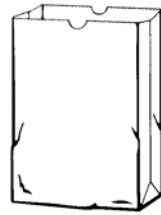


IN THE BAG
Potomac Vegetable Farms
July 2, 2008



Mini: garlic scapes, sweet onions, garlic, swiss chard, lettuce, basil, beet greens or lettuce mix or chives

Regular: sweet onions, cabbage, garlic, lettuce mix, basil, lettuce, swiss chard or beans, garlic scapes or squash or beet greens

Robust: garlic scapes, cabbage, beet greens, sweet onions, garlic, swiss chard, lettuce, lettuce mix, basil

Sweet onions have a season, unlike supermarket onions. These onions are not just an ingredient, they are a centerpiece. We've been sending the big white "Superstar" onions your way for a little while, but we've just started to pull up the yellow Walla Walla onions and the smaller red ones. (They call the red variety "Burgermaster," which sounds more like a name for an appliance than an onion, so we're not using it.) All of our onions are sweet enough to eat in a sandwich, and they are spectacular cooked on the grill.

Onions grow as the days are getting longer, and when we pass the summer solstice, they stop growing. This is why sweet onions have a season – it's all about the solstice. We pull most of them while the greens are still fresh, and we also let some of the plants cure in the field so we can extend the onion season by a few weeks. Like all other vegetables, sweet onions are best eaten fresh and they taste as good as the soil they are grown in. Our soil grows very sweet root crops. These onions are a true Potomac Vegetable Farms specialty.

Another new addition to your bags that won't go away any time soon is basil. Basil is one of the best herbs – in fact, the king of herbs, if etymology is any guide. The herb's name comes from the Greek word *basileus*, meaning "king," and the French call basil *l'herbe royale*. Usefully, basil goes very well with garlic and onions, two other items in your bag for this week. Fresh basil can be added to just about any savory dish at the last minute to add flavor. (If your recipe calls for dried basil, triple the amount for your fresh basil.) And of course, basil is great (almost) on its own: we know that we got you all really excited about garlic-scape pesto, but basil pesto is a classic.

A tip about your fresh basil: NEVER put it in the refrigerator. We get feedback from our members all the time about how their basil isn't keeping well in the fridge. You can make it last for a week or so by wrapping the leaves in a wet paper towel or keeping them in a plastic bag. We have different cultivars of basil coming your way soon – this week you have some of the most popular variety, sweet basil, but there are loads more. Stay tuned.

Pasta with Onions and Greens

This recipe can be adapted to use any greens you might find in your bag. Tender greens are best as they cook faster -- big tough greens are too chewy.

3 to 4 T. olive oil

3 large **sweet onions**, white and light green part washed and sliced thinly

3 **garlic cloves**, peeled and minced
2 bunches tender mixed **greens**, washed and chopped
1 pound pasta
salt and pepper
grated Parmesan cheese to taste

In a large heavy pot, heat 3 T. olive oil over medium heat. Add onions and sauté until very soft, about 10 minutes. Add minced garlic and sauté for one more minute. Do not let the garlic get brown. Add chopped greens and keep cooking until greens are soft and tender. Set aside. Cook pasta. Drain and toss with greens. Moisten mixture with olive oil or stock. Season to taste with salt, pepper, Parmesan cheese if desired.

Basil Pesto

We are fairly certain that we have another recipe for Jon's famous pesto that has cream in it ... but we can't find it. When we find it, we'll send it out. In the meantime, here's an old standby.

3 **garlic cloves**, peeled
3 cups **fresh basil** leaves
¼ cup pine nuts or walnuts
1/3 to ½ cup olive oil
1/3 cup freshly grated parmesan (optional)
salt to taste

Grind up ingredients in food processor (drizzle in oil to keep things moving). Simple as that.

Aioli

(from Nora Pouillon)

Looking for an alternative to pesto or something to do with all that fresh garlic? Aioli is a garlic sauce, a little bit like garlic mayonnaise. It's popular in Spain and Provence as a topping for fried potatoes – French fries are an acceptable substitute! You can also use it as a dip for vegetables or fish.

3 **cloves garlic**
½ tsp salt
1 egg yolk, or 1 T Dijon mustard
½ cup olive oil
2 tsp lemon juice
fresh black pepper

Mix the garlic and salt on a cutting board by mashing them together very well using the side of a knife blade. Place the small bowl in which you will whisk the aioli on a wet paper towel to keep it from slipping. Put the egg yolk or mustard and the mashed garlic and salt into the bowl. Beat until lemony in color. Add the olive oil, drop by drop, whisking continuously, until the sauce begins to thicken. Whisk in the remaining oil in a slow stream. Add the lemon juice and pepper to taste. If it's too thick, thin with a few drops of water.