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We'd like your input for the newsletter! Please send related news articles, book reviews, recipes, etc to carolyn@johnsonsbackyardgarden.com

We're on MySpace, [be our friend!](#)

1) In Your Box this Week

Early Girl Tomatoes

Cherry Tomatoes

Roma Tomatoes

Zucchini

Patty Pan Squash

Zephyr Squash

Yellow Straight Neck Squash

Cucumbers

Sweet Peppers

Hot Peppers

Ichiban Eggplant

Black Beauty Eggplant

Basil

Okra

Garlic

Melon – Watermelon, Canteloupe, or Honeydew

As the unexpected never fails to happen, keep in mind that this list is subject to change depending on availability and quality of crops on harvest day. You'll find the most accurate packing list on the homepage of our [website](#).

This list also features links to recipes, photos for the more unusual veggies, and other interesting tidbits.

2) Farm News

- We had another successful U-PICK this past Sunday – thanks to everyone that came out, hope you're enjoying those tomatoes! See below for some tomato recipes as well as tips on preserving them.
- We started selling at two **farmer's markets** this past week – Wednesday afternoon at the Triangle and Saturday morning at Republic Square. Both days were a great success. Ideally all of what we grow would be distributed through the CSA but right now we have an excess of things like squash and tomatoes which cannot be stored. Thus, we will only be selling in markets through the summer.
- As for the **farmstand**, we are still doing that on Saturday mornings, however we are changing to a **self-serve** stand. The tent will be set-up in the orchard with produce laid out and a price list posted, select what you need and then leave your payment in the box provided.
- **Two beef shares just became available!** Chef Jesse Griffiths of the Dai Due Supper Club was originally going to use these two for the Outstanding in the Field dinner at our farm in October, however the cuts available do not suit his needs. First come, first served, the shares cost \$500 each and consist of approximately 75 pounds of beef packaged in various cuts. They will be available for pickup on the farm in the afternoon on July 3rd. Just in time for your 4th of July cookout, hopefully you have a lot of hungry friends to invite! Email or call us to reserve one – farm@johnsonsbackyardgarden.com

- Our farm crew has grown to over a dozen people, and we still can't keep up with all the work there is to do around here! We're harvesting non-stop, as well as preparing for the fall planting. You may be wallowing in tomatoes, but we're thinking about cabbage.
- We have two new additions to our farm crew for the summer - Sam Klug and Isabelle Gauthier. Sam is a rising sophomore in highschool, the oldest son of CSA member and pickup site host Michael Klug and has worked with us often as a workshare on Saturdays. Isabelle is a rising junior in highschool in New York. Great to have you Sam and Isabelle!



- Mark your calendars: we will be taking **August 14th – 21st** off! CSA subscriptions will be suspended for that week and the farmstand will be closed, resuming again the following Saturday, August 23. The interns will be running a stand at the Wednesday and Saturday Austin Farmer's Markets that week.

3) Beef Share Pickup Info

For those who reserved beef shares, they will be available for pickup on the farm in the afternoon on **July 3rd**.

Please email or call us to set up a specific pickup time. If this day does not work for you, please let us know and we can make other arrangements. The beef will be frozen – bring a large cooler if you have one or just take it straight home to your freezer.

If you still want a beef share, we do have 2 shares that just became available. First come, first served, the shares cost \$500 each.

4) Raindance

Rain....it's been two dry months since this rainy harvest day when workshares Loraine, Chelsea and Kelly valiantly braved the elements to bring in the harvest (and even reported that it was fun!). Consider these photos (courtesy of Kelly West) our 'raindance'...





5) Preserving Tomatoes

We've been lucky so far this season with tomatoes, however it won't last too much longer. With the weather being so hot and dry, tomato production will start to slow down over the next month, until we plant tomatoes again in the fall. So make good use of the ones you are getting now, and if you're unable to use them all right away, preserve

them!

Tomatoes are really easy to **freeze** – just wash them and put them whole or in slices into ziplock freezer bags. Tomatoes stored in this way work great for making stewed tomatoes or putting in soups. You can remove the skins just by rubbing them off, or as you cook them they will easily float to the surface to be skimmed off. If you prefer, you can blanch the tomatoes and remove the skins before freezing; see the recipe section below for tips on blanching from newsletter subscriber Barbara Kelley.

Home **canning** is a bit more complicated, see the [USDA Complete Guide to Canning](#) for recipes and more instruction on the tomato canning process.



Photo from Joy Kohl, CSA member and avid canner, whose been making good use of her tomatoes!



Drawing by intern Natalie Wolchover

The patty pan squash, our favorite of the summer squashes! Easiest to pick, and undeniably the cutest.

7) Vegetable Storage Tips

We aim to grow and package our vegetables to maintain the highest taste and nutritional quality possible. However, once they've left the farm it's up to you to keep them fresh and nutritious. There's no refrigeration at the CSA drop

points so it's good to pick up your box as early as possible. Here are some additional tips on how to store this week's share:

Fridge

- **Peppers** and **Cucumbers** should be stored in the crisper, and washed in cold water before use.
- **Zucchini** and other **Summer Squash** will last 4-7 days in plastic bags in the crisper.
- **Okra** will keep for only two or three days. Refrigerate unwashed, dry okra pods in the vegetable crisper, loosely wrapped in perforated plastic bags. Wet pods will quickly mold and become slimy. When the ridges and tips of the pod start to turn dark, use it or lose it. Once it starts to darken, okra will quickly deteriorate.

Counter

- **Basil** can be stored upright in a jar of water at room temperature, or in an open bag on the counter.
- **Eggplant** and **Garlic** are best kept moderately cool, no lower than 50 degrees. A cool, dry dark place is best – on the counter, in a cupboard or basket. Eggplant are delicate and do not store well, so try to use them within a few days.
- **Tomatoes** should be kept at room temperature, but can be refrigerated if very ripe. Leaving them in the paper bag will help them ripen quickly. Also, be sure to store your tomatoes away from your eggplants, or other sensitive produce such as bananas, as the tomatoes will make them ripen faster.
- **Melons** should be stored uncut in a cool dark place. Keep cut melons in the refrigerator.

Checkout our [storage tips](#) on our website for a more complete guide, and of course feel free to contact us with any questions.

8) Recipes

Fried Red Tomatoes

From CSA member Kari Michalek

"This recipe comes from my Grandma who passed away last year. Everyone in my family thought of this as a very special treat. It's full of fat, but as an indulgence it's certainly delicious....the secret is butter."

Slice, flour and season (salt & pepper) red tomatoes

Melt 1/3 stick of butter in large frying pan

When hot add sliced floured tomatoes

Let brown about 3 minutes, turn and brown other side.

Take the tomatoes transferring to serving plate (6 or 7 slices per serving).

Add more butter to pan to make about 1/3 c liquid

Add 2 1/2 tbsp. of flour and mix in pan thoroughly

Add 1 1/2 cups of milk continue stirring until thick add more milk if needed.

You want it like country gravy.

Pour gravy over tomatoes and serve with fresh buttered bread - Oh so good and fattening.


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**Tomato Salad**

*Shared with us by Caroline Hummer who we miss dearly!*

4c chopped tomatoes, cherries and/or slicers  
1/3c sliced green onion  
4 garlic cloves minced  
1 jalapeno sliced  
1/3c balsamic vinegar  
1 tbs brown sugar  
1tbs olive oil  
2tsp minced ginger  
1tsp cumin  
1/2tsp salt  
1/2 tsp pepper

Mix ingredients and let sit, the longer the better

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Squash and Tomato Sautee

From newsletter subscriber Barbara Kelley

5 Squash, sliced (or more depends on the size)
1/2 onion diced
1-2 cloves of garlic
1 can crushed tomatoes
olive oil
Salt & pepper

Sauté onion and garlic in olive oil, pour in squash, salt and pepper, add 1 can of crushed tomatoes, and cook until soft.

I doubled this recipe when we had alot of squash and freeze it in zip lock freezer bags. Tastes very good.

You can make your own stewed tomatoes: Bring a pot full of water to a boil and pour in about 6 to 7 tomatoes. Leave the tomatoes in the boiling water for about 10 seconds. Peel and core the tomatoes. Get another pot and cook the tomatoes, until they are soft, you can freeze the tomatoes, or use them in the above recipe. Great for the winter stews.

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**Cucumber-Chile Paletas**

*From the LA Times, shared with us by CSA member Elaine DiRico*

2 pounds (about 2 large) cucumbers, plus an additional half cucumber, divided  
1/3 cup fresh lime juice  
1/2 cup sugar

1 dried New Mexico chile pepper, slightly crushed  
1 teaspoon New Mexico chile powder  
1 teaspoon cayenne chile powder  
1 teaspoon salt

1. Place empty ice-pop molds in the freezer to chill. Dice 2 pounds of the cucumber into 1-inch pieces; do not remove the skins. Place the pieces in a food processor or blender and puree until smooth. Strain into a medium bowl through a fine mesh strainer, pushing out the juice with some of the pulp. You should have 2 1/2 cups juice and pulp. Set aside.
2. Peel the remaining half-cucumber and cut it into one-half-inch-by-one-eighth-inch pieces. Set aside in a small bowl.
3. Add the lime juice, sugar and crushed chile pepper to a small sauce pan. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the sugar is dissolved. Remove the syrup from the heat and cool slightly.
4. In a small bowl, combine the chile powders. Strain the cooled syrup into the bowl with the cucumber juice, discarding the crushed pepper. Stir in the salt and one-fourth teaspoon of the combined chile powders.
5. Pour some of the mixture into each mold, leaving about one-half inch of space at the top. Stir several pieces of cucumber into each mold. Place the lid on the molds and fit with the wooden stick. Place the molds in the freezer and freeze until solid, 2 to 4 hours.
6. Remove the molds from the freezer and run them briefly under warm water to loosen the paletas. Gently pull them from the molds and sprinkle the tops lightly with the remaining chile powder mixture to taste, if desired. Wrap the paletas in plastic wrap and return them to the freezer if not serving immediately. They will keep 1 to 2 weeks in the freezer.

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Creamy Zucchini Soup

Ingredients:

2 Tbs nonhydrogenated margarine or whipped butter
1 Med onion, finely chopped
2 pounds zucchini (about 6 medium-small) grated
2 Tbs minced fresh dill
1 cup reduced- fat sour cream

Directions:

1. Heat margarine in a soup pot. Add the onion and saute over medium heat, stirring frequently, until golden.
2. Add the zucchini and continue to saute, stirring occasionally 5 to 7 minutes. Add 4 cups water and bring to a simmer. Cover and simmer gently until the zucchini is tender, about 10 minutes.
3. Add additional water if the soup is too thick and heat through. Remove from the heat and stir in the dill and sour cream. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

Serves 6.

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**Summer Squash and Corn Saute**

**Ingredients:**

1 1/2 tbs light olive oil  
1 large green or red bell pepper. cut into short strips  
2 medium yellow summer squash, halved lengthwise and sliced 1/4 inch thick  
1 to 1 1/4 cups uncooked corn kernels (from 1 to 2 ears)  
2 medium firm tomatoes, diced  
salt and pepper to taste<!--[if !supportLineBreakNewLine]-->  
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**Directions:**

1. Heat oil in a wide skillet. Add the bell pepper and saute over medium heat for about 2 minutes. Add the squash and corn and continue to saute, stirring frequently. until all the vegetables are tender-crisp to your liking
2. Add the tomatoes and continue to saute briefly, just until they have lost their raw quality. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

Serves 4 to 6<!--[if !supportLineBreakNewLine]-->  
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We would love to share your recipes too! Please email your favorites to [sarah@johnsonsbakyardgarden.com](mailto:sarah@johnsonsbakyardgarden.com)

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9) Upcoming Events

**July 1<sup>st</sup>, 12pm to 1pm: [Summer Food Gardening](#)**

Learn the benefits of growing your own food, we'll share simple methods for summer vegetable gardens. This short class is ideal for beginners. The class is sponsored by the Sustainable Food Center and will be held at Our Lady of Guadalupe, 1206 East 9th Street (Rm #2), Austin, TX.

**\*\*TO REGISTER contact Emily Neiman: 236-0074 ext 105.\*\***

**July 3<sup>rd</sup> 2pm to 7pm: Beef Share Pickup** at Johnson's Backyard Garden

**July 5<sup>th</sup> 9am to 1pm: [4th of July GREEN Celebration](#)**

At the Austin Farmer's Market at Republic Square park, 4<sup>th</sup> and Guadeloupe

**July 19<sup>th</sup>, 9am: Third Annual Chicken Seminar**

Led by Diana Claitor, Paula Middleton, and Carol Ann Sayle, this free seminar will take place next to the Hen House at [The Natural Gardener](#). Bring a lawn chair!

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10) Subscribe/Unsubscribe To Newsletter

Forwarded from a friend? Sign up for your own copy [here](#).

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## 11) Johnson's Backyard Garden Contact Information

Johnson's Backyard Garden  
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Office phone: (512) 386-5273

Office Hours : M-F, 8am – 12pm

**Farmstand Hours: Saturdays, 9am – 1pm**

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