

## What's in Your Box - August

August is our favourite month, with the farm spilling over in veg. All the lovely Mediterranean veg that everyone loves so much is producing like crazy and our peppers and chillies add a little more spice to our eating. Still autumn is closing in fast and the leaves are quietly starting to drop their first leaves—doesn't the summer pass quickly?

This is what you might find in your box through August:

**aubergine**—we grow fantastic aubergines and in August we usually have a glut. Luckily it is an incredibly versatile veg, great in stir fries, soup, lasagne, pasta, roasted, fried and baked—you name it!

**beets**—we grow a lovely range of red, golden and Chioggia beets (stripy in the middle) and they should be in full production by August. I always add beets to the Sunday roast vegetables for a touch of sweetness and they are great in soups and salads as well.

**broad beans**—we generally will still have a fair number of these still to enjoy. Don't just eat these as a side dish; they are great in risottos, soups, salads, etc. Just make sure you take the time to pop them out of their casings as they are so much nicer without them.

**basil**—an incredibly versatile herb, we'll be cropping towards the end of the month. Add to anything with tomatoes, great in curries, make pesto!

**cabbage**—we should have cabbages coming on in August, though sometimes we push them a bit later.

**carrots**—this staple veg usually is ready by August and you should be getting bunches of fresh carrots in your box.

**chard**—probably the most popular green about, there are two types: swiss chard with a thick white stalk and rainbow chard, called so because of the fabulously coloured stalks—yellow, pink, and red. We tend to mix the two in our bunches. Easiest way to cook chard is to tear up leaves, taking the central stalk out, put

a bit of water in a frying pan (about and  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch), throw your chard in, drizzle with olive oil, sea salt and garlic (optional), cover and cook on high heat for about 5 -8 minutes stirring occasionally and making sure that water doesn't complete evaporate. A squeeze of lemon at the end will take away the chalky feel it sometime get. Also, lots of people eat the stalks, chopping them up finely and sautéing before adding the leaves. If you are making risotto (which chard is lovely for) definitely use the stalks as you would celery cooking with onions at the start of the dish.

**cucumber**—a summer staple; enjoy them while they last!

**courgettes**—another summer staple, I look forward to these every year. There is so much you can do with them, from simply frying them up in olive oil and garlic to adding to pastas, curries and stir fries, lasagne and pizza.

**fennel**—has a white bulb and long fronds and a distinctive anise flavour. Lovely thinly sliced into salad or coleslaw like celery or you can bake in cream and top with cheese as a side (blanch them first before baking). The tops are nice used as an herb; chop finely.

**french beans**—our first crop is finished but the second ususally makes a reappearance in the boxes towards the end of the month. The best of the beans in my opinion; you don't have to do anything more than steam them until just tender, slather with butter and sprinkle a little salt and squeeze a bit of lemon over them. Oh so good!

**fresh herbs**—using fresh herbs in your cooking will give it a rich, boisterous flavours. We'll be growing parsley, sage, thyme and oregano. Sage is great with roast meats; thyme can be mixed into ground beef to make a tasty difference in burgers and it's also good with roast chicken; oregano is good in lasagne and pastas and really good with tomato; parsley, you can put into just about anything to lift the flavour.

**kale**—we grow a range of different kales throughout the year - Russian kale, Curly Kale, Cavolo Nero, and other special varieties as well. Key to liking kale is cooking it until it's tender which does take a bit longer but it shouldn't be tough and chewy. It works particularly well when cooked with lots of garlic and well seasoned.

**lettuces**—we should have lettuces through the summer and grow a variety of different varieties.

**red & yellow onions**—onions will be producing well by August and depending on the weather and when they are sown there still may be some of the green stalks left on them. However, by September we will have pulled the crop and dried it, so you'll get them in their more traditional form as bulbs.

**potatoes**—we're into our potatoes now and will likely have them into late autumn and winter.

**sorrel**—we don't always grow this unusual green, but when we do, it's lovely to have. It has a strong lemony flavour that is quite sharp if eaten raw; however this softens when cooked and it is *GORGEOUS* mixed into soups, quiches, curries and stir fries. Mixes well with spinach and chard also. See our recipes for ideas and try a couple.

**spinach**—delicious on its own or mixed with sorrel or chard; great for juicing as well.

**sweet peppers**—we do peppers (along with chillis) really well and they are a staple of from August on through the autumn. They are tasty and occasionally have a little heat (we were surprised to find one of the varieties is slightly spicy; so maybe good to taste them before you chuck them into a stir fry for the kids...)

**tomatoes**—we grow a range of different tomatoes: sungold (orange cherry toms that are really sweet); traditional Gardener's Delight red cherries; as well as interesting varieties like Tigerellas, Black Cherry, Marmande and other heirlooms. Tomato salad with herbs, sea salt and pepper, olive oil, white wine vinegar and a splash of cream is a decadent way to enjoy them all!