



Lone Willow Ranch
www.organicheirlooms.com
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Howdy all, we have had a busy week on the farm. The nannies are kidding, tomatoes growing and everything is very thirsty. With the hot days and warm night the produce really kicks in. We are looking at a very nice crop peaches, we should have some sweet corn in a couple of weeks.

Melons should be next week; eggplants and peppers soon.

Michelle wrote a blurb on their experiences on the farms this week.

We picked beans this week for a total of probably 6 hours. In order to pick them, we usually sit on a bucket while going through all of the plants in front of us, then move further up the row, and repeat. In total, there are four rows of beans.

The process isn't as simple as you'd think. We must make sure that the beans are exactly the right size and ripeness before we pick them. It has taken me awhile to get a feel for this, and as a result, you may find a few smaller beans in your bag. But I think I'm getting the hang of things. The wide beans should be relatively long, and the little beans inside of them should be visible. It should appear bumpy, and when touched, it should feel substantial. The narrower beans are tricky. They can appear to be ready earlier than they are. There's a tiny difference between one that is perfect and one that isn't. A perfect string bean is also long and although its inner beans aren't as prominent, it has a gurth to it that immature beans don't quite have yet.

Unfortunately, talking about this doesn't quite convey my point, as the only way to really understand is to get your hands dirty and test the beans yourself. But that is precisely what this experience has taught me: this task, more than any other that I have done on the farm, requires a knowledge based on touch. As a graduate student, I am drowned in intellectualism and often wish to be exposed to the wisdom of feeling. Picking beans has done that for me. Sitting out in the bean field at 5:30 AM, I often don't even look at the plants as I go through, searching for ripe beans. As soon as my hand grazes one, I know. I look down, and sometimes I am wrong, but lately, my odds of being right have been increasing. I pull it from the plant and place it into my bin, wondering whose plate this pod of perfection will end up on.

This week's box

We have carrots, beets, Yukon gold potatoes, nectarines, peaches, yellow & white onions, garlic, arugula, heirloom tomatoes, bunched herbs, and 3 types of green beans. For the new members, to keep you tomatoes the tastiest; do not refrigerate. They do best placed in a spot away from direct sunlight. Our favorite recipe for the tomatoes is sliced, sprinkled with balsamic vinegar, olive oil and fresh basil. Simple and delicious. Go to our web page for more of our favorite recipes.

Farm Day...12:00 to 3:00 Sunday July 20th. Thank you for those that have RSVP, I know we are all busy but take some time for yourself. We will have direction out to the farm in next week's newsletter. We are about 5 miles on the Madera County side of Firebaugh. Simple to get to. We now have music, bread, jam, to add to our tomato, melon and cheese tasting. Everyone is welcome! Bring the kids, grand kids, the more the merrier.

Until next week, Cheers!

Farmer John & Shelby