# Hog's Back Almanac



What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Beets	Yes	Plastic	Red roots
Broccoli	Yes	Plastic	
Brussels Sprouts	Yes	Plastic	On the stalk
Carrots	Yes	Plastic	
Cauliflower	Yes	Plastic	
Garlic	No	No	
Herbs	Yes	Plastic	Parsley and Thyme
Kale	Yes	Plastic	Red Russian
Peppers	Yes	Plastic	Carmen and Serranos
Potatoes	No	Paper	Kennebec
Spinach	Yes	Plastic	
Winter Squash	No	No	Butternut

### **Brussels Sprouts**

It's always a fun when we can deliver the Brussels sprouts right on the stalk. Some years they don't grow even enough so that you have tennis ball sized sprouts on the bottom and marble sized on the top. This year they came out pretty well. My only regret is having to deliver them before we've had a real hard freeze. A freeze really sweetens them up nicely. They will still be very enjoyable.

Our favorite way to prepare them is simply cleaned, sliced lengthwise in quarters, sautéed until tender and finished with a little cream and thyme. I can eat a scary amount of them this way. Delivering them on the stalk also gives the kids an opportunity to get involved by snapping them off. I think this increases the likelihood that they'll try them.

There isn't a lot of documentation about Brussels sprouts out there, and why exactly they're associated with a city in Belgium. They are a many-headed subspecies of cabbage which never forms a head on top but forms all the little head buds, or sprouts, on the stalk. The traditional way to cook them in France and Belgium is to roast them with peeled chestnuts and toss them with butter and a little veal gravy.

## Farm Report 10/09/08

Rainfall 1.75"   High Temperature 69°   Low Temperature 33°   Former Complete to directore™			
Farmer Complaint Indicators <sup>™</sup> :			
-			
TOO WET TOO DRY			

This is the **LAST WEEK** of the regular season share. The winter shares begin next Thursday, October 16 at the same pickup sites and times. Please make sure everyone in your group knows this. Thanks.

Also in the cabbage family this week is the Red Russian Kale. Lately I've had trouble getting nice plantings of this kale, but this planting was the exception. This is my favorite kale to use in a raw kale salad, it is more tender and sweet than other kales.

The cabbage family is also represented in this week's box by the broccoli and cauliflower.

Some nice parsley and thyme join the fall vegetables this week. I love the thyme this time of year, it is one of the true flavors of autumn to me, whether it's with some roasted root vegetables or in a chicken pot pie.

Kennebec potatoes make their first appearance ever at our farm this week. I've never been that interested in white potatoes, but thought I'd try some this year. It's a classic all-purpose variety good for baking, hashbrowns or oven fries. Keep them in a dark place or covered with a towel or they will turn green. You may see a little green on a couple from exposure to sun in the field. Trim away the green areas and use normally.

We didn't get much of a frost so the peppers keep coming. The squash this week is butternut and there's a bag of beautiful young spinach to wrap up the season.

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### Farm News

The big news this week is that it's the end of the line for the regular season shares. We've had a few highs and lows but for the most part have been very pleased with the contents of the boxes this year and hope that you have too. My take on the season is mostly from a production standpoint and sometimes it's very helpful for me to hear about the season from a consumption standpoint, so if you'd like to email us your feedback we always read it and often make changes based on it. We always try to focus special effort on a few areas each year and feedback is a big way we choose what to focus on.

It takes a tremendous amount of work to bring you these veggies every week and I'd like to take a moment to thank my two faithful employees this year, Jesse and Ashley. They've endured the mood swings of your farmer as well as heat, cold, rain, sun, and still showed up the next morning to work. I'd also like to thank all of you for making the commitment to support our farm. We are very grateful. Last, but certainly not least, thanks to my lovely wife, Melinda. Without her hard work and support this whole operation would grind to a halt.

The fall colors have been at their peak this week, I've almost driven off the road more than once looking at trees. The colors are the best we've had in several years. We had some real nice rain early this week which gave me some time to sit down at the computer and catch up on email and the books. Jesse and Ashley took the rainy day opportunity to wash all of the squash. It's a big wet job, and it's great to have it out of the way before it turns too cold. I also had time this week to sit down and go through all the turkey orders and assign turkeys to them. At the end of the day we have about 5 turkeys left to sell, all in the 10-12 pound range. Let me know if you're interested.

With the end of the regular season we start looking ahead to next year. If this was your first year with the farm I'll explain how we sign people up for next year. If you have a share this year we automatically sign you up for one next year. In January you'll get an invoice from us for your 2009 share(s). If you would not like to purchase a share next year you can let us know that now, or when you get the invoice in January. After we know how many people have opted-out I can sell shares to new members in February. If you definitely want a share for next year you don't need to do anything, just pay your invoice when you get it next year. For this reason it's very important that you keep your email and mailing address current with us so we can contact you in January. If you have friends or family who are interested in getting a share have them email me over the winter and tell them to mention your name, I always make shares available first to the customers you all send our way.

The winter shares are sold out, my apologies if I didn't return an email to you regarding them. It's been a little crazy around here.

If you have a winter share we'll see you next Thursday, if not, have a wonderful fall and winter and thanks again for your support. -David Van Eeckhout

### **Roasted Root Vegetables**

- 1-2 1/2 pound butternut squash, peeled, seeded, cut into 1/2 inch pieces (about 5 cups)
- 1 1/2 pounds potatoes, unpeeled, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1 pound beets, trimmed but not peeled, scrubbed, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
- 1 medium-size red onion, cut into 1/2 inch pieces (about 2 cups)
- 2 carrots, peeled, cut into 1/2 inch pieces (about 2 cups)
- 1 head of garlic, cloves separated, peeled
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

Preheat oven to 400°F. Oil 2 large rimmed baking sheets. Combine all ingredients in very large bowl; toss to coat. Divide vegetables between prepared baking sheets; spread evenly. Sprinkle generously with salt and pepper. Roast vegetables until tender and golden brown, stirring occasionally, about 1 hour. The key with any roasted root vegetable dish is having all the ingredients about the same size so that they cook evenly. Brussels sprouts would also be a welcome addition to this dish, as well as some parsley or thyme.

#### Carrots and Brussels Sprouts epicurious.com

- 2 tablespoons chopped shallot (from 1 medium)
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 1 lb carrots, cut diagonally into 1/2-inch-thick pieces
- 1 lb Brussels sprouts, halved lengthwise
- 1/3 cup water
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar

Cook shallot in 2 tablespoons butter in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until softened, 1 to 2 minutes. Add carrots, Brussels sprouts, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin to brown, 3 to 4 minutes.

Add water and cover skillet, then cook over mediumhigh heat until vegetables are tender, 5 to 8 minutes. Stir in vinegar, remaining tablespoon butter, and salt and pepper to taste.