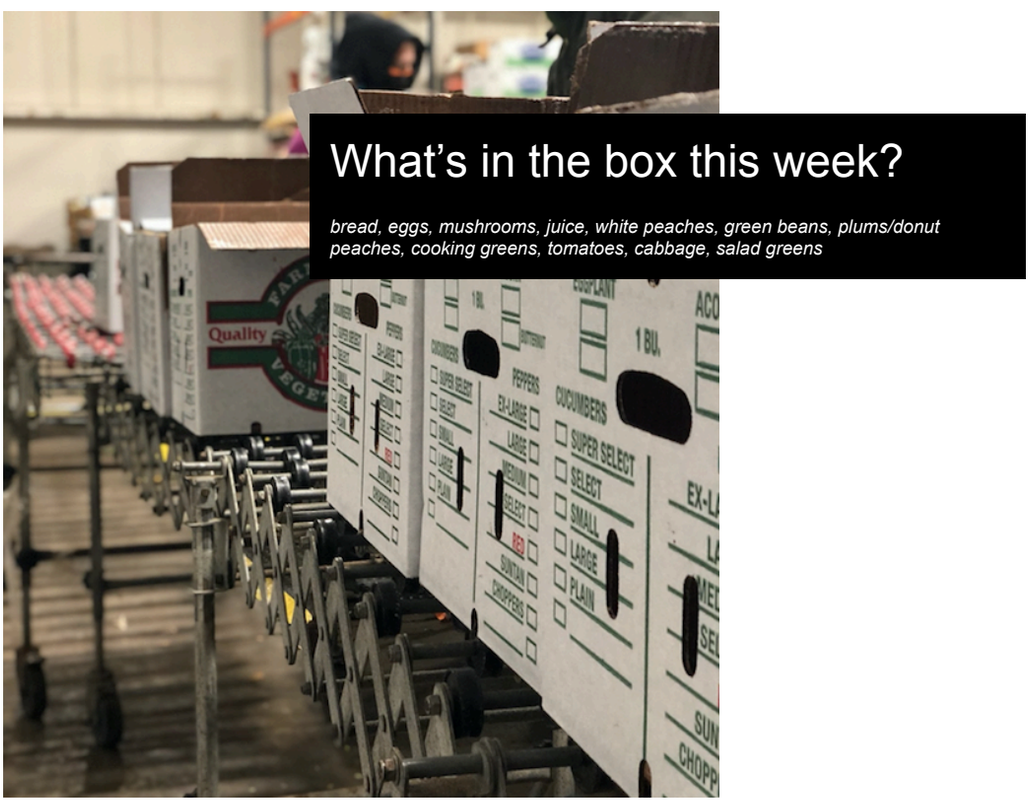
Summer Week 11: August 11/12/13

Welcome to LUCSA Week 11!

If you are looking for the newsletter for a previous week, you can find those in our newsletter archive!

*Any share changes or requests must be submitted to lucsa@theurbancanopy.org by **Monday at noon**! Thank you!*



Stand with Pembroke Black Farmers

Regenerative farmers in Pembroke don't want a fracked gas pipeline. They are building for a resilient future with local, organic food, energy efficiency, biodiesel and solar power.

If Gov. Pritkzer signs HB3404 as written, Black farmers in Pembroke will be saddled with an expensive, polluting energy source that threatens to contaminate the region's aquifer and is certain to grow more costly as Illinois moves away from fossil fuel.

Pembroke is pristine agricultural land that's worth protecting. The region is a world-renowned microbiome, home to a rare black oak savanna habitat.

If Nicor is given the right to build the pipeline, the people of Pembroke want added protections for the land, water, consumers, and public health.

Luckily, you can help. **Urge Gov. Pritkzer to use his veto power to amend the bill to preserve what remains of this rare black oak savanna and secure critical public safety provisions.**

Vendor Profile: Growing Solutions Farm

Where is your farm located?

Growing Solutions Farm is located in the Medical District at 2200 W Campbell Park Dr., a very quiet street (near the intersection of Leavitt and Harrison). Growing Solutions Farm is one of many programs and a vocational site of Urban Autism Solutions, a non-profit dedicated to changing outcomes for young adults with autism and related disabilities. The farm started as small earthboxes in 2013, and has increased in size every year. As of 2021, we are up to 7000 square feet between our flower beds, herb beds, produce beds, and hoop house.

The farm's mission is twofold: 1) provide vocational programming for young adults with autism and related disabilities who live and attend Chicago Public Schools on the city's west side, and 2) produce affordable, healthy food. While being a very productive farm is a great goal to meet, vocational programming for our population is the heart and soul of our operation.

What is it you enjoy most about farming? What is it that drives you crazy about farming?

There are countless benefits urban farms provide to individuals, communities, and the environment. For individuals, urban farms provide healthy food, recreation, and green space. For communities, urban farms provide jobs, educational opportunities, and help localize the economy by supporting your neighbors. For the environment, urban farms help sequester carbon and rain water, and, if done using permaculture principles, benefit fauna like pollinators.

Unfortunately, and despite widespread support, urban agriculture remains on the fringe as an industry. Farmers and others within the green or clean economy often struggle with making sure their needs are met by their government. For example, urban farmers in Chicago struggle mightily with ensuring water access through the permitting process on an annual basis.

Despite the barriers we face, farmers are united by the passion of their work.

Is there one misconception about farming that you wish you could correct?

While urban farmers struggle most often with navigating often indifferent governmental policy, we too struggle with making sure we are welcome within the communities we operate in.

Often, farms can be seen as eyesores, with brush, weeds, and trash littering the plot. It is not uncommon for farms to be sited by the city at the behest of unhappy neighbors. We would ask neighbors to give farmers the benefit of the doubt that even some unwanted smells from compost, for example, are ultimately for the good of the processes at large. I would encourage neighbors to get involved as well and help understaffed farms with beautification of their plot through volunteering (which will often end with you leaving with more produce you can carry).

What is your favorite vegetable to grow and your favorite vegetable to eat? Do you have a simple preparation that you love?

Growing Solutions is known for its extensive menu of produce and flowers. In 2021, we are growing over 70 varieties of fruits and vegetables. This year, we have finally gotten the extensive menu of herbs that makes us a much more complete operation.

Personally, I have greatly enjoyed this year's crop of greek oregano, a savory and fragrant herb great for pastas, meats, and much more.

My favorite plant to grow is, of course, tomatoes. They take months of careful attention from seed to seedling, months of care from seedling to fruit production, and months of care from fruit production to the end of their life. Our hoop house, where the majority of our tomatoes are grown, is always the crown jewel of interest at the farm, and our tomatoes are always the best and most exciting selling item.

Is there anything you have wanted to grow and tried to grow that just won't work?

Again, on the personal side, I have worked as a farmer for eleven years now, and I have had the benefit of many great teachers and colleagues. I have made mistakes, and taken the long way around to learning the art and science of production, but I've been able to grow what I've wanted to successfully given the space to make those mistakes. If I may, thank you very much to all the teachers and colleagues I've had the pleasure of working with over the years!

To answer the question though, it is quite the bummer we don't have a slightly more tropical climate for all the wondrous fruits that our clientele always seeks.

Add-on Items

*All from local businesses! Order weekly until Monday at **noon**.*

CLICK HERE FOR THE ADD ON ORDER FORM

garfield produce microgreens

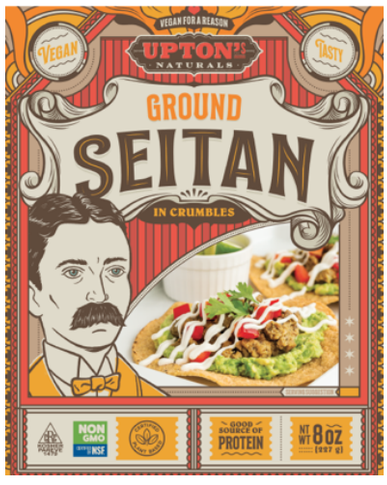
rainbow mix - brussels sprouts, kale, mustard, broccoli, radish -
this 5 veggie micro mix makes for a colorful and flavorful salad base

prairie fruits chevre

herbs de Provence - a very versatile cheese—you can cook with it, put it in a salad, top it over a pizza or just enjoy it on a slice of bread with jam or honey.

bluems bouquets

a local and seasonal bouquet from our friends at Bluems Chicago!



uptons sale!

big sale on our uptons products this week ~ Italian and ground seitan only $3! check out these recipes

true grain artisan flour

on sale ~ 3lb bag of suuuper nice locally milled flour - made from sustainably grown midwestern wheat.

foxship cookies

from uptons for pesto lasagna and cheeseburger pizza, or add to any pizza, in pasta, over rice, in a hash, and as a crumbled breakfast sausage with biscuits and gravy.

s'mores! 3 quarter pound vegan cookies

& much more available!

From the Farm

Every year at The Urban Canopy farm, our crew likes to experiment in planting a few new specialty crops. This year we've chosen to try our hand at growing carrots, kohlrabi, a variety of cherry tomatoes, and sweet peppers. Many of you may have already tried our first batches of carrots and purple kohlrabi heads, and we hope you enjoyed eating them as much as we did growing them. And now it is finally time to see how our newest experimental crops are turning out, our fruiting crops.

First fruit: Sunpeach cherry tomatoes. The Sunpeach varietal of cherry tomatoes are very similar to the widely known Sungold tomatoes. What differentiates Sunpeach tomatoes from their commonly desired cousin is the pinkish-red hue, moderately sweet balanced flavor, and generally larger fruit size. So far, we are noticing healthy vegetative growth and heightened size from them compared to our other varietals, Indigo Cherry and Sungolds. However, we won't know until the growing season is over if they'll produce well enough to stay on the farm next year. Until then, we will continue to enjoy their peachy red color and watch for any exceptional developments.

Our sweet bell pepper plants, the second fruiting experimental crop and easily the most noticeable feature on the farm taking up a quarter of available land are also ready for harvest. In needing a summer hardy crop to replace our mid-June harvest of garlic, we decided to try planting an array of small sweet bell peppers. Some of them look very similar to the size and shape of spicy peppers, but we promise you they are as sweet, if not sweeter, as the little Lunchbox peppers you can find at the market. Currently green in color and particularly crunchy, our peppers will be at their best flavor once their green shade turns to red, orange, and yellow.

One noticeable quality we have found about these experimental species, including the other fruiting crops on our farm, is the lateness in the year for ripening. Our fruiting plants are a few weeks behind compared to previous years. It may be because of the recent cool weather, rain, and cloud cover we are experiencing. Or perhaps the transplants were a bit smaller when they went into the ground this year. Either way, the flavor, and quality seem to be just as spectacular, and in a matter of days, we will have enough cherry tomatoes and peppers ready for my seasonal summer salsa recipe. Can't Wait!

-Erin

Share Contents (in progress)

Refer back to this page for updated share contents and photos to help you identify produce!

- *Please keep in mind that share contents may vary due to market availability so contents may vary slightly from this list. Farming is never 100% predictable. We appreciate your flexibility.*
- *Wash everything before eating!*
- *Remember to return your wax box, egg cartons, and rubber bands during your next delivery. We reuse all of these items!*

Beverage
Cold Pressed Juice: Field + Farmer (Carol Stream, IL)
Kale Apple + Wheatgrass
Apple Beet + Ginger

Bread
Wednesday: Sourdough Pullman, Publican Quality Bread (Fulton Market, Chicago, IL)
Thursday: Multigrain, pHlour Bakery (Andersonville, Chicago)
Friday: Rye Batard, pHlour Bakery (Andersonville, Chicago)
Storage Tip - Keep your bread cut side down in a bag on your counter for two to three days. At that point you will want to slice or rip/cut your bread into pieces and freeze for future toast or croutons! Because of the olive oil, the focaccia can mold much quicker than other breads if kept at room temperature. If it's particularly hot you may want to move it to the refrigerator after a day or two (the only time we will tell you to refrigerate bread!)

Eggs: Finn's Steak and Egg Ranch (Buchanan, MI)
Storage Tip - You can freeze your eggs to make them last longer. Crack and scramble in a container, or crack whole into oiled muffin tins, and keep frozen for up to 6

months.

Mushrooms
Wednesday: Crimini Mushrooms, River Valley Mushrooms (Burlington, WI)
Thursday: Velvet Pioppini Mushrooms, Mycopia (Scottville, MI)
Friday: Crimini Mushrooms, River Valley Mushrooms (Burlington, WI)
Storage Tip - Keep out of plastic. Open up your paper bag to reduce moisture. Smoke, dehydrate or par-cook and freeze for longer storage.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: DONUT PEACHES (ALSO CALLED SATURN PEACHES), PLUMS AND WHITE PEACHES

White Peaches: Mick Klug Farm (St. Joseph, MI)
Storage Tip - Keep your peaches on the counter until they reach desired ripeness. To ripen faster, store them in a brown paper bag. Once ripe, you can move them to the fridge to keep them for a couple days longer.

Plums / Donut Peaches: Mick Klug Farm (St. Joseph, MI)
Storage Tip - Keep your fruit on the counter until they reach desired ripeness. To ripen faster, store them in a brown paper bag. Once ripe, you can move them to the fridge to keep them for a couple days longer.

Wednesday: Plums
Thursday: Plums or donut peaches
Friday: Donut peaches

Green Beans: Mick Klug Farm (St. Joseph, MI)
Storage Tip - Store unwashed fresh beans in a reusable container or plastic bag in the refrigerator crisper. Whole beans stored this way should keep for about seven days.

Cooking Greens: The Urban Canopy (Englewood, Chicago, IL) / Relish Chicago Farm (Chicago, IL)
Storage Tip - Remove from compostable green bag. Make sure greens are good and dry. You can wrap the greens in a paper or cloth towel to cut down on extra moisture. Then store in a plastic bag in the fridge for up to a week.

Wednesday: Kale
Thursday: Collards, chard or kale
Friday: Kale

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: KALE, SWISS CHARD, COLLARD GREENS

Tomatoes: The Urban Canopy (Englewood, Chicago, IL) / PrairiErth Farm (Atlanta, IL) / Gary Comer Youth Center (Grand Crossing, Chicago, IL)
Storage Tip - Tomatoes should be kept at room temperature on the counter away from sunlight. Consume within a few days.

Wednesday: Tomatoes
Thursday: Tomatoes
Friday: Cherry tomatoes

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: LETTUCE MIX, LETTUE HEAD, ARUGULA

Cabbage: PrairiErth Farm (Atlanta, IL)
Storage Tip - Keep in a plastic bag in the crisper for two weeks.

Salad Greens: The Urban Canopy (Englewood, Chicago, IL)
Storage Tip - Repackage in a non-biodegradable plastic bag or container with a towel or paper towel for up to a week.

Wednesday: Lettuce mix or arugula
Thursday: Arugula or head lettuce
Friday: Head lettuce

***SUBS* (items for people who opt out of beverage, eggs, bread or mushrooms or having a conflicting allergy)**
** Specified subs are subject to change*

Onions: Gorman Farm Fresh Produce (Monee, IL) - *Bread substitute*
Storage Tip - Keep cool, dry and out of direct light, on your counter, in a cupboard or in a perforated paper bag.

Celery: Nichols Farm and Orchard (Marengo, IL) / Relish Chicago Farm (Chicago, IL) - *Egg substitute*
Storage Tip - Keep in an open plastic bag in the crisper for up to two weeks.

Scallions: PrairiErth Farm (Atlanta, IL) - *Beverage substitute*
Storage Tip - Stand upright in an inch of water in a jar or glass, cover tips with a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator. Change the water if it starts to discolor.

Turnips: PrairiErth Farm (Atlanta, IL) - *Mushroom substitute*
Storage Tip - Remove greens from the root for the root to last in the crisper or a plastic bag in the fridge. Greens should be used within 2 days.

FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: SCALLIONS, TURNIPS, ONIONS, CELERY

Recipe Recommendations

Click on the image to access the recipe

Tuna Nicoise Salad

Tahini Smothered Charred Cabbage

Coconut Creamed Greens

Everyday Greens Salad

Grilled Peaches

Grilled Romaine Lettuce

Tomato Peach Salad

Thai Green Bean Salad

Celery Salad with Dates, Almonds, and Parmesan

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