

Johnson's Backyard Garden, May 26th

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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

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1) In Your Box this Week

Tomatoes

Carrots

Zucchini

Patty Pan Squash

Zephyr Squash

Cucumbers

Sweet Peppers

Rainbow Chard

Cilantro

Garlic

Onions – Yellow Granex and Red Creole

Red Lasoda Potatoes

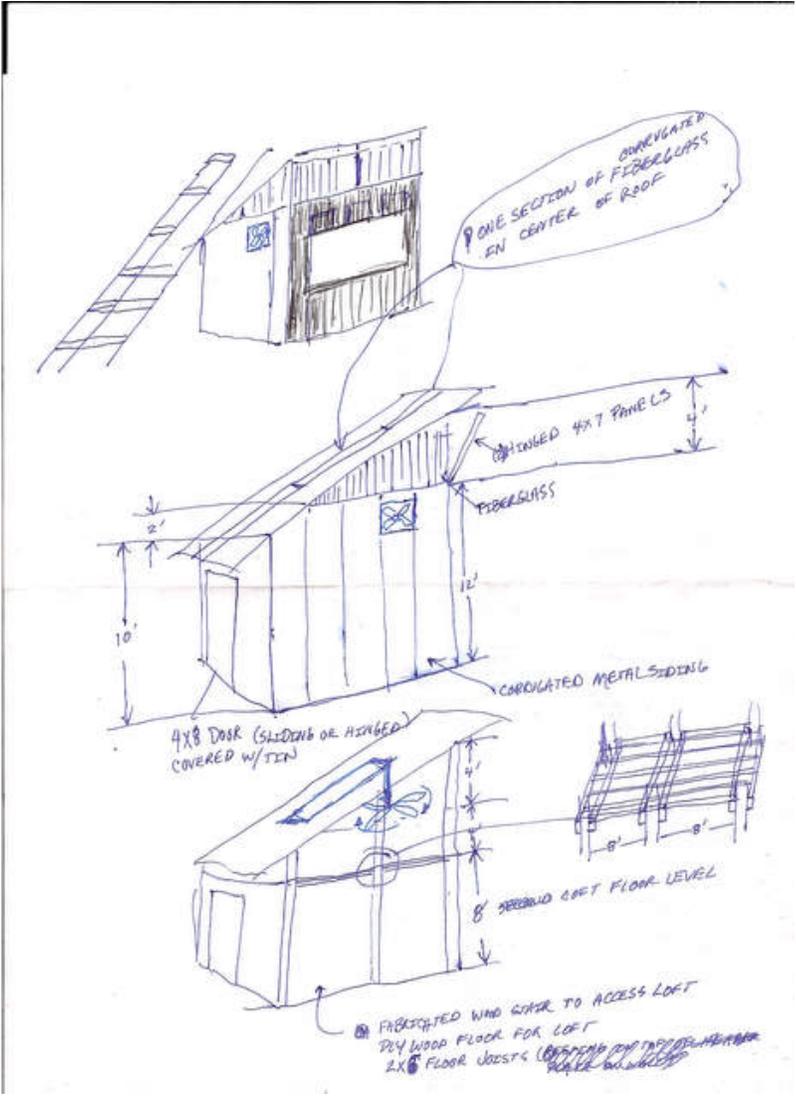
There will also be Zinnias – look for these in a bucket at your pickup site.

Coming soon: Okra, Ten Varieties of Winter Squash, Eggplant, Tomatillos, Mini Baking Pumpkins, Watermelons, Cantaloupe, Honeydew Melons, San Marzano Sauce Tomatoes, Twenty plus Heirloom Tomato Varieties and.....Sun Gold and Red Cherry Tomatoes (!!!!!)

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](#). The website list also features links to online recipes, pictures (for the more unusual veggies) and other interesting tidbits.

2) Farm News

- This week's farm construction project is a wellhouse/loft space (or sauna, depending on who you ask). Conceived by Brenton and constructed by Chalon, this well house makes cold showers a possibility in the summertime by shading the tanks that store water for residential use.



- We planted sweet potatoes this week, as well as more cantaloupe, honey-dew melons, watermelons and arugula.
- Zinnias are blooming! Sure does brighten up the farm, and the house.

- We placed a big seed order – seven varieties of eggplant, heat-tolerant tomatoes, hot and sweet peppers, and tomatillos. We also ordered some ‘husk cherries’ to try out – a relative of the tomatillo these golden berries are sweet and can be eaten raw, dried like raisins, frozen, canned, or made into pies, preserves and desserts.
- This Thursday, May 29th at 7pm a [fundraising event](#) will be held for the Rowland family at the [Barr Mansion](#) in Austin. Guests will be offered tastings of dishes prepared by leading area chefs using ingredients from many Austin area farms. Minimum suggested donation of \$20 at the door, or [make a contribution](#) online. Proceeds will go towards defraying the financial burden of Sarah Rowland's recent breast cancer diagnosis. Hope to see you there!

3) Farmstand Opens June 7th

Our farmstand is set to open **Saturday June 7th, 9am to 1pm.**

Nothing fancy to begin with, the farmstand will be a small tent setup in the pecan orchard. Enjoy the excitement of a Saturday morning harvest on the farm; bring the kids, have a picnic in the orchard and pickup some veggies!

We will be selling our veggies as well as a few goat milk products - fresh chevre, feta, goat milk soap and possibly goat milk. The stand will also double as the farm CSA pickup site.

We are located at 9515 Hergotz Lane, 5 miles from the airport in East Austin. When you arrive, use the farm entrance at the very end of Hergotz Lane, drive in past the second fence and park on the right-hand side of the road in the pecan orchard. Then look for the white tent in the rear of the orchard.

4) Seven Beef Shares Left

We currently have three nice and healthy Black Angus steers that will be ready to butcher in June. The cattle are grass-fed, raised naturally and are antibiotic and hormone free. These cattle grazed our pasture last year, but as our farm expanded we moved them back to their original home at our neighbor Sam's Y&B Ranch.

Each beef share will be a quarter of beef consisting of a mixture of various cuts such as T bones, rib eyes, chuck roast, brisket, round steak, hamburger and soup bones, totaling an estimated 75 – 85 pounds. The meat will be processed at Doyle's Processing Plant in Giddings Texas, about an hour outside of Austin, and will be packed and labeled in butcher paper.

Pricing: We anticipate each share to cost \$650, the actual price will be based on the dressed weight and calculated at the time of processing. This amounts to approximately \$7.50 per pound of packaged meat. You will need approximately 2-3 cubic feet of freezer space for proper storage.

To reserve your beef share, we are taking deposits of \$250 on a first come first serve basis. This deposit will be deducted from the final cost of the beef, calculated at the time of processing. There are only seven shares left!

5) Michael Pollan on Home Gardening

Michael Pollan's name has become synonymous with food issues recently. Many of our CSA members, interns and volunteers cite Pollan's work, particularly *Omnivore's Dilemma*, as part of their inspiration for becoming involved with our farm. A recent article by Pollan about home gardening, "[Why Bother](#)"; published in the April 30th issue of the New York Times Magazine, has been brought to our attention several times this past week, by the Local Harvest newsletter, another farmer and a CSA member.

In this article Pollan discusses home gardening as one of the small steps that individuals can take to lessen their carbon footprint and address global climate change. A home garden seems like a "drop in the bucket"; on the global scale, especially, as Pollan points out, while in other parts of the world people are rapidly increasing their resource consumption. However, Pollan maintains that small scale gardening can be a revolutionary act within the life of an individual (be careful – if it gets out of hand you might end up a vegetable farmer, just ask Brenton).

If there's grass growing in your yard, chances are a vegetable garden would grow there (and should! Why waste energy on a lawn when you could have a producing garden?). If you are limited by space, think about container gardening – the possibilities are endless, you can even grow [tomatoes upside down in buckets](#)! (Our intern Carolyn can attest to the goodness, her Grandpa Wilson does this with enviable results.)

We will be selling seedlings periodically at our farmstand, give us a call or stop by on a Saturday morning to check on availability. For growing tips, the [Travis County Master Gardeners Association](#) is a good resource for this area, we'll also be happy to talk shop when you stop by the farmstand.

6) Farm Art



This is a piece by 8-year-old Lila.

And remember that in exchange for your farm art you could win a 4-week CSA membership! Submit a logo or T-Shirt design by email (carolyn@johnsonsbackyardgarden.com), snail mail, or in person. Winner(s) will be chosen by the JBG team, or perhaps we'll put it to a vote through the newsletter.

Deadline: June 15, 2008

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, especially as the weather heats up. Here are some additional tips for storing this week's share:

- **Carrots** should be stored in plastic bags. Take tops off before storing.
- **Cilantro** stores best with bottoms of stems trimmed, placed upright in a jar of water in the fridge. You can also freeze it (it will lose texture but not taste).
- **Rainbow Chard** should be kept in plastic bags. Any bunch greens can be freshened by cutting an inch of the bottom stalks and soaking the entire bunch in cold water for 10 minutes. Place in a plastic bag in the fridge for a few hours to revive.
- **Onions** and **Potatoes** 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.
- **Peppers** and **Cucumbers** should be stored in the crisper, and washed in cold water before use.
- **Tomatoes** should be kept uncovered at room temp, but can be refrigerated if very ripe. All other fresh vegetables belong in the refrigerator.
- **Zucchini** and other **Summer Squash** will last 4-7 days in plastic bags in the crisper.

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 – Summer Squash

There's nothing like the sound (and smell!) of a hot pan sautéing summer veggies. To keep from heating up the house, try cooking on a grate over an outdoor fire pit in a cast iron skillet, as farm residents Grit and Steven do frequently.



Yellow Squash Patties

This was one of the recipes Beth Johnson made from last week's box. Everyone in the family liked it, even little Jimmy!

3 cups yellow squash, cooked and drained

1/3 cup onion, chopped

1 egg

1 teaspoon sugar

Salt and pepper

¾ - 1 ¼ cup self-rising flour

Olive oil

Beth's additions: grated carrots and green bell pepper.

In a bowl, mix the squash, onion, egg and seasonings. Mix in the flour a little at a time, stir until thick enough to drop by spoonfuls, adding more flour if needed.

Heat oil in a frying pan, you'll want it to get really hot so the patties don't stick. Fry patties until lightly brown on both sides, remove and drain on a paper towel. Serve warm.

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## Summer Box Medley



A little something intern Carolyn cooked up this past week.

- 1/2 onion
- 3 cloves garlic
- Oregano
- Salt and pepper
- 1 Zucchini
- 1 Patty Pan Squash
- 1/2 bunch Swiss Chard
- 1 Green Bell Pepper
- 1 Tomato

Sauté veggies in the order listed, adding the chard, pepper and tomato at the very end. Top with toasted sunflower seeds or pine nuts and parmesan cheese. Serve alone, or over your favorite cooked grain (Carolyn used quinoa). Leftovers make amazing omelets, especially with a little fresh chevre....

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Sarah' Squash Dish

Here's a recipe submitted by Carolyn's Grandma Sarah. Thanks Grandma!

- Olive oil
- 4 small yellow squash, sliced
- 4 small Zucchini squash, sliced
- 1 large Vidalia onion, chopped
- Cauliflower florets, optional
- 1 red pepper sliced
- Salt and pepper
- Herbs to taste – Grandma uses a spice mix called 'Jane's Krazy Mixed Up Seasoning,' basil, oregano, or rosemary would also work well

In a large frying pan, sauté onion and sliced red pepper in olive oil until slightly tender. Season with a generous sprinkling of herbs, salt and pepper. Add all squash and florets. Cook uncovered turning frequently. Cover just until vegetable are slightly tender. Delicious!!

We would love to share your recipes too! Please email your favorites to carolyn@johnsonsbackyardgarden.com

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10) Johnson's Backyard Garden Contact Information

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