeharvestcsa.com](mailto:veggies@wholesomeharvestcsa.com) – [www.wholesomeharvestcsa.com](http://www.wholesomeharvestcsa.com) – Issue 7: July 29<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup>

## Tomayto, Tomahto

At the end of last season, we polled our members to see which vegetables they were just dying to receive in their box and the overwhelming favorite was (drum roll please)...heirloom tomatoes! Tomatoes have always been one of our favorite vegetables to produce but, for this season, we really amped it up. We have over 10 varieties of heirloom tomatoes, not to mention cherry tomato varieties and our red slicing tomato, growing around the farm in either hoopouses or in the field. We have over 4000 sq. feet of hoopouse space and another ¼ acre of field space dedicated to tomatoes for the season.

What exactly are heirloom tomatoes?? Heirloom tomatoes are simply varieties of tomatoes that have been around for 50+ years with no change. They have not undergone selective breeding or other breeding techniques over the years making them quite extraordinary, albeit vintage. Just think, your great, great grandparents might have eaten the same exact variety of tomato that you will find in your box this week!!

Though heirloom tomatoes are quite interesting and exciting to produce, they are also very challenging and expensive to produce. Our modern red slicing tomatoes have been bred over the years to be almost “perfect;” the perfect weight and size, crack/split resistant, made for shipping, all while still having a great texture and taste. Growing heirloom tomatoes is no small task. On average, we have to plant 7 heirloom tomato plants to 1 hybrid plant.

Everything that our red, modern slicing tomatoes have been bred for, the heirloom tomatoes have not. Heirlooms are plagued with pollination problems, splitting/cracking, scars, and poor yields. Don't be alarmed if you see any of this cracking, splitting, and/ or cat facing (suture looking scars) on your heirloom tomatoes. These are all natural occurrences for heirlooms.

Although heirlooms may look odd at times (don't we all), there is something special about these old school varieties. Whether it's their wonderful colors, delicious taste or soft texture, heirlooms are definitely a treat! Over the next several weeks, you could receive any mixture of them in your box!

## What's in your box?

This list is tentative and subject to change. The official list will be updated continuously on our website's homepage.

### Full Shares/Half Shares

- \* Zucchini
- \* Carrots
- \* Onion (green topped)
- \* Beans; green
- \* Slicing Tomatoes
- \* Cherry Tomatoes
- \* Grape Mix Tomatoes OR Heirloom Tomato
- \* Red Lettuce
- \* Eggplant OR Pepper

### Greens Share

- \* Swiss Chard
- \* Head Lettuce Variety
- \* Basil

### Tomato Varieties (left to right):

- Slicing Tomato
- Prudens Purple
- German Johnson
- Cherokee Purple
- Green Zebra
- Powers Heirloom
- Black Prince
- Speckled Roman
- Red Paste Tomato
- Yellow Saladette Tomato
- Juanne Flamme (bunch)
- Red Saladette Tomato (bunch)





Crate full of heirloom tomato varieties including German Johnson and Cherokee Purple

Varying stages of ripeness for the Speckled Roman tomato fruit



Yellow Saladette tomatoes ready for harvest

## What are all these veggies in my box?

**Red Lettuce:** This is the head lettuce that has reddish/green leaves. It is great on a burger or cut up for a salad! Remember, to keep lettuce as fresh as possible, store it in the fridge with paper towel to suck up excess moisture.

**Carrots:** The first week of carrots!! This variety of carrots is the familiar looking orange ones. They will have their tops on them which you can use. Though these carrots are hydro washed, carrots are root crops. This means they might get to your home with a little Wholesome Harvest dirt still residing on their skin. Give them a good scrub/wash before eating!

**Tomatoes:** This is the first week that all of our different tomato crops are beginning to really produce. We have cherry tomatoes, heirloom tomatoes, other varieties, and the classic red slicing tomatoes all being harvested. You will see cherry tomatoes, red slicing tomatoes, and one other variety in your box this week!

**Beans:** The beans are in full swing now! Beans are one of the most labor intensive vegetables around this time of year as they take a large part of our crew to pick them each harvest day.

**Zucchini:** The zucchini in this week's box is coming from our second planting of the crop. This second planting has definitely been the higher yielding planting but both plantings have suffered slightly due to the lack of rain over the past couple of weeks. We have been able to pick a lot over the last two weeks though for which we are very thankful!

**Green Top Onion:** This week's green top onions are huge!! Remember, store these in the fridge if you are not going to use them right away.

**Eggplant OR Pepper:** Our eggplant crop has been slightly diminished due to the small amount of rain over the last couple of weeks but all three varieties have been able to produce which is great! You might see one of three varieties, Asian, globe, or fairytale, in your box this week. We also are starting to see some of our pepper plants outside beginning to produce so some of you will see either a green bell pepper, a white bell pepper, or a cone pepper variety.

# Italian Herb & Cheese Stuffed Tomatoes

## Ingredients:

- \* 6 vine ripened tomatoes (you can use as many as you have/want)
- \* 1/4 cup fresh italian parsley, chopped
- \* 1/4 cup oregano, chopped
- \* 1/2 tablespoon thyme
- \* 1 tablespoon Italian seasoning
- \* 1/2 cup bread crumbs
- \* 1 cup shredded Italian cheese blend (cheddar, mozzarella, parmesan)
- \* ground black pepper to taste
- \* extra virgin olive oil
- \* 2 teaspoons italian seasoning

## Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees
2. Cut the tops off of the tomatoes and scoop out the mushy insides using a melon baller and set aside. Leave the thick tomato wall in tact making sure not to pierce through the skin.
3. In a medium sized mixing bowl add in the tomato pulp, herbs, bread crumbs, cheese, and pepper to taste. (You can also add about 1/2 tablespoon of olive oil). Mix ingredients together until mixed evenly.
4. In a 9x13 pan line up your tomatoes and fill each with the pulp mixture. Top off with a sprinkle of olive oil. Bake for 18-22 minutes, until the cheese is melted.

Servings: 6; Adapted from my the freshfridge.com

# Tomato Vegetable Casserole

## Ingredients:

- \* 1 medium potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- \* 1 medium sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- \* 2 carrots, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- \* 1 red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- \* 4 tablespoons olive oil
- \* 1 3/4 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper
- \* 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- \* 1/2 red onion, thinly sliced into rings
- \* 1 large zucchini, cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- \* 2 large ripe tomatoes, cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick slices
- \* 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- \* 2 tablespoons Italian-style dried bread crumbs
- \* Sprigs of fresh basil, for garnish

## Preparation:

1. Preheat the Oven to 450 degrees F. In a 13x9x2-inch glass baking dish, toss the potato, sweet potato, carrots, bell pepper, 2 tablespoons of the oil, 3/4 teaspoon of pepper, and 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Arrange the onion evenly on top, then top with the zucchini. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the oil and sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon each of salt and pepper. Arrange the tomato slices over the zucchini. Drizzle with the remaining 1 tablespoon of oil and sprinkle with the remaining 1/2 teaspoon each of salt and pepper.
2. In a small bowl, stir the Parmesan and bread crumbs to blend and sprinkle over the vegetables. Bake uncovered until the vegetables are tender and the topping is golden brown, about 40 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes.
3. Garnish with fresh basil sprigs and serve.

Servings: 6 side dishes; Adapted from wizardrecipes.com