

Hi All!

Welcome to Potomac Vegetable Farm's CSA! In The Bag is below, and our newsletter, Farm Notes, is attached. Please take the time to read these!

Your sixteen-week share will be filled with a variety of veggies, familiar and unfamiliar. For those you can't identify, please look at the list of what's in your bag below and check it against our ever-growing [ID That Veggie](#) section on our website.

For those of you who ordered a cookbook--and that's all new members and some returning members--please pick it up with your share this week. It will have your name on it. Also, throughout the season, remember that this and the [Recipes](#) section of our website, are great resources for what to do with your bag of goodies.

Shares are delivered in cloth bags:

- Mini shares are BLUE
- Regular shares are GREEN
- Robust shares are WHITE.

Please make a note of what you bought and pick up the correct bag. There will be a list posted; please check it to make sure that you get the eggs, bread or flowers that you ordered. Flower shares will start on the first day.

One VERY IMPORTANT thing is that you return your bags each week. If you'd be so kind as to fold them up, you'll make life easier on us at the host site. The farm will also take used egg cartons, clean grocery or newspaper bags (and only those specific bags), and used pint or quart sized containers (and only those sizes), either plastic clamshells or paper.

Your host is your first point of contact with any questions, so please feel free to contact them if you're uncertain in any way.

Happy eating!

**In The Bag**  
**Potomac Vegetable Farms**  
**Week #1A: September 24, 2012**  
**Featuring: Sweet Potatoes**

**This is what we anticipate will be in your bag. It could be slightly different.**

**Mini:** potatoes, spaghetti squash, carrots, radishes, beans, beets, arugula, sweet potato greens

**Regular:** garlic, sweet potatoes, kale, radishes, peppers, arugula, bok choy, dill, onions

**Robust:** potatoes, spaghetti squash, sweet potatoes, kale, cilantro, radishes, peppers, beans, arugula, sweet potato greens, bok choy, dill, onions

Potatoes go in a cool, dark place. Eggplant, spaghetti squash, onions and garlic will be happy on the counter. Beans, radishes, carrots, beets, leafy greens, herbs, and peppers are do best in the fridge.

**New (to some) items:**

**Arugula** is a zippy, peppery green in the cruciferous family of vegetables (also known as the Brassicas). It's popular in Italian cuisine, grows wild in Asia and the Mediterranean, and can be traced back to Roman times where it was used for its seeds and oils. It can be eaten raw in salads or cooked. Arugula has become a popular ingredient in salad mixes. If you find its flavor too pungent, try cooking it to tone down the taste. It is an excellent source of vitamins A and C, folic acid, calcium, magnesium, and manganese.

**Beets** are the two-meals-in-one vegetable: You can eat the beautiful roots AND you can sauté up those leafy greens. They belong to the same family as chard and spinach. Beets are fantastic boiled or roasted and then put over a salad, or grilled (wrap whole beet in foil, drizzle with olive oil, and stick them on the grill for about an hour) as a side dish. Beet greens are a bit earthier in flavor than chard or spinach, but still in the same vein. You can sauté them up with a little olive oil and garlic and serve them over some ravioli. The sweet ricotta balances the earthy really nicely. Beets are high in folate, manganese, potassium, vitamin C, and iron.

**Bok choy** is a Chinese cabbage with white stalks and round green leaves. The flavor is slightly sweeter than traditional cabbage, and you'll find it to be a bit more delicate and juicy. It can be eaten raw, steamed, stir fried, braised, or used in soups. It is high in calcium and vitamins C and A.

**Kale**, a broad, leafy, robust-stemmed green, is a form of cabbage and in the Brassica family. It is used worldwide, and can be sautéed, stewed, steamed, frozen, or even used raw in green smoothies or when young and tender in salads. Kale is a super food, high in antioxidants, vitamins K and C, calcium, beta carotene, and iron. Use it in any recipe that calls for leafy greens.

When cooked, the **spaghetti squash's** flesh falls away from the skin in ribbons, like spaghetti. It can be baked, boiled, or steamed, and it's high in folic acid, vitamin A, potassium, and beta carotene.

**Sweet Potatoes** are large, starchy, sweet tasting, tuberous root vegetables that are actually only distantly related to the potato family. They are in the Convolvulaceae family, whose other member, the morning glory, we fight in the fields as a very successful weed. They are high in complex carbohydrates, vitamins A, C and B6, manganese, dietary fiber, and potassium. They're also high in antioxidants. Sweet potatoes can be baked, roasted, pureed, and used in soups. Personally, I like them cubed, tossed with olive oil and chili powder, and roasted in the oven until just starting to crisp. Sweet and spicy... Yum!

**Sweet Potatoes Greens:** You didn't know you could eat these, did you? These are exactly what they sound like---the tops of the sweet potato plant---and a common green served in many Asian and African cultures. They're high in antioxidants and in vitamins A, C and B2. Sauté them, steam them, boil them, put them in soup. We're stretching your horizons, and you'll be happy!

**Preserving Sweet Potatoes**

There's not a lot you can do to preserve sweet potatoes. Some strategies for root cellaring include wrapping them individually in

newspaper and storing them in a 50-60 degree dry room. You can also pack potatoes one inch apart in cartons on a two inch bed of sawdust and pour sawdust between the potatoes. Spread an inch of sawdust over each layer of potatoes and put several inches on top. Don't let the potatoes touch the sides of the carton. Or, wrap potatoes in newspaper, put them in paper bags, and hang them from joists in a cool basement.

To freeze sweet potatoes, the [National Center for Home Food Preservation](http://www.nationalcenterforhomefoodpreservation.org/) recommends cooking until almost tender in water, in steam, in a pressure cooker or in the oven. Let stand at room temperature until cool. Peel sweet potatoes, cut in halves, slice or mash. If desired, to prevent darkening, dip whole sweet potatoes or slices for 5 seconds in a solution of 1/2 cup lemon juice to 1 quart water. To keep mashed sweet potatoes from darkening, mix 2 tablespoons orange or lemon juice with each quart of mashed sweet potatoes. Pack into containers, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

Baked -- Wash, trim and heat potatoes in oven at 350°F without peeling until slightly soft. Cool, remove peel and wrap individually in aluminum foil. Place in polyethylene bags and freeze. Complete the baking in an oven at 350°F immediately before serving, leaving the potatoes wrapped in foil.

**Recipes:**

Sweet Potato Tacos: <http://www.potomacvegetablefarms.com/recipe/sweet-potato-tacos/>

Baked Sweet Potatoes with Chili Beans:

<http://www.potomacvegetablefarms.com/recipe/baked-sweet-potatoes-with-chili-beans/>

Sweet Potato Cakes: <http://www.potomacvegetablefarms.com/recipe/sweet-potato-cakes/>

Sweet Potato, Ricotta and Arugula Flatbread:

<http://www.potomacvegetablefarms.com/recipe/sweet-potato-ricotta-and-arugula-flatbread/>

Bacon Wrapped Sweet Potato Bites:

<http://www.potomacvegetablefarms.com/recipe/bacon-wrapped-sweet-potato-bites/>

Sweet Potato and Three Bean Soup:

<http://www.potomacvegetablefarms.com/recipe/sweet-potato-and-three-bean-soup/>

Crispy Baked Sweet Potato Fries: <http://www.potomacvegetablefarms.com/recipe/crispy-baked-sweet-potato-fries/>