

May 1st, 2009

Issue 1

Flagstaff Garden Starts CSA



The Seedling Chronicle

In This Week's Share.....

Onions~ 'Candy'

Widely adapted, mid-day variety. Slightly flattened yellow onion. Extra sweet and so mild, cutting 'Candy' leaves you less teary-eyed. 110 days to maturity (dtm).

Onions~ 'Purplette'

These flavorful onions mature early and hold well. A glossy rich burgundy, transforming to a nice pastel pink when cooked. Harvest at golf ball size or very young as baby bunching onions. 60 dtm.

Onions~ 'Evergreen Hardy'

The most winter-hardy bunching onion. Little or no bulbing. 65 dtm.

Kale~ 'Red Russian'

Tender, colorful specialty for salad mix and bunching. Stems are purple; leaves are deep gray-green, purple-veined, flat, noncurled, and tooth-edged. 25 baby, 50 mature.

Kale~ 'Toscano'

Lacinato or "dinosaur" type. Unique leaf type: extra-dark green, noncurled but heavily blistered. Tolerant to hot and cold weather. 30 baby, 65 mature.

Parsley~ 'Titan'

Specialty flat-leaf for flavorful garnishes. Outstanding sweet flavor lends itself to many culinary uses. Biennial. 75 days to harvest.

Spinach~ 'Tyee'

The most bolt-resistant savoy type spinach. Upright growth habit for cleaner leaves. 40 dtm.

A Warm Welcome.....

Welcome to our 2009 season! Our newsletter will serve to inform you about what you receive in your share, in addition to recipes, poetry and general perspectives about growing and eating food. Whether you are a returning member or a new member, I am very appreciative for your support in our second year of existence.

By becoming a part of this CSA, you have joined 50 other families and individuals in a quest to grow your own food and engage in a pastime that has the potential to teach us new things, help us relax and engage with the natural world as well as reap the delicious fruits (and vegetables) of our labor.

Happy gardening everyone and thanks again for your support!

	Spacing Requirements	Sun Requirements
Onions	4-6 inches	Full Sun
Kale	12-18 inches	Full Sun to Partial Shade
Spinach	6-8 inches	Part to Full Sun
Parsley	9-12 inches	Full Sun to Partial Shade



Water your garden with rainwater! Sign up for Rain Barrels arriving in June. Call the Native Plant and Seed nursery at (928) 773-9406 for more information.

The Wonderful World of Kale

If you want an addition to your garden that's delicious, full of nutrients, easy to grow and aesthetically pleasing, then kale is the plant for you!

Kale is a member of the Cabbage Family and it grows well in any season. Kale plants like to grow in a rich soil, high in organic matter but it can thrive under a variety of soil conditions.

You can harvest very young leaves to use fresh in salads or allow plants to mature and use

as a cooked green. Harvest older leaves by removing the larger, outer leaves and allowing the center of the plant to continue producing.

Kale will tolerate some shade, but a sunny spot is preferable. If garden space is such that some crops have to be partially shaded, reserve the full-sun area for warm season crops. If you put your kale in a sunny location, it will droop a little during the day and then perk up at night when the temperatures are cooler.

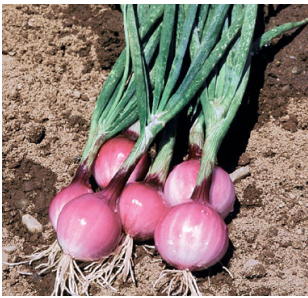
Baked Kale Chips

Ingredients

- 1 bunch kale
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon seasoned salt

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Remove the leaves of the kale from the thick stems and tear into bite size pieces. Wash and thoroughly dry kale. Drizzle kale with olive oil and sprinkle with seasoning salt. Bake approximately 10-15 minutes until the edges are brown, but not burnt.



Onions

Onions are generally very hardy and easy to grow. One of the biggest factors affecting onion success is day length. Some onions need short days for bulbing, and others require long ones. The onions I have chosen for you are intermediate day varieties.

Onions like it warm and a southern exposure is a great advantage. Onions prefer loose, fertile, friable, well-drained soil with plenty of added organic matter. It is important for your onions to get enough nitrogen, but too much can delay bulbing. Be sure your soil has adequate phosphorus, as a deficiency in this can result in onions

that have thick necks and don't store well.

The shallow root systems of an onion is sensitive to fluctuations in water. Mulch to conserve water and to control weeds. Weeding is very important in a young onion patch, since onion leaves grow straight up and produce no weed-inhibiting shade.

When transplanting your 'Candy' onions, it is best to separate them carefully, placing them 4-6 inches apart in shallow furrows about 2 inches deep. The 'Purplette' onions can grown slightly closer together as they only grow to be golf ball sized. Once in their furrows, quickly push dirt around their roots,

and water them immediately. This will minimize transplant shock.

You don't need to worry about separating the "Evergreen Hardy White" bunching onions, as they will not bulb up and can grow in close proximity to one another.

Onions can be picked at any time for fresh use. However, if you plan on storing them you must wait until the tops fall over. That is when you know they have finished growing and are in the last stages of bulbing up. At this time you should stop watering them so the bulbs can dry out and be cured.

Ode To The Onion by Pablo Neruda

Onion,
luminous flask,
your beauty formed
petal by petal,
crystal scales expanded you
and in the secrecy of the dark
earth
your belly grew round with dew.
Under the earth
the miracle
happened
and when your clumsy
green stem appeared,
and your leaves were born
like swords
in the garden,
the earth heaped up her power
showing your naked transpar-
ency,
and as the remote sea
in lifting the breasts of Aphrodite
duplicating the magnolia,
so did the earth
make you,
onion
clear as a planet
and destined
to shine,
constant constellation,
round rose of water,
upon
the table
of the poor.

You make us cry without hurting
us.
I have praised everything that
exists,
but to me, onion, you are
more beautiful than a bird
of dazzling feathers,
heavenly globe, platinum goblet,
unmoving dance
of the snowy anemone

and the fragrance of the earth
lives
in your crystalline nature.

Planning tips for your garden.....



Keep a journal to make next year's planning that much easier. Jot down notes on when you planted particular crops, what worked well and not so well and other general observations.

Double your harvest by interplanting and succession planting. Interplanting takes advantage of space while crops are maturing. Succession planting involves replanting vegetables into areas you have already harvested.

Look at the plot where you wish to grow your garden. Determine the hours of sunlight it receives. For example, if planning on growing tomatoes, they need a minimum of 6 to 8 hours of sunlight a day.

Be prepared for a frost at any time. Have some row covers, walls of water, etc. on hand in case night temperatures drop unexpectedly. This first share is frost-tolerant but later shares won't be.

Hardening-Off and Transplanting

Hardening-off is an important part of the transplanting process. I try to expose your plants to cooler nighttime temperatures and windier conditions before giving them to you, but because Flagstaff has so many differing microclimates it may be a good idea to acclimate the plants to your site before putting them in your garden. Limiting water during the hardening off period can make your plants stronger.

Step 1
Set the plants in a sheltered, shady spot outdoors. A covered porch is an ideal starter spot, so is a table or bench under a leafy tree. Bring the plants back inside at night, and bring them in at any time of day if the weather turns cold, windy or rainy.

Step 2
Expose the plants gradually to more sun. After two or three days, you can safely keep them in the sun for half a day, then return them to the shade. By the end of the week they'll be

tough enough to soak up the rays all day.

Step 3
Transplant the seedlings to the garden on an overcast day or in the early evening to ease the shock of transition from pot to ground. Always handle plants by their leaves or by the root ball. Avoid grasping the plant by its stem. I always like to dip my six-packs in a liquid seaweed/water mix before transplanting. The seaweed provides nutrients and reduces the stress on young seedlings.