

THE ROOT CONNECTION PO Box 267 Woodinville Wa 98072

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October 25 thru 28 are the last pickup days. That's **three more weeks after this one**, so keep coming. Lots of good stuff!!

If you haven't gotten them, **PLEASE PICK UP YOUR PUMPKINS THIS WEEK** (2 per membership for the season)

Preseason signups for 2017 – there are 3 ways you can sign up for 2017 CSA season:

Pay in full now (the discount was increased to 4% over last year)

or

Use the 3 payment plan (pmts in Oct, Nov and Dec)

or

Pay just a deposit to reserve your spot for next year. You can then either pay the balance before April 15 for a discount, or make whatever payments you want during the winter so it costs you less to pay the balance in April, or opt to follow the payment plan next year (pmts April thru August)

Why do we have Preseason signups? There are 3 main reasons- **one** is that it gives us a pretty good idea of how many people will sign up for next year. If preseason signups are low, we may opt to plan on a smaller membership when we set our limits for next year. The **second** reason is that we spend around 1/3 of our supply budget for 2018 (seeds, field supplies, etc.) in October and November. Our fiscal year ends Sept 30, and after that, all expenses have to go onto the 2018 budget. We also have equipment and property repairs to do in the winter, which can total quite a large sum. There are labor costs in the winter as well, as the Foreman and General Manager work year-round, and some of our other employees are called in as needed to help with the work. The **third** reason is that having money to pay those expenses as they occur means that we do not have to rely on interest-bearing operating loans and can more easily keep within our budget. So, in a nutshell, this money provides funds for our expenses from now until April when other signups come in.

Winter share signups are available – good way to keep up with your improved diet of organic fruits and vegetables and save money too. And, you sign up and pay for one or two months at a time and choose your weeks, so it's very flexible. Members tell me that doing the Winter shares encourages eating more produce as the same philosophy works – it's paid for, and you can collect it all in one place and plan menus accordingly.

Deadline to start in November is to have your forms in to me by Oct 22nd.

U-Pick greens: Pick limit increased:

Now up to 12 leaves per type of Kale PER WEEK (there are 3 kinds- Siberian (my favorite), Toscano, and Rogue (curly green)). Increase in pick limit does not apply to the Scarlet Kale, mustards, or collards as there is not as much of them. So if you pick a total of 36 large leaves per week you can put away lots of greens over the next 4 wks

Time to freeze some! (see front counter for freezing greens print out or click on "recipes" on our website and select "greens") The greens will remain in the field until late Winter, or as long as they survive, which is weather dependent. Members are welcome to stop by and pick some leaves even when the CSA is over. Some years there is a fair amount of small leaves to pick, and some years they don't survive due to very cold weather plus ground water that comes up far enough to drown the roots. **THANK YOU all members for being so careful with your picking!** Everyone is doing such a good job, and although the plants are getting picked, new growth is still happening to provide more leaves for us later.

Winter squash- you will enjoy the **Honey Boat**, which is a type of Delicata. Honey Boat was bred right here at the Root Connection (a hybrid of Delicata and Sweet Dumpling) and is now available in some seed catalogues. Easy to prepare, just

cut in half lengthwise, and put whatever you want on top of the halves. Then put open side up in the oven covered with foil, or put on a plate in the micro with a small amount of water, cover with plastic wrap, cook for about 7 minutes. The skin is tender enough to eat. My favorite thing on it is some date sugar or organic unrefined cane sugar (available at PCC has a slight molasses flavor) with a little olive oil or butter and sprinkled with allspice and cinnamon.)

Also enjoy the **Sunshine Kabocha** squash. Bright orange flesh makes great soups, pies, or just baked for eating. See handout in store for more info.

You can store winter squash for some time, just make sure you wash skin well with soap and water, or water with a tiny bit of bleach, dry thoroughly and then store in a cool place. Members have reported finding squash hiding on the floor of closets in the spring that is still edible (but that's stretching it). Just like the pumpkins, squash yield is down (number of actual squash per plant) so there isn't much surplus so maybe you can use it all up now anyway.

There are several good recipes for Winter Squash on our website, including Spicy Coconut squash. And tons more on the internet. (cooks.com is a simple to use site)

I hope coming to the farm, gathering food and preparing it is giving a sense of connection to the earth for everyone. We really do need that, especially in these turbulent times when we can even more appreciate the natural earth that is so wonderfully in balance, all it needs is for us humans to defend it. PCC had an excellent article last month on the scientific proof of the beneficial effect that (organic) soil has on our body systems and the problems now occurring as adults and especially kids do not have the opportunity to be in skin contact with soil. So next time you're picking, go ahead and pick up some of nature's miracle, the soil, and rub it around on your skin.

Look around while you're out there and notice the rye-grass cover crop now carpeting the fields in green. It will grow there throughout the winter keeping the soil microbes protected from heavy rains. Each little plant has over 2 miles of roots, so this helps keep the soil from compacting and improves drainage without us having to lift a finger! (Well, we have to plant it)

Have fun with Tongue Twisters! A great thing to do with kids that requires them (and you) to put down the devices and take out paper and pen. Just start with a letter to be the first part of the main words and see what you can come up with.

Here's one I did: (Stephanie and Rita helped)

"Freddie Farmer's friend found five frogs flipping and frolicking in fields of fading fennel fronds."

If you or your kids can do some, we'd love to post them at the farm (illustrations good too)

More later--