

HUTCHINS FARM PLANT CATALOG 2024

The following list represents our expected offerings for the coming season, complete with brief variety descriptions, notes on cultivation, expected price and season of availability. We are unlikely to successfully produce everything on the list, for a variety of reasons, so bear in mind that not all items may be available during the specified season (or at all), and supplies are limited for all items. Because of logistical difficulties experienced in past seasons, we will no longer be taking orders for plants

HUTCHINS FARM SALES PLANTS AT A GLANCE

The following short chart represents our expected offerings for the coming season, container type, expected price, and season of availability – please remember that does not mean they are available that entire period! It means the plants will appear on the porch in waves over that time frame as they come up from the greenhouse.

<u>Plant type</u>	<u>Container</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Availability</u>
Amaranth	6-pack	\$4.00	May-July
Artichoke	4" pot	\$4.75	April-May
Arugula	6-pack	\$4.00	April-May
Basil	3" pot	\$4.00	May-July
Beets	6-pack	\$4.00	May-June
Broccoli	4-pack	\$4.00	April-May
Brussels Sprouts	4-pack	\$4.00	Late June-July
Cabbage	4-pack	\$4.00	April-June
Celery/Celeriac	4-pack	\$4.00	May-June
Chard	4-pack	\$4.00	May-July
Chervil	6-pack	\$4.00	April-June
Chives	3" pot	\$4.00	May-July
Chive, Garlic	3" pot	\$4.00	May-July
Cilantro	6-pack	\$4.00	April-June
Cucumber	3-pack	\$4.00	May-July
Dill	6-pack	\$4.00	April-July
Eggplant	4" pot	\$5.00	May-July
Endive/Escarole	4-pack	\$4.00	April-May
Fennel	4-pack	\$4.00	April-May
Fenugreek	6-pack	\$4.00	May-July
Flowers	4 or 6-pack	\$4.75	April-June
Kale/Collard	4-pack	\$4.00	April-July
Kohlrabi	4-pack	\$4.00	April-July
Lavender	3" pot	\$4.75	May-July
Leek/Scallion	3" pot	\$4.00	April-June
Lemon Balm	3" pot	\$4.00	May-July
Lemon Verbena	3" pot	\$4.75	May-July

Lettuce	6-pack	\$4.00	April-July
Lovage	3" pot	\$4.00	May-June
Marjoram	3" pot	\$4.00	May-June
Melon/Watermelon	3-pack	\$4.00	May-July
Mint	3" pot	\$4.00	April-July
Nasturtium	3" pot	\$4.00	May-July
Okra	3" pot	\$4.00	June-July
Onion/Shallot	3" pot	\$4.00	April-June
Oregano	3" pot	\$4.00	May-July
Parsley	3" pot	\$4.00	April-July
Peppers	4" pot	\$5.00	May-July
Potatoes	4-pack	\$4.00	April-May
Pumpkins	3-pack	\$4.00	Early June
Purslane	6-pack	\$4.00	May-July
Rhubarb	2 gal. pot	\$20.00	April-May
Rosemary	3" pot	\$4.75	May-July
Sage	3" pot	\$4.00	May-July
Savory, summer	3" pot	\$4.00	May-July
Shiso	3" pot	\$4.00	May-July
Sorrel	3" pot	\$4.00	May-June
Spinach	6-pack	\$4.00	April-May
Squash, summer	3-pack	\$4.00	May-July
Squash, winter	3-pack	\$4.00	Early June
Strawberry	4" pot	\$6.00	May-July
Tarragon	3" pot	\$4.75	May-July
Thyme	3" pot	\$4.75	May-July
Tomatillo/Husk Cherry	4" pot	\$5.00	May-July
Tomato	4" pot	\$5.00	May-July
Watercress	3" pot	\$4.00	April-June
Za'atar (Notes under Marjoram)	3" pot	\$4.00	May-June

HUTCHINS FARM PLANT CATALOG 2024

The following list represents our expected offerings for the coming season, complete with brief variety descriptions, notes on cultivation, expected price and season of availability. We are unlikely to successfully produce everything on the list, for a variety of reasons, so bear in mind that not all items may be available during the specified season (or at all), and supplies are limited for all items.

Most of our vegetable and herb plants are grown from seed or cuttings taken from our own ‘mother’ plants and are certified organic by Baystate Organic Certifiers. A few varieties of herbs are bought in as rooted cuttings from Hillcrest Nursery, an organic greenhouse operation in Maryland, and are likewise Certified Organic. The varieties and species we sell are all farm-tested (unless specified) for best flavor, reliability, yield and/or other traits that we find important. Many of these ‘professional grower’ varieties are not to be found at typical garden centers because of the high seed cost.

New varieties for 2024 are in *ITALICS*.

AMARANTH—‘Red Leaf’—6-pack @ \$4.00 (May be available in mixed packs)

AVAILABILITY: May-July

SPACING: 6-8”

CULTURAL NOTES: Heat loving relative of common pigweed, ‘Red Leaf’ Amaranth is an attractive, easy to grow plant used for cooked greens. Widely grown in India and the Caribbean, where it is known as ‘Calaloo’.

HARVEST: We cut heavily when plants reach adequate size—around 12-16” tall—leaving some lower stems and leaves for regrowth.

ARTICHOKE—‘Wonder’—4” pots @ \$4.75

AVAILABILITY: April-June

SPACING: About 1 square yard per plant.

CULTURAL NOTES: Artichokes are half-hardy perennials usually propagated by division. Plants usually begin to produce in their second season, but for those of us who live in a climate where they don’t survive the winter, this seed propagated variety (if started early enough—we seeded in early February) will produce buds the first season. Beautiful thistle-like plants grow quite large and productive with enough space and fertility.

HARVEST: Buds usually begin to arise in July and continue to form for several weeks—primary buds can be quite large, followed by a flush of secondary buds. Plants tend to go dormant in the heat of August, then begin to grow again in the fall—you can sometimes get a second flush if freezing weather holds off long enough. Cut buds when they have achieved maximum size but before they begin to open. You can leave a few buds to open up into giant, gorgeous, long-lasting neon purple thistle-like blooms.

ARUGULA—‘Astro’—6-pack @ \$4.00 (May be available in mixed packs)

SPACING: Cells can be set quite close together, almost side by side.

AVAILABILITY: April-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Arugula does best in the cooler weather of the early and late season—in hot weather it tends to ‘bolt’ (go to flower and seed) before it has made much leaf growth. We recommend that gardeners buy seed for this vegetable—seeds germinate

readily and rapidly in a wide range of conditions and the plants are ready for harvest in a month or less. We will be offering pre-germinated seeds in packs—do not try to divide up the seedlings in an individual cell as the disturbance can cause the plants to bolt more quickly. Plants do best under cover to keep out flea beetles, which chew holes in the leaves. We seed throughout the season, but will have plants for sale primarily in May and June. Because Arugula is cold-tolerant and fast growing, seedlings can be made until about mid-September or later if protected.

HARVEST: Because the harvest window for Arugula is so brief, we usually pull up the entire plants by their roots, and just keep seeding for continued harvest. Home gardeners may prefer to pick individual leaves to get the most from each plant, particularly during cool weather when the plants bolt more slowly.

BASIL—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: We set Basil plants 6” apart in rows about 12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Among the most tender (least tolerant to cold) of common garden plants, Basil suffers anytime temperatures go below 50 for an extended period. Row covers can be of great assistance for early and late season, and because Basil thrives in tropical heat, they can be left on all summer to exclude pests like Japanese Beetles. Basil seed germinates and grows readily in warm, moist soil, but can be prone to fungal disease in less than ideal conditions. A single planting, frequently cut back, well-watered and fertilized, can produce over the entire season. We usually make several plantings to ensure top quality. A new disease, Basil downy mildew, has become a perennial scourge and has shortened our basil season significantly beginning around 2010, but we have had success reestablishing a more ‘normal’ basil season with a new group of DM resistant varieties available for the first time in 2018.

HARVEST: Plants can and should be cut back frequently and quite severely, making sure to leave some active growth to ensure continuing production. Plants that have begun to flower can be encouraged to resume leaf growth by cutting back. Cold temperatures and moisture (and the new Downy Mildew disease) can cause Basil leaves to turn black. We never refrigerate Basil, but rather store it at room temperature with the cut stems in fresh water, the leaves covered by a plastic bag. Cooking diminishes the fresh, full flavor, so basil is best added to dishes just before serving. At the end of the season, or when disease begins to threaten, you can cut all your basil, make a big batch of pesto (minus the cheese, which should be added just before using), and freeze it in small bags for use throughout the winter.

VARIETIES:

Genovese—68 days—‘the’ pesto basil, also wonderful paired with tomatoes. Our most popular basil by far.

Spicy Bush—70 days—Of a type common in Greece, this charming, small-leaved, bushy variety grows into an attractive mound. Flavor is reminiscent of Genovese, but leaves are small enough to use whole and do not require cutting (which can result in discoloration). Restaurants in Greece often have a plant on each table so diners can season their food as they wish.

Sweet Thai—64 days—Strong growing variety of ‘Thai’ basil--ornamental purple tinged plants have a strong anise-clove flavor, widely used in Southeast Asian cuisine. Tolerates Downy Mildew better than ‘Genovese’ or ‘Spicy Bush’.

Devotion—70 days—A new variety developed in cooperation with Rutgers University—observed to have significant resistance to Basil Downy Mildew in field trials and on

farms throughout the country, including ours. Flavor and appearance are similar but not identical to ‘Genovese’. In our experience, ‘Devotion’ basil will eventually succumb to downy mildew disease pressure, but we consistently get at least six more weeks of production compared to ‘Genovese’—weeks that coincide with tomato season.

Evi—70 days—Most recent development in DM-resistant basil, this one is supposed to be the best yet, with similar appearance and aroma to the standard ‘Genovese’. Last year, we found it virtually indistinguishable from ‘Prospera’.

Prospera—68 days—Yet another new DM-resistant variety, this one developed in Israel. ‘Prospera’ appears to have resistance in roughly equal measure with ‘Devotion’, but has a taller plant, somewhat smaller leaves with a more typical ‘Genovese’ basil shape. We’re thrilled that we can once again offer basil and tomatoes together, as God intended. In the difficult, wet 2021 season, ‘Prospera’ remained disease free for about a month longer than any other variety.

BEETS—6-packs @ \$4.00

SPACING: We plant individual cells fairly close (4-6”), although there are often multiple plants per cell. Beets don’t tend to form a very coherent root ball, so often fall apart in the process of planting. They tend to do okay anyway.

AVAILABILITY: We generally seed our beets directly in the field, but to get a jump on the season, we start some early in the greenhouse as well—availability will probably be April-May.

CULTURAL NOTES: Beets require more fertility than some root crops, so should be fertilized fairly generously.

HARVEST: Transplanted beets perform fairly well (in fact, a good number of farms produce all their beets from transplants), but the tap root tends to get bushy and tangled at the bottom of the globe-shaped root, so they don’t look as tidy as direct-seeded beets.

Pull when beets have sized adequately, anywhere from 2-4” diameter.

VARIETIES: We grow a number of very similar standard red varieties.

BROCCOLI—4-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties @ \$4.00

SPACING: We plant broccoli 16” apart in rows three feet apart, but home gardeners can tighten up the spacing somewhat.

AVAILABILITY: Because summer heat adversely affects the quality of broccoli, we tend to concentrate on July seedings to mature in the late summer and fall. Plants will be available in April-May, and possibly in July and August. We sometimes offer packs with multiple varieties for extended harvest.

CULTURAL NOTES: Broccoli does best in soils with a near neutral pH and high fertility. Heads that mature in hot weather are often strong flavored and loose or ‘ricey’, and the individual yellow flowers can begin to open prematurely. Heads that mature under relatively cool conditions are better flavored (those that undergo several light frosts are the sweetest) and they hold longer in the field.

We cover our spring planting to protect from flea beetles and root maggots. All plantings need protection from a number of caterpillars: Imported Cabbageworm (the bright green, fat caterpillars, which are offspring of the small, pale yellow butterflies often seen fluttering around brassica plantings), the smaller Diamondback Moth and Cabbage Looper, and the newly arrived Cross-striped Cabbageworm, which hatches and feeds in groups, so can do a lot of damage in a brief period of time. These can all be effectively and safely controlled with row covers, or with one of two biological insecticides:

Bacillus thuringensis (Bt) var kurstaki (trade name Dipel, Monterey BT et al.) which

affects only Lepidopterans (caterpillars) which ingest the substance, and Spinosad (trade name Monterey Garden Insect Spray, Captain Jack's Dead Bug Brew) which can control caterpillars and is also effective on flea beetles, thrips, leaf miners, and Colorado Potato Beetles. Both materials are most effective on small larvae (caterpillars in this case) and have very short period of activity before sunlight begins to break them down—spray in the evening for maximum effectiveness. Spinosad has some potential to harm honeybees if they are present during spraying, another reason to spray in the evening.

Broccoli and related brassicas suffer from a number of common and destructive diseases, but there are no effective organically acceptable means of controlling them except trying to discourage them by providing conditions that aren't conducive to their spread—provide plants adequate space, and use drip irrigation (or only water on sunny mornings) to keep foliage from getting wet.

HARVEST: Broccoli should be cut when heads are fully formed, but before they begin to loosen up (which can happen rapidly in hot weather). We check broccoli every other day when it begins to mature and cut those heads whose florets separate readily when moderate pressure is applied. A week or two after the main head is cut, a number of side shoots will begin to appear which can be cut and used like the main head. Keeping them cut will encourage extended production.

VARIETIES:

BC1611—33 days—We grew this Chinese kale (kailaan) type variety for the first time in 2020, and were very favorably impressed by its earliness, productivity and quality.

Loose, medium-sized buds are borne on long tender stems—after cutting the small central 'head', continue cutting abundant stems for up to several weeks.

Monty—56 days—Newer early variety, third year trial as results were not conclusive over the last couple years. Johnny's reports it has superior heat tolerance.

Emerald Crown—60 days—Early and resilient, this large, well-domed variety has been a standout over the last several years

Emerald Star—74 days—This late-maturing variety is purported to demonstrate unprecedented heat tolerance and exceptional reliability. Takes a long time to mature.

Green Magic—62 days—Our standard variety has impressed us with its uniformity, quality and unsurpassed production of secondary shoots.

Imperial—71 days—Newer variety that produces very large, uniform heads under a wide variety of conditions—more reliable during hot weather than most others.

Jet Dome—54 days—Extra-early new variety is reported to have excellent heat tolerance and hold well for an early variety.

Lieutenant—58 days— Its strong performance for several seasons in a variety of time slots has made 'Lieutenant' one of our new favorites. Uniform, productive and heat-tolerant.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS—4-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: We plant Brussels Sprouts 16" apart in rows three feet apart. This could be tightened up a bit, but Brussels Sprouts are in the field for over 3 months and benefit from as much space as they can get.

AVAILABILITY: Because they require so long to mature, and benefit from reaching maturity during cool weather, we only make one planting of Brussels Sprouts. Plants should be available late June or early July.

CULTURAL NOTES: Similar in culture to other related brassicas (broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, kale), Brussels sprouts tend to be more problematic than most others because they require such a long season to mature, which exposes them to lots of opportunities for

disease infection, or pest infestation. Especially difficult to deal with are aphids, which are generally controlled during most of the season by native beneficial insects, but which continue to reproduce uncontrolled after their predators retire for the winter. Aphids can be suppressed by insecticidal soap, but only if it is applied early enough and frequently enough to prevent population build up—aphids quickly colonize parts of the plant that are protected from sprays, so once they are established, it's too late. Ample fertility is important for optimum performance—plan to fertilize a few times during the long growth period.

We clip the top rosette off Brussels Sprout plants as they approach maturity, for us usually around mid-September—this will encourage the sprouts on the stalk to develop more evenly and completely.

VARIETIES:

Gustus—105 days—Our long-time favored variety, we're still looking for one that performs as or more reliably.

Marte—103 days—Recommended as a variety that handles heat and fertility stress better than most.

Silvia—98 days—Compact variety is supposed to grow well at tight spacing. Early.

CABBAGE—4-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties, @ \$4.00

SPACING: We plant storage cabbage 16" apart in rows 3 ft apart, but earlier varieties can be spaced much closer to control size.

AVAILABILITY: We plant smaller, early cabbages repeatedly over the course of the season, while we only plant the storage varieties in late June and early July. Look for early varieties beginning in April through June, and possibly more during July, storage varieties around the end of June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Cabbage is closely related to Broccoli and almost identical in culture. Cabbage is relatively more tolerant to heat stress than Broccoli.

HARVEST: Cabbage can be harvested anytime the heads have become firm. Allowing heads to stand too long in the field after they are mature can cause them to split.

VARIETIES:

Alcosa—72 days—Savoy-type, especially popular in Italy. Heads are not as dense as typical varieties. Harvest promptly to avoid splitting and internal browning.

Alfaro—74 days—New mid-early red cabbage, medium to large size.

Farao—65 days—Similar to but later than Tiara, the deer express a decided preference for this extra-sweet cabbage, eating them to the ground while leaving surrounding varieties untouched.

Omero—73 days—Our new choice for early, small red cabbage. Easy to grow, size can be controlled by spacing.

Promise—95 days—New storage variety from Johnny's. Second year trial.

Storage #4—95 days—Our favorite green cabbage for long-term storage with wide adaptability. Can be harvested early for fresh use, or allowed to enlarge for storage. Stands well in the field and can grow quite large.

Ruby Perfection—85 days—Very uniform and high quality red cabbage with good storage characteristics. Requires a long season and doesn't like to be crowded.

Tiara—68 days—New green 'mini-cabbage' variety responds to close planting by forming small heads. Very tender and sweet for salads, slaw or braising.

CELERY/CELERIAC—4-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: We set celery plants 9” apart in rows 3 feet apart, though the distance between rows could be reduced by as much as half.

AVAILABILITY: Mid-May through Mid-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Descended from wetland plants, Celery requires uniformly moist soil throughout the season for best results. High fertility and ample moisture help to produce succulent, juicy stalks. Although celery plants are fairly hardy, extended exposure of young plants to cool temperatures can cause the plants to go to seed (as biennials, they ‘think’ they have gone through a winter) so we postpone planting until the weather has warmed sufficiently.

HARVEST: We cut the entire plant at ground level, but home gardeners may choose to harvest individual leaf stalks as required. Mature celery tolerates light frost.

VARIETIES:

Kelvin—75 days—Hybrid celery from Holland. Very dark green and uniform, quick to mature.

Merengo—80 days—New hybrid variety, reported to have good disease resistance. Second year trial.

Balena—110 days—Celeriac or Root Celery. This is the same species as common celery, but selected over many generations for a large, tender root (leaves are edible, but best used as a flavoring). Roots are large, with white interiors, and have real celery flavor in a more versatile form—they can be eaten raw, shredded, fried, pureed, roasted, etc. Require a long season, good fertility and consistent moisture to really size up—be patient, but harvest before heavy frost.

CHARD—4-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: We plant Chard a foot apart in rows a foot apart, but plants can be spaced more closely.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Like Celery, Chard is a hardy plant that can respond to extended cold temperatures by flowering prematurely—therefore we hold off planting until early to mid-May. Chard is relatively trouble free, and much more tolerant of heat than spinach (which it can replace during the summer). One pest that can become problematic in some years is the leafminer, which also feeds on closely related beets and spinach (and the weed lambs’ quarters). Covering plants with row cover will keep flies from laying eggs on the leaves. If you do get leafminer, cut off any affected leaves and allow to regrow—usually infestations are very temporary, only affecting plants during several weeks to a month. A single planting can produce all season (up until heavy frosts) with ample water and fertility.

HARVEST: We snap individual leaves off a little above ground level—take care not to dislodge the plants, especially when just beginning to harvest. Plants can also be completely trimmed a couple inches above the growing point. Chard continues to regrow as long as it isn’t cut below the growing point from which the leaves emerge.

VARIETIES:

Bright Lights—55 days—AKA ‘Rainbow Chard’, this variety is highly ornamental as well as delicious. Stems can be gold, pink, orange, purple, red or white. Somewhat less cold-tolerant than other varieties, so protect plants as cold weather threatens in October.

Improved Rainbow Blend—60 days—Presumably almost identical to ‘Bright Lights’, we’re trying this variety to increase our use of Certified Organic seed.

CHERVIL—6-packs @ \$4.00

SPACING: Plant cells about 4-6” apart

AVAILABILITY: April-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Chervil is a relative of parsley, cilantro and dill (among others). Like cilantro and dill, it is an annual, and will grow leaves for a while before going into its reproductive phase, aka bolting. Even less tolerant to heat than cilantro and dill, chervil can only be successfully grown very early or very late in the season. More cold-tolerant than most other herbs.

HARVEST: Chervil tastes a bit like a combination of parsley and fennel, with a pronounced anise flavor. Harvest promptly as chervil bolts readily in hot temperatures.

CHIVES—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: Clumps will spread over time, so initial spacing can be 6-12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: April-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Chives are perennial onion relatives, mostly grown for their thin, hollow leaves which are snipped or chopped and used to top salads, baked potatoes, pasta and countless other dishes. Also prized for their beautiful edible flowers, which arise in early spring and have a unique sweet, onion-y flavor. Clumps of chives will slowly divide and spread, and can be dug and divided, which is best done before they begin to grow.

HARVEST: Leaves can be snipped anytime they are large enough—older leaves tend to get tough and discolored, so it is often advisable to keep plants cut to encourage growth of young leaves. Flowers generally emerge soon after plants begin to grow in the spring, and should be cut soon after they open and before they begin to dry and darken in color. Flowers have a short season.

VARIETIES: We grow a number of different varieties, depending on what is available—they’re all essentially equivalent.

CHIVES, GARLIC—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: Similar growth habit to regular chives, they will spread over time so don’t need to be planted closely.

AVAILABILITY: April-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Garlic Chives (also know as Chinese Chives or Chinese Leeks) are a distinct species from onion Chives with flat, non-hollow leaves and a different flavor. Flowers are likewise edible (and commonly found in Asian markets), but they are white and arise in late August or early September. Plants are long lived and spread readily, but are not aggressive. Easy to propagate by division during the early spring.

HARVEST: As Chives. Flowers (for eating) are often cut in bud stage and bunched with stems and leaves. Flowers are delicious, but are attractive enough to use as cut flowers or as garden ornamentals.

CILANTRO—6-packs @ \$4.00 (May be available in mixed packs)

SPACING: Plant cells 4-6” apart in rows 8-12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: We seed Cilantro about every other week all season to ensure a consistent supply—we will have a good supply of plants from late April through July.

CULTURAL NOTES: We recommend that people plant seed directly in the garden, but because seed can take up to three weeks to germinate, we offer customers the

convenience of pre-germinated seeds in 6-packs—the whole cell should be planted without separating the individual plants, which can stress them and cause premature bolting. Cilantro bolts relatively quickly in hot weather—don't expect to harvest all summer from one planting.

HARVEST: We pull plants up with their roots (which are also edible) when leaves are large enough, but late summer plantings can be leaf-picked without worrying about bolting. Cilantro seeds are the Coriander of the spice trade and can be allowed to form and used as such, or saved and planted.

VARIETIES: Calypso—50 days—This variety is by far the best we have tried, well over a week later to bolt than other leaf varieties with equally good flavor and vigor.

CUCUMBERS—3-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: Set plants 8-12" apart in rows 4 or more feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: We plant Cucumbers five times during the season to ensure a consistent supply of high-quality fruit. Plants will be available in May-July.

CULTURAL NOTES: Many growers direct seed Cucumbers in the garden or field as they are notoriously resentful of root disturbance. We have had success using transplants and do so exclusively now for the following reasons:

1. More control over conditions during germination means less work thinning and less wasted seed (which has become increasingly expensive)
2. Transplants have a significant jump on weeds.
3. Transplants can more easily outgrow insect damage which might decimate newly germinated seedlings.

Cucumbers are very sensitive to cold—it is best to wait until the weather and soil have warmed to plant them. They are also quite sensitive to root disturbance which can cause significant stunting—plants should be removed from their containers with care to maintain the root ball. If there is more than one plant in a cell, they shouldn't be separated—they can be planted together, or one can be clipped off at soil level. We cover our cucumber plantings with row covers to provide an extra measure of warmth and protection from pests, particularly Cucumber Beetles. Row covers should be removed when the plants begin to flower to allow pollinators access to flowers—parthenocarpic varieties can set fruit without pollination, so can be left covered. Fruit from parthenocarpic varieties that don't get pollinated will be seedless.

For best production, plants need consistent moisture and ample fertility. On the farm, our plants usually succumb to disease/pest pressure after a couple weeks of good picking—home gardeners may have better results. Rather than resorting to time-consuming, expensive, and often ineffective sprays, we simply continue planting new fields as long as time remains to mature a crop—we generally plant five times during a given season.

HARVEST: Cucumbers size up rapidly. Cucumbers should be picked regularly to promote extended production—we try to pick every other day, although we can wait a little longer under cool conditions. If you're going to be unable to harvest for a longer period of time, try to pick cucumbers on the smaller side so you're not left with a whole bunch of oversized fruit. We usually clip Cucumbers from the vine to avoid damaging them.

VARIETIES:

Braga—45 days—New parthenocarpic slicer variety, reported to have heavy early fruit set.

Bristol—56 days—New slicer variety with improved resistance to Cucurbit Downy

Mildew, a new disease that usually cuts short the season in September, but can appear earlier as well.

Citadel—52 days—New pickler variety with robust resistance to DM—can add a week or more to harvest during periods of disease pressure.

Cool Customer—55 days—New pickling variety from Johnny’s, open pollinated.

Excelsior—52 days—Traditional pickler, but parthenocarpic for higher yields.

Gracie—50 days—‘Cornichon’ type pickler, quite early, with copious yields.

Parthenocarpic, so can produce without pollination.

Lagos—45 days—One of our favorite slicers—extra early and parthenocarpic for great yields even under less than ideal conditions.

Gateway—56 days—New disease-resistant slicer, DM resistance means it will produce longer into the late summer.

Gershwin—49 days—New parthenocarpic pickler, supposed to be high-yielding and early.

Marketmore 76—58 days—Standard OP slicer for the northeast, long time favorite. This variety is somewhat late to mature, but may perform better in home gardens than some newer hybrid varieties that have predominantly female flowers and depend on a small percentage of pollinator seed to provide male blossoms.

Nokya—54 days—Parthenocarpic Japanese-style cucumbers are long, slender and ridged. Can grow quite long with small (or non-existent) seed cavities.

DILL—6-packs @ \$4.00 (May be available in mixed packs)

SPACING: Plant cells 4-6” apart in rows 8-12” apart

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: We treat Dill exactly the same as Cilantro, planting them together in the same bed at the same time and harvesting them in an identical way. Dill left to set seed in the garden will often self-seed and reappear the following year.

HARVEST: As Cilantro, except that Dill flowers and immature seeds are also cut as they arise to be used like the leaves or, especially, for pickling.

EGGPLANT—4” pots @ \$5.00

SPACING: We plant Eggplant 18” apart in rows 6 feet apart, but rows could be significantly closer together. We use black plastic mulch to keep down weeds, provide extra heat, and keep soil fertility from leaching out during heavy rain. Plants can get quite large and rangy and can benefit from staking.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Eggplant is sensitive to cold and should be planted after temperatures have warmed. Eggplant is considered to be in the same genus as potatoes and shares several pests in common. The Potato Flea Beetle (similar in appearance to but distinct from the Cabbage Flea Beetle) chews holes in the leaves and can completely defoliate small plants. Colorado Potato Beetles are as attracted to Eggplant as they are to Potatoes and the orange larvae can very quickly eat even a large plant down to a skeleton. Both of these pests can be excluded with row covers, but check the plants periodically because if even a few Potato Beetles get underneath, they can wreak havoc. We usually cover directly after planting to protect small plants from flea beetles and provide a warmer environment. When the plants are large and ready to bear, we remove the covers (for convenience—Eggplants are self-fertile and don’t require pollinators to produce fruit) and control Colorado Potato Beetles with Spinosad (see Broccoli) or by picking them off by hand. Because Eggplants are growing and producing over a long season,

providing fertilizer at about the time they bear their first fruit can promote a longer productive season.

HARVEST: We cut or pull fruit off the plants when they are good sized but while their skin is still glossy. Eggplant can be cut quite young, but don't let fruit hang too long—a truly ripe Eggplant whose skin has lost its gloss becomes bitter and seedy. Harvested eggplant are best kept cool at high humidity levels, but can be damaged by low temperatures in the refrigerator.

VARIETIES:

A-1014—55 days—This standard eggplant was highly recommended by Seedway as an exceptionally early, productive and high-quality introduction with compact, manageable plants and a long production period. We found it to be everything they promised, fruit a bit smaller than our other 'standard' favorites

Barbarella—64 days—another hybrid 'Rosa Bianca' type with large rounded fruit and dark violet-purple skin.

Beatrice—62 days—One of our favorites, among the most productive every season. Very attractive large fruit of the 'Rosa Bianca' type, with violet skin and rounded shape. Excels for making vegetarian 'scallopini'.

Dairyu—60 days—Early and productive 'Ichiban'-type Japanese eggplant with abundant long, slender fruit.

Fairy Tale—65 days—Plants bear abundant small fruit with excellent flavor and few seeds. Small plants with extremely high yield potential.

Lucilla—67 days—Beautiful purple-striped fruit of standard size and shape are quite striking, and delicious as well. Can be a miserly producer some seasons.

Nadia—65 days—Our long-time favorite standard eggplant, was briefly unavailable, but has returned to the catalogs.

Nigral—65 days—Standard Italian-style eggplant, possible replacement for Nadia which was unavailable for a few years

Orient Express—58 days—Japanese-type (like Dairyu), early and abundant.

Patio Baby—50 days—'Patio Baby' is a new variety bred specifically for containers. Miniature spineless fruit are continuously produced over a long season

Santana—61 days—'Santana' has continually impressed us with its sustained production of large and jumbo fruit of the standard eggplant type. Very similar to 'Nadia'

Super Violet—65 days—Taiwanese-type eggplant, can grow over a foot long, slender and dark pink. Replacement for 'Slim Purple' which was not available this year.

ENDIVE/ESCAROLE—4-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: We set our plants 1 foot apart in rows about 1 foot apart. Frisee Endive and Italian dandelion probably don't need quite this much space, while escarole could sometimes use more.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-May

CULTURAL NOTES: These are all 'chicories', close relatives of lettuce and similar in culture, but are more prone to bolting under hot conditions. Spring plantings need ample water and fertility to form a full size head before they begin to stretch, and should be harvested promptly as soon as they reach usable size—late summer plantings are more forgiving.

HARVEST: Like lettuce, cut at the base. When they are ready, the leaves in the center of the head begin to bunch together and fold over.

VARIETIES:

Benefine—48 days—New ‘frisee’ type, reported to be more reliable and tolerant to hot weather than typical varieties.

Carina—65 days—Newer hybrid Italian dandelion. Can regrow after cutting.

Clio—48 days—Related to escarole and endive, this chicory is commonly known as Italian Dandelion or ‘Catalogna’—slow bolting, can grow quite large. Very attractive to deer, so be warned.

Curlesi—50 days—Curly endive, not as finely cut as Rhodos—easier to grow, with less tendency to tipburn.

Eros—50 days—Another newer escarole variety, seed produced organically.

FENUGREEK—6-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: This is our first year trying this herb, we’ll probably set them at 4-6” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Fenugreek is a legume commonly used as a fresh herb, also as a dried or frozen herb, or seeds used as a spice. Common in Indian food, reported to be easy to grow, but resents transplanting, so handle carefully.

FLORENCE FENNEL—4-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: We set plants 1 foot apart in rows about 1 foot apart, but the spacing can be tightened if soil fertility is high.

AVAILABILITY: We will have a few packs available in late April-May, and we plant again in late June-July.

CULTURAL NOTES: In the same family as Dill, Chervil, and Cilantro (not to mention Carrots, Parsley, and Celery) Fennel dislikes root disturbance, so care should be taken not to disturb the root ball when planting. Fennel thrives during cooler weather, but requires a long season. Plants have ferny leaves (which are edible) but are grown primarily for the swollen base or ‘bulb’ which forms just above the base of the soil. Fennel responds best to consistent soil moisture and high fertility.

HARVEST: We cut Fennel when the ‘bulb’ is thick and rounded, but before the scales start to separate and stretch (at which point the plant is starting to flower, and becomes tougher). We cut with clippers at the base of the bulb—the root is tough, so be careful if using a knife.

VARIETY:

Orion—80 days—the largest, most reliable variety we have found, for a long time, ‘Orion’ was the only one we grew. Much better performance than traditional OP varieties.

Preludio—73 days—Excellent performance with an earlier harvest date. Good complement for planting with Orion to extend harvest period.

FLOWERS—4 or 6-packs (depending on type) @ \$4.75

SPACING: Depends on variety—cut flowers usually grow taller when crowded.

AVAILABILITY: April-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Most flowers we grow are for cut flower bouquets. Exact requirements and details of cultivation differ depending on species or variety. Most cut flowers need full sunlight, but don’t need high levels of fertility (there are exceptions).

HARVEST: Again, highly species dependent, but generally flowers should be cut before they fully open for maximum vase life. Cutting before pollination (in some species) can dramatically extend vase life.

VARIETIES: Varies by the season and the year.

KALE AND COLLARDS—4-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: We set plants 1 foot apart in rows about 1 foot apart, but sometimes allow extra space for extended production.

AVAILABILITY: We make several plantings of kale and collards to ensure consistent production from late May through the very end of the season. Plants are available April-June, and possibly again in July and August.

CULTURAL NOTES: Most varieties are considered to be the exact same species as Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage and others. Kale suffers from the same pests and problems outlined under Broccoli. Kale is exceptionally hardy and can continue to produce well into December. One planting, well maintained, can produce all season long. Cold weather improves the flavor.

HARVEST: We snap leaves off as they enlarge. The whole plant can be clipped directly above the growing point (where the newest leaves are emerging). Growth is continuous, but slows in extreme heat or cold.

VARIETIES:

Black Jack—60 days—Newer hybrid “lacinato” or Tuscan kale, more uniform, earlier production.

Darkibor—75 days—Similar to our favorite curly kale ‘Winterbor’, but available as Certified Organic seed. Later to mature than ‘Winterbor’.

Ebony—65 days—New hybrid variety of Tuscan kale. Second year trial.

Mamba—65 days—New hybrid Tuscan kale variety, with broader, less crinkled leaves. Very productive, easy to pick and cold-tolerant. Seed is often in short supply.

Red Russian—50 days—Unlike most Kale varieties, this Siberian heirloom is actually more closely related to Rutabaga than Cabbage. Oak shaped leaves are thin and tender with purple stalks. Very sweet and tender, especially after a few frosts.

Redbor—55 days—Red version of the curly ‘Winterbor’, this variety is exceptionally striking in the cool weather of fall, when the red color becomes more pronounced.

Top Bunch—50 days—Collard (originally ‘Colewort’) variety boasts large, dark green rounded leaves with slight savoy. Very tender and flavorful.

Winterbor—55 days—For many years, our standard curly kale variety. Tall plants bear large, tightly curled leaves that are easy to pick. Regrowth is rapid, and overall production is unsurpassed.

KOHLRABI—4-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: We set plants 6” apart in rows 12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-May.

CULTURAL NOTES: One of the odder members of the Broccoli/Cabbage species, Kohlrabi is grown for the swollen base of the stem. Similar in culture to its close relatives (see Broccoli), Kohlrabi is more tolerant to heat and much quicker to mature.

HARVEST: We clip the tough root at the base of the ‘bulb’ when it is 2-3” in diameter and before it begins to elongate. Kohlrabi are peeled, and the interior pith is sweet and crisp and wonderfully versatile—can, among other things, be eaten raw, sautéed, stir-fried or pickled. Very similar to the inner portion of a Broccoli stem

VARIETIES:

Kolibri—35 days—Similar to ‘Winner’ but earlier and with purple color, which is only skin-deep.

Kossak—80 days—Storage-type kohlrabi can grow enormous, keeps for a long time.

Terek—40 days—Substitute for ‘Winner’, which was unavailable for a time

Winner—32 days—Our favorite for quick maturity, vigor, size, uniformity, reliability, appearance and flavor. Very slow to become tough.

LAVENDER—3” pots @ \$4.75

SPACING: 12-16”

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Tolerates relatively poor soils, but not shade. Gray-green foliage grows low and bushy, abundant flowers grow to about 24”. Often perennial, but can die out in extreme cold or prolonged wet conditions.

HARVEST: Cut individual stems and hang upside down to dry. Retains a wonderful fragrance when dry.

VARIETIES:

Provence—This famous lavender variety has very attractive foliage, and abundant, tall, fragrant flowers. Tolerates humidity better than many lavenders. Not reliably perennial, but can be overwintered with careful site selection and mulch.

Grosso—Hybrid French lavender variety with fat, tall spikes. Exceptional fragrance, very productive.

LEEK/SCALLIONS—3” pots with multiple plants @ \$4.00

SPACING: We set Leeks about 5” apart in rows 3 feet apart, although rows could be spaced more closely. Scallions can be set closer, about an inch apart is sufficient.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Separate the clump of plants in the 3” pot into individual leeks, and set them deeply with only an inch or so of green above the level of the soil. Leeks grow quite slowly and require ample moisture and fertility. They are exceptionally cold-hardy, with some varieties lasting all winter. The entire plant is edible, but the choice white portion is preferred—‘hilling’ or heaping soil up around the shank will increase the proportion of white, blanched stem. Scallions are grown in much the same fashion, but are much quicker to mature.

HARVEST: When plants have acquired sufficient girth (at least 1”) we pull them by hand, peeling and trimming the roots and some of the green leaves as we go. In tighter soils, it may be necessary to loosen the soil with a digging fork before pulling.

VARIETIES:

Biker—100 days—Hybrid leek, second year trial as our usual favorites were not available.

BO-04—60 days—Authentic Japanese scallion, reliable, easy to grow, sweet and flavorful even when quite large.

Comanche—98 days—Hybrid leek with a long, thick shank, early to size up.

Gladius—105 days—Another first year trial standing in for unavailable varieties.

King Richard—75 days—Very long and quite early, the stalks are often over a foot long below where the leaves begin to fan out.

Nabechan—65 days—Traditional scallion variety from Japan, where this vegetable is particularly esteemed. These can be allowed to grow quite large without any sacrifice in quality.

LEMON BALM—3” pot @ \$4.00

SPACING: 12”

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: This mint relative tends to be relatively trouble-free—not reliably perennial in sub-zero weather, mulch can help survival.

HARVEST: Use lemon flavored leaves in salads and teas.

LEMON VERBENA—3” pots @ \$4.75

SPACING: We set this herb about a foot apart in rows a foot apart. Could be more closely spaced.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Botanically known as *Aloysia triphylla*, Lemon Verbena is a beguilingly lemon-scented herb used for flavoring a wide variety of dishes including dressings, marinades, fish and poultry. Makes a wonderful tea. Lemon Verbena is a perennial, but isn’t reliably winter-hardy at temperatures below about 15 F.

HARVEST: Cut individual leaves and stems as desired. Regular cutting promotes growth.

LETTUCE—6-pack inserts with six different varieties @ \$4.00

SPACING: We plant lettuce one foot apart in rows about a foot apart. Plants can be spaced somewhat more closely (8”) in the row if desired.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June, some may be available throughout the season as well.

CULTURAL NOTES: Lettuce is relatively easy to grow and quick to mature, but does better in cool to mild temperatures—heat causes plants to begin flowering, often before they have grown a full-size head. Growing lettuce is more challenging during the summer months, when more attention must be paid to water, maturity, and variety selection. We select varieties that do best under the expected conditions (i.e. lettuce plants bought toward the end of June will be of varieties that, in our experience, tolerate summer heat).

HARVEST: We cut the heads off at the base, but in the spring and again in the late summer and fall, gardeners may choose to pick or clip leaves and allow lettuces to regrow—this is not a good option when temperatures are hot.

VARIETIES: We grow too many varieties to list here, and only sell them in mixed packs. We grow multiple varieties in each ‘class’, including green and red romaine, green and red leaf and oakleaf, green and red Boston, green and red Batavian, and others that don’t fit neatly into any category.

LOVAGE—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: 12-18” apart in rows about 2 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Lovage is a hardy perennial related to celery. Plants begin growing early in the spring, ultimately growing into a large (4-6’) plant when it is in full flower. Leaf production resumes after flowering is complete.

HARVEST: Individual leaves are cut or pulled at the base. The aroma and flavor are quite strong and reminiscent of celery—a little bit goes a long way. Small amounts are welcome in potato salad, soups and stews.

MARJORAM—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: About 8” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Annual relative of Oregano with a sweeter flavor—leaves and flowers are edible.

HARVEST: Cut any time plant is large enough—keep flowers cut to encourage production. Marjoram retains its flavor dried.

VARIETIES:

Sweet Marjoram—80 days (from seed)—Sweet oregano-like aroma and flavor, also known as Annual Oregano.

Za’atar—85 days (from seed)—Mediterranean relative of oregano and marjoram, with more complex, less sweet flavor. Not to be confused with the Middle Eastern spice mix of the same name (which often includes this herb).

MELONS/WATERMELONS—3-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties @ \$4.00

SPACING: We plant melons 1 ½ feet apart in rows six feet apart, but ideally, they would be spaced 2 feet apart or more.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Melons are closely related to Cucumbers and are treated in much the same manner. Watermelons are relatively less susceptible to Cucumber Beetles and the diseases they spread than other melons.

HARVEST: Watermelons are a little tricky to harvest—because they do not continue to ripen after picking, it is important to correctly judge ripeness in the field. One sign of ripeness is a yellow spot where the fruit rests on the ground, but what we look for is that the curly tendril nearest to where the fruit is attached to the vine is brown and dried.

Because Watermelons have a long shelf life, it is usually best to err on the side of caution, allowing fruits to remain on the vine for a day or two after the above ripeness indicators have been observed. Other types of Melon vary in the way they are harvested, but as they do continue to ripen after harvest, are more forgiving than watermelons.

Typically, other melons are ripe when they acquire a yellowish coloration and ‘slip’ from the vine, i.e. when the melon readily separates from the stem that connects it to the rest of the plant.

WATERMELON VARIETIES: All our Watermelons have seeds.

Cathay Belle—85 days—Red fleshed variety produces 7-10 lb fruit with crisp, tender flesh and a thin rind.

Dark Belle—75 days—New variety in the 5-7 lb size range—red, sweet flesh with green rind with darker green stripes. Traditional shape with much smaller fruit.

Estrella—84 days—Good producer of large, sweet, firm-fleshed 20-24 lb fruit. 2021 was our first year growing this variety.

Jade Star—75 days—13-16 lb ‘black’ watermelon with excellent flavor, very productive.

Mini Love—70 days—This red flesh Watermelon bears abundant small 2-4 lb fruit.

Quite sweet with a distinctive rind pattern.

Natsu Cocoa—65 days—New mini variety from Japan, very uniform, flavorful, with a crack-resistant rind.

Petite Yellow—78 days—Productive yellow-flesh variety, smaller than ‘Yellow Doll’, 3-5 lbs with yellow, juicy flesh.

Yellow Doll—68 days—Quite early and manageable in size (5-7 lbs. on average), Yellow Doll is one of our favorite varieties—beautiful yellow flesh is consistently sweet and refreshingly crisp and juicy. Rind is medium green with darker stripes.

OTHER MELON VARIETIES:

Athena—80 days—With its thick rind and dense orange flesh, Athena is our most consistent ‘Muskmelon’ type, both in production and quality. Harvest when the fruit detaches easily from the vine with a slight tug. Athena is the variety most resistant to cracking or softening in the field. About 5-7lbs.on average.

D’Artagnan—75 days—Small 2-3 lb “Charentais” type melon—don’t wait until the melon slips from the vine, cut when color changes to a creamy tan. First year.

Milan—75 days—Tuscan type melon with small, elongated fruit with green striping. First year trial.

Goddess—70 days—‘The best early melon we have ever seen’ gushed one catalog, and we concur. Fine-flavored, fragrant 5-7lb. fruit. Muskmelon type. Harvest at forced slip.

Halona—76 days—Along with ‘Goddess’, ‘Halona’ is our earliest melon variety. Fruit are smaller than ‘Goddess’ but more abundant. Cracks very readily, so early harvest (at ‘forced’ slip) may be warranted. Most productive early variety, with excellent sweet flavor.

Sugar Cube—73 days—We were very impressed with the production and flavor of this mini muskmelon—Intensely sweet and sized at 2-4 lbs. Reliably productive and very cute.

Sugar Rush—72 days—“Big Sister” of ‘Sugar Cube’, earlier, larger, with similar exceptional sweetness and reliability.

MINT, SPEARMINT—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: We plant about a foot apart, plants will spread and fill in open area

AVAILABILITY: April-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Irrepressible in the garden and in the kitchen, mints are notorious for their aggressive growth, spreading through underground rhizomes to neighboring areas. Many growers prefer to keep them in containers, though they require substantial watering and fertilization to thrive in containers. We periodically dig and cut them into much smaller pieces, then replant. In the kitchen, spearmint is best known (in the U.S.) for its affinity to lamb, but is widely and liberally used in many world cuisines and in tea. Hardy perennial reliably persists from year to year.

NASTURTIUM—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: We grow compact, non-trailing varieties, but they can still grow into a good sized mound. Space around 8-12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Nasturtiums like sunny, well-drained locations, and are reputed to flower more abundantly in soils with only moderate fertility. That said, the attractive foliage will decline and yellow without adequate nutrients, so fertilize judiciously.

HARVEST: Both leaves and flowers provide a peppery zing to salads, the flowers having a sweet flavor as well. Makes a lovely garnish. Nasturtiums are notorious for attracting aphids, which may, in turn, attract beneficial predatory insects to your garden.

VARIETIES:

Alaska—55-65 days—This variety boasts unique, variegated foliage in shades of green, yellow and white. Flowers are typical in shades of cream, yellow, orange and red, plant habit is bushy

Jewel—55-65 days—Standard bush variety, plentiful flowers borne above round, green leaves reminiscent of lily pads.

OKRA—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: Okra plants can get quite large, so we plant them about 18” apart in rows 3’ apart.

AVAILABILITY: June-July

CULTURAL NOTES: One of the most cold sensitive vegetables we grow, okra should not be planted out until temperatures are consistently warm, and even then they benefit from a cover until they get too large. Okra doesn’t have any regular pests that we are aware of, and deer tend to avoid it.

HARVEST: Okra pods get tough very quickly as they size up—they are best when they are 4” or less (including the stem). This means they need to be harvested regularly, like every day or two, and the tough stems are best cut with clippers. Plants are covered with irritating hairs, and extended harvest sessions can become quite painful—use gloves and long sleeves to avoid discomfort. Yields are sparse until the plants get larger in late July and August. Cold temperatures in mid-September usually bring production to a crawl. Okra is closely related to Hibiscus (and cotton), so pods are preceded by showy yellow flowers.

VARIETIES: Jambalaya—50 days—This hybrid variety is much more productive in our cold climate than traditional OP types.

ONIONS/SHALLOTS—3” pots with multiple plants @ \$4.00

SPACING: We set onions about 5” apart in rows about a foot apart. Smaller onions and shallots can be more closely spaced or planted in small clumps.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-May

CULTURAL NOTES: Separate the plants from the 3” pots into individual onions. We plant onions as early as we possibly can because they begin to form bulbs in response to the lengthening days rather than the size of the plant, so earlier plants have more opportunity to grow large before they begin to bulb, resulting in larger onions. For best results, Onions require fairly fertile soil and consistent moisture. They are very poor competitors with weeds, so must be regularly weeded. Onions can be adversely affected by onion maggots, which are the larvae of flies that are active early in the season (May), and by onion thrips, which cause whitish streaking and stunting later in the season. Both can be excluded using row cover.

HARVEST: Onions can be harvested at any stage. Those that are meant for storage should be allowed to fully mature, at which point most of the tops will fall over. At this point they can be pulled and allowed to fully dry in a dark, warm place. When fully dry, the roots and tops can be clipped. Disease infection during growth can result in rotting or other problems in storage.

VARIETIES:

Ambition—110 days—Established red shallot variety, very consistent, large and reliable.

Barolo—110 days—Large to Jumbo red with early maturity with long storage. First year trial.

Bridger—90 days—We’ve found early onions to be easier to reliably produce, and Bridger is the earliest yellow we grow. Consistent performer, medium-size bulbs for short term storage.

Cabernet—95 days—We grew this for the first time in 2017 when it performed quite well, forming a high percentage of medium-large deep red globes with good storage. Very early for a red onion

Elsye—110 days—Large sweet yellow onion, for trial

Expression—98 days—We have very good luck with this yellow variety year after year. Large, sweet, early and reliable. Good for medium-term storage.

Frontier—100 days—Medium-large yellow storage onion with downy mildew resistance.

Innovator—110 days—Elongated shape, first downy mildew resistant shallot from seed.

Patterson—104 day—This year’s substitute for ‘Cortland’. Standard yellow storage onion with exceptionally long storage potential. Medium to large size.

Red Long—90 days—Italian heirloom variety, variously known as ‘torpedo’ or ‘bottle’ onion. Flavor is mild and appearance is very appealing. Size varies, but most are small enough to grill whole or shish kebab. Not suitable for storage.

Sierra Blanca—105 days—Sweet white variety can grow quite large. Short storage only. Also known as ‘Superstar’.

OREGANO—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: 12”

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Easy to grow, spreads readily. Dig, divide and replant clumps every several years.

HARVEST: Cut leaves as needed—flavor is most intense just before flowers open. Oregano remains flavorful when dried.

PARSLEY—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: 12” or more.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June and possibly later.

CULTURAL NOTES: Parsley planted too early has a tendency to bolt—later plantings after the weather has warmed can be continuously harvested until heavy freezes arrive in the fall. For best sustained production, plants should be fertilized a couple times during the season.

HARVEST: Pick or clip individual leaves at their base. Plants that have begun to flower will not revert to producing leaves even if the flower stalks are kept cut.

VARIETIES:

Wega—75 days—Highly recommended curly variety. Curly parsley is commonly used for garnish, but is also easier to finely mince than flat leaf parsley. Less prone to bolting than flat leaf parsley, but less productive overall.

Giant of Italy—75 days—Improved flat-leaf parsley type with vigorous growth and large size. Many people consider flat leaf parsley more flavorful than curly types.

PEPPERS—4” pots @ \$5.00

SPACING: We plant peppers 18” apart in rows 6 feet apart, but rows could be significantly closer.

AVAILABILITY: May through Mid-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Peppers are tender (i.e. not cold or frost hardy), so planting should be delayed until the weather warms. Chance early plantings should be protected

with row covers, and can be kept covered until the weather warms or the plants become too large. University research indicates that peppers which are planted deeply—with a portion of the stem underground—tend to produce earlier with higher yields. All peppers start out an immature color (can be green, purple, white or cream colored depending on variety) then eventually ripen to their mature color (can be red, yellow, orange or chocolate brown depending on variety). Peppers are subject to a few pests and several fungal diseases, all of which are quite difficult to control. Avoid planting in soil that can become waterlogged for extended periods and avoid watering late in the day when leaves won't have a chance to dry before nightfall, or use drip irrigation. Some pepper plants, particularly hot varieties in the poblano class, can grow quite large and benefit from staking. The plants of many varieties of peppers can grow quite large--over the last several years, we have decided to stake all our pepper plantings and they've never done better.

HARVEST: Immature (green, purple or white) fruit can be picked as soon as it has grown large and firm to the touch. Pepper plants are brittle, so it is often advisable to use clippers to harvest the fruit. If mature (red, orange, yellow, brown) fruit is desired, the peppers need to hang on the plant for several additional weeks, during which time there is an increased chance of pest and disease problems. Peppers can be picked as they begin to change color and allowed to fully ripen in the safety of your kitchen—put them in paper bags to slow down moisture loss. Be aware that fruits that ripen precociously often do so because they have some sort of insect damage, and sometimes have a maggot inside.

SWEET VARIETIES (all our sweet pepper varieties are hybrids):

Abay—72 days—Yellow maturing green bell, supposed to be prolific, with large, blocky fruit.

Ace—50 days—Could be the earliest, most reliable and highest yielding bell for the northeast. Fruit go from green to red and are on the small side compared to our other bells.

Cupid—75 days—Red mini-bells are borne on large, well-branched plants.

Early Sunation—69 days—This bell pepper produces an abundance of large fruit that ripen from green to bright yellow. For some reason, we have found that it is usually easier to carry yellow-fruited varieties to maturity than red or orange-fruited varieties.

Eros—75 days—Yellow sister of 'Cupid' with similar size and plant type.

Escamillo—72 days—Yellow ripening bull's horn pepper, first year's trial as a substitute for 'Yellow Bardo'

Flavorburst—62 days—Recently introduced bell variety ripens from light green to golden yellow exceptionally early with continuous yield. One of our best performers, year after year.

Galileo—70 days—New pepper, extra-large to jumbo bells, ripen green to red. Very impressive the last couple years.

Gatherer's Gold—75 days—Open-pollinated bull's horn type, reported to be extremely productive, thick-walled, borne on large plants. First year trial.

Giant Marconi—63 days—The largest Italian bull's horn peppers we've seen. Thin walls, enormous size, sweet flavor make them exceptional for frying. Ripen green to red.

Mama Mia Giallo—70 days—Another contender to replace unavailable 'Yellow Bardo', first year trial. Yellow bull's horn type sweet pepper.

Mellow Star—60 days—Hybrid Japanese 'Shishito' type pepper, these are much larger than the typical shishito, and are amazingly early and productive, borne on vigorous,

bushy plants. Thin walled, wrinkled peppers are typically used green. Nice grilled whole or tempura fried.

Snowball—65 days—Medium-large bell that turns from ivory to red. Productive and very attractive—we prefer this variety to ‘Bianca’, which it replaces.

Socrates—71 days—Productive green to red bell variety, exceptionally early to turn red. Productive over an extended period.

Sweet Delilah—70 days— An Italian bull’s horn type like Giant Marconi but smaller, with thicker walls—kind of like a sweet New Mexico chile, but larger. Ripens red.

Takara—73 days—Traditional shishito type pepper, smaller than ‘Mellow Star’, with approximately 10% spicy fruit. First year trial.

Tequila—72 days—Quite early and productive, this is the best variety of purple bell peppers we have found. Medium to large fruit start out a beautiful lavender color and eventually ripen red.

SV3964PB—72 days—Reported to be ‘unstoppable’, with mostly jumbo fruit and extended production.

HOT VARIETIES

Aji Rico—61 days—New variety with ‘chinense’ flavor (fruity and tropical, think habanero), but with moderate heat. Has consistently performed well and is a crew favorite.

Astry—70 days—Beautiful Hungarian wax type pepper, only moderately hot. Ripens from a creamy yellow, through orange, to bright red. Hybrid.

Baluarte—67 days—New jalapeno variety, has consistently performed well over the last several years. Quite spicy and large, with sustained production on large plants.

Baron—80 days—Newer Ancho/Poblano type hybrid, was a pleasant surprise in 2018, when it started producing much earlier than varieties we had been using.

Bastan—85 days—Another new Ancho/Poblano type, with large fruit and moderate heat. Ripens chocolate brown.

Carolina Reaper—95 days—Record-breaking hot pepper, registering at 1.5 million Scoville heat units. Large plants bear abundant crops of interesting fruit that ripens red.

Charger—75 days—Authentic ‘Anaheim’-type chile that grows well in the Northeast. Mild pungency, thick walls, large fruit size. Hybrid.

Devil—75 days—This new hybrid version of the traditional ‘Serrano’ is more vigorous than the original, somewhat earlier, with much larger fruit. Enormous plants become loaded with peppers with the appearance of small jalapenos. Fruit turns from green to red, but is most often used green. Hotter than a jalapeno, but not significantly. Hybrid.

El Jefe—67 days—Long-time favorite jalapeno is available again. Smaller fruit than ‘Baluarte’, good yields of spicy fruit over a long season.

Ghost—85 days—Famous Indian hot pepper also known as ‘Bhut Jolokia’, hotter than a Habanero. Plants are large and become loaded with red, wrinkled peppers late in the season.

Golden Cayenne—87 days—A cayenne type that ripens to a golden yellow. Reported to be very spicy, easy to dry, with a compact plant

Habanada—80 days—Heatless habanero variety boasts the fruity taste typical of the type without the searing heat. We’ve grown various similar varieties over the years, and are giving this one a shot.

Habanero—100 days—Known for their scorching heat, habaneros also boast a beguiling, fruity flavor unique to peppers in the *Capsicum chinense* species. Habaneros can be used

green but are most often allowed to ripen to a bright orange. Plants are shrubby and become loaded with luminous fruit late in the season. Open-pollinated.

Havasu—60 days—Known as a ‘Santa Fe’ pepper or ‘Chile Guero’, a little less spicy than a jalapeno but still has a good kick. Hybrid.

Helios—87 days—We’re partial to the improved performance, vigor and disease resistance of hybrid peppers, so we tried this hybrid habanero—it performed well last year, with huge yields, and earlier maturity than the OP. Somewhat less hot than standard ‘habanero’. Hybrid.

Highlander—75 days—We have been suitably impressed with this ‘Anaheim’ (more properly known as New Mexican or ‘Hatch’) type—mild, long green chiles that are wonderful for grilling or roasting. Ripe peppers of this type are used to make the ‘ristras’ commonly seen in New Mexico, although they are too thick-walled to dry successfully in our climate. These peppers will turn from green to red if allowed to ripen. Hybrid.

Lexus—70 days—New Jalapeno type, supposed to have large fruit size and early maturity. First year trial.

Longhorn—85 days—Supposed to be a prolific producer of ‘finger hot’ type fruit, ripening green to red. According to our source, plants get quite large.

Marques—85 days—New poblano/ancho type. First year trial.

Pathfinder—73 days—New hybrid Serrano-type pepper, potential replacement for our old favorite ‘Devil’, which was unavailable this year.

Primero Red—78 days—Early ‘Habanero’ type matures red with less heat—still quite spicy though. Very productive.

Red Ember—70 days—Very sweet and moderately spicy cayenne-type, for use fresh and dried. First year trial.

Red Flame—80 days—Cayenne-type pepper with 6-6 1/2” long thin-walled fruit that readily air-dry. Very spicy and very productive. Hybrid.

Rodeo—90 days (red)—Hot cherry pepper, very spicy and productive. Plants are quite brittle and benefit from staking.

Salvatierra—80 days— The first hybrid variety of the ‘Pasilla’ type pepper, bearing long (up to 10”) slender peppers that turn from a dark green (at which stage they are known as ‘Chilaca’) to brown. Provide little or no heat—they are commonly used dried as a component of Mole sauces. This variety has proven itself to be far more productive and reliable than traditional OP varieties. Hybrid.

Soundwave—80 days—New Jalapeno-type pepper, described as high-yielding, disease resistant, with exceptional fruit quality. First year trial.

Spitfire—65 days—New Anaheim-type, reported to be even larger than our current favorites. Second year trial.

Velociraptor—85 days—Early maturing red habanero type, first year trial to replace ‘Primero Red’ which was unavailable this year.

POTATOES—4-pack inserts@4.00

SPACING: About a foot apart should be adequate

AVAILABILITY: April-May

CULTURAL NOTES: These potato plants are unusual in that they are seed-grown from seed collected from our own potato crop. Each plant will be genetically different from one another, and they exact properties of each—size, color, texture, yield etc.—will be distinct, and unpredictable. Growing potato from seed is not usually done except in the interest of developing new varieties that are thereafter propagated by clone, i.e. by

planting cut up potatoes. For the adventurous gardener with space to spare who is looking for an interesting project (sounds like me).

PUMPKINS—3-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: Varies depending on variety, but all are vigorous vines that can grow eight feet or longer. Can be grown on trellises if support is provided for heavy fruit.

AVAILABILITY: Early June

CULTURAL NOTES: Pumpkins are vigorous members of the squash family a benefit from ample space, fertility, sunlight and water. They are susceptible to a number of insect pests, including Squash Vine Borer, which can kill plants outright. Disease can be a problem as well—minimize leaf wetting and harvest promptly to avoid the worst effects. Pumpkins are attractive to deer even before they fully ripen.

HARVEST: We've had the best luck harvesting pumpkins as soon as they turn color (sometimes before they're completely orange) and storing them until Pumpkin Season—this generally means starting picking as early as late August. Harvest before foliage dies back completely by clipping stems as long as desired. Cure in a cool (not cold) dark place

VARIETIES: We will likely only offer pie pumpkin varieties, smaller types that are sweet and suitable for making pie and bread.

Baby Bear—105 days—This long-time Johnny's favorite is small (1 ½- 2 ½ lbs) with long, sinuous stems and semi-hulless seeds. Prolific producer.

Cinnamon Girl—85 days—New variety combines good looks, good eating quality and early maturity. Fruit are around 4-6 lbs. Exceptional performance in the several years we've grown it.

PURSLANE—6-pack @ \$4.00 (May be available in mixed packs)

SPACING: 6-8"

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: This is a cultivated variety of the common weed 'purslane'. Best eaten raw in salads, purslane has succulent, crunchy leaves and stems with a slightly salty/acid flavor. Reported to be very nutritious and high in Omega-3 fatty acids. This cultivated variety has larger, lighter colored leaves and a more upright habit than 'weedy' Purslane. Thrives in dry, sunny conditions. Will regrow after multiple cuts.

HARVEST: Cut back stems and leaves, leaving some at the base to regrow. Delicious raw, can also be cooked where purslane provides some thickening and body to dishes.

RHUBARB—2 gallon pot @ \$20.00

SPACING: Plants get quite large over time, allow at least 2' between plants, more if you have the space.

AVAILABILITY: April-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Rhubarb is a long-lived perennial. Harvest can usually begin the year after the planting year. We harvest large petioles (leaf stems) from the time they emerge (usually mid-late April) until around mid-June, but harvest can occur any time leaves are present—avoid heavy harvest late in the season as this can weaken the plant going into winter.

ROSEMARY—3" pots @ \$4.75, some larger plants may be available.

SPACING: Rosemary in this climate is most often grown in a container, although they can be set in the soil at least 8" apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-August

CULTURAL NOTES: Rosemary plants are not hardy enough to survive the winter in our area, so growers often leave plants in containers, bringing them inside when the weather gets cold. Rosemary likes sun, well-drained, limey soil and thrives when it is frequently cut.

SAGE—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: 12” or more.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: This hardy perennial thrives in a sunny, well-drained spot. Sage forms a relatively large plant, but can become straggly after a few seasons if not kept cut back. Sage doesn’t form clumps and therefore can’t be divided.

HARVEST: Cut newly formed leaves as they grow. Flowers are attractive and edible.

Sage dries quite successfully. We offer regular garden sage, and the vegetatively propagated ‘Berggarten’ which is tidier, with rounder leaves, and less prone to flowering (which tends to shut down leaf growth)

SAVORY, SUMMER—3” pots @ \$4.00

SPACING: About 8” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: This annual herb should be kept cut for best production. Thrives in full sun, can’t tolerate frost.

HARVEST: Dark green leaves have a peppery flavor—keep them cut as they grow for extended harvest. Summer savory dries well.

SHISO—3” pot @ \$4.00

SPACING: 8-12”

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Heat loving relative of Basil, with similar culture.

HARVEST: Cut back regularly to promote continued vegetative growth.

VARIETIES: Britton—80-85 days—This vigorous variety has bicolor leaves—green on top and red beneath. Very attractive, larger than standard Shiso varieties, similar flavor.

SORREL—3” pot @ 4.00

SPACING: Perennial spreads readily, so can be initially planted at 8-12”

AVAILABILITY: April-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Relative of rhubarb (and spinach and chard), sorrel grows readily during cooler months of the year, flowering and slowing down in the heat. Very easy to grow and maintain.

HARVEST: Sour lemony flavor is welcome (in moderation) in salads, also used in soups and sauces. Clip individual leaves when they are young and tender. After flower stalks are spent, clip them and wait for another flush of leaf growth.

SPINACH—6-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: Plant cells about 4-6” apart in rows about 8” apart

AVAILABILITY: April-May

CULTURAL NOTES: We generally seed spinach directly in the field, but it can sometimes be tricky, and for the earliest crops, we start plants in the greenhouse to plant out. Spinach is exceptionally hardy and can tolerate all but the coldest temperatures (around 25) without damage.

HARVEST: Spinach plants don't like heat and will quickly go to seed during hot weather—harvest spinach promptly if it begins to stretch.

We offer a number of very similar varieties based on what is available.

SQUASH, SUMMER—3-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: 12-18" apart in rows about 5-6 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Similar in most respects to Cucumbers, although Squash tends to be a little more resilient and easier to grow. Keep picked to encourage continued production and to avoid raising baseball bats.

HARVEST: We usually cut Zucchini types with small paring knives or clippers, while other types can be twisted off by hand. Squash grow very rapidly and plants should be harvested thoroughly every other day to avoid oversized fruits. Squash can be picked quite small—we consider them ready when the flower detaches easily from the fruit.

VARIETIES:

Dario—55 days—This is a hybrid version of the striped Italian zucchini 'Cocozelle'. Has better yields and better disease resistance than the original.

Desert—50 days—Dark green zucchini, productive, beautiful and early.

Dunja—47 days—We have been favorably impressed with the yield and appearance of this dark green zucchini over the past few seasons

Gentry—43 days—Hybrid version of the old 'Yellow Crookneck'—Necks are stronger and less curved for less breakage.

Golden Glory—50 days—Most recent in a long line of golden-yellow zucchini that we've tried, this one is the best we've seen.

Green Machine—44 days—Medium green zucchini is high yielding and disease resistant.

Rocio—45 days—This squash is known as Cousa, or Lebanese Zucchini. Similar to zucchini in appearance, but shorter, fatter and lighter green. This is among the most productive squash we grow and is prized for its fine flavor.

Lazor—42 days—Prototypical yellow straightneck squash, very reliable, productive and delicious.

Noche—48 days—Dark green, disease resistant zucchini with open plant habit, good disease resistance, and almost no spines.

Pantheon—50 days—Hybrid version of Italian heirloom 'Costata Romanesco' with similar fruit characteristics—striping and ridges—but much higher yields. Fruit are relatively large, and are often harvested young with the flower still attached.

Slick Pik—48 days—Standard yellow straightneck squash, popular and productive.

Spineless King—45 days—Medium green zucchini on open, mostly spineless plants, supposed to be very productive.

Tempest—54 days—Semi-crookneck yellow from Johnny's, reported to have exceptional flavor and cooking characteristics.

Y-Star—52 days—Bright yellow Patty Pan type with large plants and excellent yields.

Zephyr—54 days—Unique bicolor straightneck squash with good yields and exceptional flavor. Fruit are yellow with a green tip. One of our best producers during the late summer.

SQUASH, WINTER—3-pack inserts @ \$4.00

SPACING: Varies by variety, but most require at least a good square yard for best results.

AVAILABILITY: Early June

CULTURAL NOTES: See ‘Pumpkins’ above. Butternut varieties are late but resist Squash Vine Borers and some disease problems.

HARVEST: Different varieties have different criteria to determine ripeness, but quality is best when fruit are harvested promptly, before foliage dies back. Most dark colored squash (like Acorn) are susceptible to sunburn if allowed to sit in the field after foliage has collapsed.

VARIETIES:

Black Futsu—105 days—Japanese heirloom, same species as ‘Butternut’ (*C. moschata*). Reliable producer, good yields, fruit are sweet with edible skin. Stores up to 5 months.
Delicata JS—100 days—Long time favorite, sweet and tender and ready to eat right off the vine.

Honeyboat Delicata—100 days—New variety of Delicata, possibly sweeter than the original. Attractive fruit are similar to Delicata but with a rosy-orange color when they ripen.

Honeynut—110 days—Interesting new mini-butternut with a dark buckskin color when ripe. Rangy vines are productive, but fruit ripens quite late. Extremely sweet flesh.

Sugar Dumpling—90 days—An improvement on old Sweet Dumpling—similar eating quality, but far more uniform and larger fruit. Restricted vines.

Sunshine—95—Early orange ‘Kabocha’ type squash weigh in at about 4-5 lbs. Flesh is flaky and sweet, best to wait several weeks after harvest to eat.

Waldo PMR—100 days—Medium-large Butternut type. This variety is powdery mildew resistant, so the foliage holds up longer meaning more fruit can ripen. Butternuts are probably the most reliable performers among the Winter Squash, and among the best keepers.

STRAWBERRY, DAY NEUTRAL—4” pots @ \$6.00

SPACING: 12”-18” apart, plants can produce runners to fill in open space. Runners should be managed to form a 2 foot wide ‘matted row’ with individual plants about 6” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Day neutral strawberries differ from the more familiar June bearing strawberries in that they continue to flower and set fruit throughout the growing season. It is recommended that all flower buds be removed for the first four to six weeks after planting to encourage establishment. Many growers remove all runners during the first year to maximize fruit production. Mulch with several inches of straw in November or December to protect over the winter.

HARVEST: Day neutral strawberries can set fruit anytime temperatures are between 45 and 85 degrees. Pick regularly to discourage pests and diseases that thrive on overripe fruit.

VARIETIES:

Elan—100-120 days (from seed)—Johnny’s touts this as the most flavorful day neutral variety, fruit is of medium size.

TARRAGON, FRENCH—3” pots @ \$4.75

SPACING: About 8” apart

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: This perennial herb is prized for its delicate anise flavor, welcome in sauces, salad dressing, and with poultry and seafood. French Tarragon does not reproduce from seed, so we take cuttings from our ‘mother’ plants to make new

plants. Established plants can also be divided to expand plantings. Tarragon thrives in full sun and prefers well-drained soil of moderate fertility.

THYME—3” pots @ \$4.75

SPACING: 12” more or less.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Spreading perennial herb needs to be kept cut for best sustained production. Requires full sun and adequate drainage. Clumps should be dug, divided and replanted every several years.

HARVEST: Clip leaves as needed—cut back heavily occasionally to encourage new growth. Thyme dries quite well, and the flavor is welcome in many dishes. When asked what she considered the one indispensable herb, Martha Stewart (after briefly considering parsley) chose thyme and I concur.

TOMATILLOS/HUSK CHERRIES—4” pots @ \$5.00

SPACING: We plant tomatillos 18” apart in rows 6 ft. apart, but rows could be somewhat closer if plants are supported. The large plants benefit from staking. Husk cherries are smaller, so rows can be planted closer together and they don’t require staking.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: We plant our tomatillos alongside our tomatoes, treating them identically. See notes under tomatoes. **Tomatillo plants require cross-pollination, so you should plant at least two plants.**

HARVEST: Harvest when fruits completely fill their papery husks but before they begin to turn yellow at which point they lose their refreshing tartness and turn insipidly sweet. Husk cherries generally drop to the ground when they’re ripe, so gardeners could spread a cloth around the plants to facilitate gathering.

VARIETIES:

Pancho—60 days—New hybrid tomatillo variety with medium-early maturity and large, rounded fruit.

Siquieros—75 days—We’ve had good success with this new hybrid tomatillo in recent years, our favorite HPG-20 having been discontinued. Big harvests from rangy plants.

Super Verde—60 days—Hybrid tomatillo, reported to bear early, large fruit. Second year trial

Goldie—75 days—Husk cherry. Sprawling, vigorous plants bear prolific quantities of small, cherry-sized fruit inside a papery husk. Harvest when they turn yellow, often from the ground as they tend to drop.

Ambrosia—115 days—Cape Gooseberry. This delicious tomatillo relative requires a long season, but bears cherry-tomato sized, husk wrapped yellow fruit with a unique and beguiling flavor. Sometimes seen in grocery stores and called “Goldenberry”, in addition to their outstanding flavor, these fruits have a long shelf-life, even unrefrigerated. In our brief experience growing these, we’ve found them to be very attractive to the Three-lined Potato Beetle (not to be confused with the Colorado Potato Beetle). The best strategy is probably to try and exclude them with row cover.

TOMATOES—4” pots @ \$5.00

SPACING: We plant our tomatoes 18” apart in rows 6 ft. apart and stake them.

Determinates can be spaced more closely and don’t necessarily require staking, though I believe staking is well worth the effort.

AVAILABILITY: May-July

CULTURAL NOTES: Tomatoes are prone to several fungal diseases—staking them minimizes foliar contact with the soil and promotes air movement, allowing the leaves to dry more quickly after a rain. Tomatoes have been shown to respond well to deep planting, setting a 2-3” section of the stem under the soil surface. Certain varieties (plum tomatoes, for example) are especially prone to a condition known as blossom end rot, where the bottom of the tomato turns black—this condition is caused by a calcium deficiency, brought on either by a soil deficiency or (more commonly) a temporary deficiency in the plant caused by inconsistent watering. To avoid this condition, plants should not be subject to wide fluctuations in soil moisture levels and can be lightly limed or fertilized with bone meal, both of which contain ample calcium.

In recent memory, the devastating disease known as ‘Late Blight’ seemed to have changed from a relatively rare, late season scourge to an expected but unwelcome annual guest. Unlike ‘Early Blight’ which tends to slowly defoliate the plant from the bottom without much direct effect on fruit, late blight can bring your tomato season to a crashing halt in less than a week, killing plants and destroying ripe and unripe fruit. When conditions are conducive to the spread of the disease (high humidity, wet leaves, not too hot) we spray foliage and fruit with a copper hydroxide fungicide allowed by the National Organic Program. In our experience, these sprays are effective in preventing and suppressing infections. We also include a growing roster tomato varieties in our plantings that are known to have some genetic resistance to late blight, including ‘Mountain Magic’, ‘Plum Regal’, and ‘Damsel’. Fortunately, the concern that Late Blight would become an annual problem doesn’t seem to have been borne out, with only a few instances (usually in October, well after the real tomato season) since the widespread epidemic in 2009. We still watch the weather carefully during July, August and September, and also monitor a website—usablight.org—which has information and maps showing where recent confirmed outbreaks have occurred in the US.

HARVEST: Although tomatoes can be allowed to completely ripen on the vine, they are less likely to crack if they are picked slightly underripe—known as the ‘breaker’ stage—and allowed to fully ripen on the safety of your kitchen counter. We find that this practice sacrifices little (if any) flavor and allows us to successfully produce sound specimens of even the most fragile and crack-prone heirloom varieties. Only fruit that has begun to change color should be picked—dead green fruit will not ripen off the vine (unless you gas them with ethylene, like the abominations you find in the supermarket).

VARIETIES: We are happy to offer our gardening customers the full range of tomatoes we grow on the farm, plus several additional varieties that are especially suitable for container growing.

To try and impose some order on our large, unwieldy list of varieties, we divide our tomatoes into five broad categories:

The first group is the **hybrid slicers**—hybrid varieties can be considered to be the progeny of arranged marriages, with the goal of producing plants and fruit with specific, desirable, and predictable characteristics, usually involving fruit size, shape,

yield, or disease resistance. Hybrids tend to have the highest yields, and although they have often been developed without sufficient consideration for flavor, those that we offer are all very good, some exceptional. Because of the precise way the parent lines are crossed, hybrid tomatoes that are saved for their seed will not reliably produce progeny with the same characteristics as the hybrid parent.

The second group is the **heirloom and open-pollinated varieties**—before hybridization became common, plant breeders used the slower process of selecting fruit from plants with desirable traits, growing out the seed, then reselecting over the course of many plant generations to develop stable varieties with desirable characteristics. Because the development of most heirloom varieties predates the commodification of produce, characteristics such as flavor, color and yield were often emphasized rather than shelf-life, perfect appearance or ‘pack out’. This is a diverse group, with tomatoes of every shape, size and color (even some with several colors). They are almost all quite delicious, though their flavors range from sweet and mild to quite tart (a little something for everybody). Because seed from these varieties will produce fruit like the original fruit, seed is quite easy to save, therefore inexpensive, therefore of little interest to commercial breeders. For this reason, there is little research on which varieties exhibit specific resistance to tomato diseases, but our observations are that they often fare as well as the hybrids, but sometimes succumb to disease prematurely. They generally produce very soft, delicate fruit that can crack quite easily in adverse weather. In addition, heirloom varieties (with some exceptions) usually have significantly lower yields than their hybrid relatives. Nonetheless, their aesthetic appeal, both in terms of flavor and beauty, are unexcelled.

Recently, increased commercial interest in the desirable characteristics of heirloom tomatoes has prompted breeding programs aimed at developing productive, disease resistant, hybrid versions of popular heirlooms. These varieties can offer the best of both worlds—good yield, crack resistant fruit, increased disease resistance, along with beautiful colors and intense tomato flavor. We’re calling this third group the **modern “heirlooms”**.

The fourth group—**cherry/salad tomatoes**—contains both hybrid and heirloom members. The cherry tomatoes are usually highly productive, generally grow on very large plants, and usually have a sweeter, more intense flavor than larger tomatoes. When planting tomatoes in marginal areas, cherry tomatoes are the surest bet, as they almost always come through with a crop. The difference between cherry and salad tomatoes is merely size - cherry tomatoes are bite-sized small tomatoes, while salad tomatoes are slightly larger, and of course, often used in salads. But salad tomatoes are still on the small size, not nearly as large as a more classic slicing tomato.

The fifth and final group is the **plum tomatoes**, variously known as plum, paste, or Roma tomatoes. The tomatoes are usually medium sized, with a low moisture content, making them well-suited to rapidly boil down into sauce or paste, but less so for fresh eating. Plum tomato plants are usually relatively small, though some are indeterminate.

Individual varieties within these groups are listed alphabetically, with an explanation of salient characteristics like flavor, fruit size and color, and plant habit. The following abbreviations are used:

Ind.—indeterminate, meaning that the plant can continue to grow and produce fruit over the entire season. Plants often grow quite large and require staking. Pruning at least once, or even three or four times, is recommended but not required—google: ‘pruning tomatoes extension’ for the most accurate information on how to prune tomato plants.

Det.—determinate, meaning that the plant will grow to a certain size, produce its crop, and then, mission accomplished, go into decline. These are best grown using short stakes, but can be allowed to sprawl. Determinate plants can be pruned, but benefits are less than with indeterminates.

Comp. Ind.—compact indeterminate, can continuously fruit, but the plants are compact and manageable. See descriptions for details.

HYBRID SLICERS

ARBASON: Ind. New round red hybrid proved to be early to ripen, heavy yielding, with excellent disease and crack resistance, and, most important, fabulous flavor. Strong vines produce 7-9 oz. fruit. 72 days.

BENDIDA: Comp. Ind. New orange hybrid with manageable plants, 6-7 oz. fruit, reported to have delicious flavor and excellent yields. 75 days.

BETTER BUSH: Comp. Ind. Sturdy, self-supporting plants stay compact but bear delicious full-size red fruit all season. Developed especially to grow in containers. 68 days.

BHN 589: Det. We have planted and liked this variety for many years now—bears early 8-10oz. fruits and keeps bearing over an extended period. Round red fruits have exceptional flavor. 74 days.

BHN 871: Det. This variety boasts large, bright orange fruit, good disease resistance, and amazing flavor. 76 days.

BIG BEEF: Ind. This versatile variety bears loads of big, red beefsteak-style fruit with excellent flavor. Plants are vigorous and grow quite large, continuing to produce good-size fruit throughout the season. 73 days.

CHEF'S CHOICE ORANGE: Ind. Award-winning orange beefsteak made a very good impression on us when it first came out, with sustained production of 8-11 oz. fruit with beautiful appearance and spectacular flavor. Seed has been in short supply for several years, so we will only have a small quantity of plants. 75 days.

CHEF'S CHOICE PINK: Ind. We liked 'Chef's Choice Orange' so much, we had to give this one a try. Large fruit borne on potato-leaved plants. 75 days.

EARLY GIRL: Ind. Reliably producing the first ripe tomato of the season, Early Girl has more to offer than precocity—although fruit size falls off over the course of the season, the sharp, real tomato flavor remains and many devotees seek it out by name even when the big main season tomatoes appear. 52 days.

GALAHAD: Det. From the breeder who brought us 'Damsel', this variety is reported to have the complete package: Early, delicious, exceptional disease resistance. 69 days.

LEMON BOY: Ind. An eloquent refutation to the common slanders against yellow tomatoes—they're flavorless, insipid—Lemon Boy packs a lot of flavor (dare I say zesty?) with good looks to boot. Although very soft and prone to cracking and discoloration in adverse weather, Lemon Boy can potentially produce enormous crops of beautiful, clear yellow, delicious fruit. 72 days

POLBIG: Det. One of our long-time favorites is again available. Good size and exceptional flavor for such an early tomato, Polbig is borne on very short vines. Doesn't generally produce over a long season, but extra-early flavorful fruit make up for that. 61 days.

RED DEUCE: Det. We're trialing this early round red to replace other varieties that have been dropped by suppliers. Reports of big yields of extra-large, flavorful fruit were borne out in 2022 and 2023. 72 days.

ROADSTER: Det. Supposed to have the best combination of early maturity, extra-large size, and superior flavor. Second year trial. 67 days.

RUBEE DAWN: Ind. New variety supposed to have early maturity, excellent flavor, large fruit and manageable vines. 57 days.

RUBEE PRIZE: Ind. New variety in the same series as the previous variety. Relatively early, manageable plants, very large beefsteak-type fruit. 65 days.

HEIRLOOM/OPEN-POLLINATED

AUNT RUBY'S GERMAN GREEN: Ind. These big beefsteaks ripen from a pale green color to a deep amber-green color with a blush of pink on the blossom-end. In our opinion, these beautiful tomatoes are among the best fresh-eating tomatoes around. Fruit is fragile and the ripeness is somewhat difficult to judge—pick when the blossom end begins to soften, and allow to ripen another day or two on the counter. 80 days.

BRANDYWINE: Ind. With its unusual 'potato-leaf' foliage, huge pink-red beefsteak fruit, and incomparable flavor, Brandywine has become the poster boy for the resurgence of heirloom tomatoes. Its reputation for flavor is well-deserved, but the big plants often yield somewhat sparsely, often over a long period. 78 days.

CHEROKEE PURPLE: Ind. but with relatively short vines. This Tennessee heirloom has become increasingly popular over the last few years, rivaling Brandywine's claim as 'best tasting tomato'. Cherokee is earlier and more productive than Brandywine, with the purplish-brown coloration characteristic of 'black' tomatoes. The fruit is large, more globe-shaped than most 'beefsteak' types, and very fragile—harvest promptly to avoid excessive cracking. 72 days.

GOLDIE: Ind. Truly exceptional—from its phenomenal yields of (generally) defect-free jumbo fruit, to its unique 'Creamsicle' orange color, to its velvety texture and rich flavor, Goldie is one of our favorite tomatoes. 90 days.

GREEN ZEBRA: Ind. Not a true heirloom, this increasingly popular tomato was developed using traditional breeding methods and is a stable strain (unlike hybrids). Big plants yield bumper crops of small to medium sized striped fruit that ripen to an amber-green color, often with a blush of pink on the blossom end. Sweet and tart, the flavor is outstanding, and the beautiful emerald-green flesh graces any dish. Prone to blossom-end rot (calcium deficiency brought on by inconsistent water supply) and cracking in wet weather, Green Zebra usually comes through with bountiful yields. 77 days.

PINEAPPLE: Ind. Although there are many bicolor heirlooms available, Pineapple remains our favorite. The fruits are often enormous, mostly yellow, with a red starburst pattern on the blossom end that extends to the inside, resulting in stunning red and yellow marbled flesh. The flavor is mild and sweet with a complex fruitiness. Can be a stingy producer. 85 days.

MODERN "HEIRLOOMS"

ABIGAIL: Ind. New hybrid is advertised as having exceptional disease resistance (including Late Blight), reduced cracking and deformities, and greatly increased yields compared to standard heirlooms. 10-16 oz fruit are said to have flavor that compares favorably with similar heirlooms such as 'Brandywine'. Second year trial. 75 days.

BLACK VELVET: Ind. New 'hybrid heirloom' similar to 'Black Prince', but with better production, far less splitting and defects, and firmer fruit. This is the variety you

may have seen labeled as ‘Kumato’ in the grocery store. Fruit size is somewhat small, and plants are compact, but flavor is consistently excellent. 72 days.

BUFFALOSUN: Ind. New variety whose appearance is similar to that of the stunning heirloom ‘Pineapple’, with similar amazing flavor, but with much increased disease resistance for longer production and higher yields. Produces very large fruit, well over a pound. 70 days.

CHEROKEE CARBON: Ind. New variety resulting from a cross between heirlooms ‘Cherokee Purple’ and ‘Carbon’. One of our new favorites. 75 days.

DAMSEL: Ind. New organically grown hybrid boasts heirloom-quality flavor and texture with improved disease and crack resistance. Plants are relatively compact and easy to manage, and are supposed to have some tolerance to late blight. Dark pink color when ripe. 73 days.

DARKSTAR: Ind. New hybrid has the looks and taste of ‘black’ tomatoes like ‘Cherokee Purple’ and ‘Black Krim’. Yields well consistently, reported to have resistance to late blight among other diseases. 75 days.

HARVEST MOON: Ind. New introduction from Johnny’s, 7-10 oz fruit resemble ‘Pineapple’ with red streaking on gold background. Said to have sustained production of crack-resistant fruit. Plants are reported to be fairly compact and manageable. 75 days.

HOT STREAK: Ind. Reported to be an extremely productive ‘Striped German’ type tomato, with gorgeous color, fabulous flavor, and a firmer texture than similar heirlooms. Supposed to sustain high yields over a long season. 70 days.

MARMALADE SKIES: Ind. New Johnny’s introduction, said to be earlier and more productive than similar varieties. Fruit average 7-8 oz. 75 days.

MOUNTAIN GEM: Det. Highly recommended new heirloom type on a smaller plant. Pink round-ish fruit. 74 days.

MOUNTAIN ROUGE: Ind. Another new contender for best ‘Brandywine’ type. First year trial was promising even under difficult conditions. 2019 AAS winner with exceptional disease package. 73 days.

STRAWBERRY FIELDS: Ind. New introduction from Johnny’s—classic ‘Brandywine’ look but with improved disease resistance, crack resistance and higher yields. Flavor reported to be exceptional, fruit are 7-10 oz. 75 days.

CHERRIES/SALAD TOMATOES

BLACK CHERRY: Ind. Heirloom. Vigorous plants produce heavy crops of round cherry-size tomatoes with the classic ‘black’ tomato color and flavor. Unique and irresistible alone or in combination with the rest of the cherry tomato spectrum. 65 days.

CHERRY BOMB: Ind. Hybrid. Classic, classy cherry tomato with great flavor and strong disease resistance, including to late blight. 64 days.

CHOCOLATE SPRINKLES: Ind. Hybrid. Slightly larger than most of our cherries, with attractive mahogany fruit striped with dark greens and purples. Excellent flavor. 60 days.

CLEMENTINE: Ind. Hybrid. Bright orange complement to ‘Mountain Magic’, this larger “salad” sized cherry impressed us with its excellent flavor, appealing color, and good resistance to cracking. 68 days.

JULIET: Ind. Hybrid. The big sister of the original ‘grape’ tomato (‘Santa’), we would classify this as a “salad” tomato. Juliet shares many of Santa’s qualities, but in a larger package. Crisp and flavorful, Juliet is very productive and one of the most reliable and resilient producers under a wide range of conditions. The size is perfect for eating out of hand, salads, drying and roasting. 60 days.

MOUNTAIN MAGIC: Ind. Hybrid. Star performer most years, with big yields of delicious, juicy 2 oz fruit. We would call this a “salad” tomato. Has demonstrated resistance to early blight and late blight. 66 days.

NOVA: Ind. Hybrid. Our favorite grape tomato variety is back, firm and crack-resistant like all grapes, but with excellent flavor and beautiful appearance. Healthy plants bear copious amounts of fruit. 60 days.

ORANGE ZINGER: Ind. Second year trial to compare with ‘Sungold’, which we love, but which has a problem with splitting. Described as very similar to ‘Sungold’, but with oval fruit. Cherry sized. 67 days.

RUBY CRUSH: Comp. Ind. Hybrid. New grape variety with a manageable plant (said to be suitable for containers), excellent flavor and heavy production. 63 days.

SUNGOLD: Ind. Hybrid. This cherry wins our vote for the best tomato variety ever developed—big plants bear loads and loads of sunny orange, bite-sized fruit with very intense sweet and tangy flavor. Sungold is usually the first tomato to ripen, and they keep coming for a long time. Their only drawback is a tendency to split after a heavy rain—a common characteristic of fruit with high levels of sugar. 57 days.

SUNCITRON: Ind. Hybrid. Pale yellow member of the ‘Sungold’ family, supposed to be productive and sweet. First year trial. 70 days.

SUNGREEN: Ind. Hybrid. This cherry tomato from the same breeder as ‘Sungold’ bears unique lime-green fruit with fabulous flavor. Plants are large, can bear over a long period, but it can be somewhat difficult to tell when fruit is ripe. A subtle shift from opaque whitish-green to translucent amber green accompanied by slight softening is the signal to pick. 75 days

SUNPEACH: Ind. Hybrid. We like pink-fruited tomatoes, and this cherry is a winner. Slightly larger than ‘Sungold’ with an ovoid shape and an unusual pinkish-red color and mouthwatering flavor. 70 days.

SUPERSWEET 100: Ind. Hybrid. Long-time standard round red cherry tomato with outstanding yields and excellent flavor. Plants are very large and require support. 65 days.

VALENTINE: Ind. Hybrid. Extremely productive and tasty grape tomato with resistance to early blight. Crack-resistant, firm fruit are delicious, abundant and early. 55 days.

VERONA: Ind. New variety supposed to be like ‘Juliet’ but somewhat larger with richer flavor. We would classify this as a “salad” tomato. Second year trial. 67 days.

YELLOW MINI: Ind. Hybrid. Charming bright yellow round cherry tomato with excellent flavor and texture. Not as prone to splitting as many other round cherries. Keeps quality over a long season. 57 days.

PLUMS/PASTE

HYBRID PLUMS

DOLCECUORE: Comp. Ind. Very early oxheart type Italian tomato, big early yields, excellent flavor. Fruit are fairly large and heart-shaped.

GRANADERO: Ind. Second year trial for this highly lauded plum tomato variety, we liked it last year and expanded our planting this year. 75 days.

PAISANO: Det. Plum-type with San Marzano shape, excellent producer, good early production. Tends to produce some fruit with yellow shoulders. 72 days.

PLUM REGAL: Det. Excellent large plum-type tomato with some early and late blight resistance—this is our workhorse plum tomato. 80 days.

SUNRISE SAUCE: Det. Brand new plum variety in a lovely shade of orange. We found it to have exceptional flavor, good concentrated production, and a very manageable habit, making it ideal for containers. 57 days

SPECIALTY PLUMS

AMISH PASTE: Ind. Well-known 'oxheart' type which we characterize as an 'heirloom plum'. Good yields of ½ lb. fruit which, like typical plum tomatoes, have low moisture content (though not as dry as most modern plums) but with more intense flavor. One of the best for sauce and salsa. 85 days.

DOLCECUORE: Ind. Hybrid. Pink-ripening 'Cuore di Bue', or oxheart, type from Italy. Very soft but early and productive.. 65 days.

OPALKA: Ind. This Polish heirloom is a meaty, low-moisture tomato that excels for making sauce and paste. Better fresh flavor and more juicy than 'modern' plum tomatoes. Productive but quite late. Foliage is wispy, fruit are elongated and prone to green shoulders and blossom-end rot. 82 days.

ORANGE BANANA: Ind. Bright orange plum-type tomato with outstanding flavor for sauces, paste and salsa. Very prolific producer. 85 days.

WATERCRESS--3" pot@4.00

SPACING: Perennial spreads and self-seeds in suitable conditions, plant maybe a foot apart

AVAILABILITY: April-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Native to slow flowing streams and soggy streambanks, watercress can be grown in containers or in the garden, but requires ample moisture. Best leaf production is during cooler parts of the year (including winter), watercress flowers and becomes too strongly flavored during the hottest part of the summer. Watercress doesn't need running water to grow, but it needs plentiful water and fertility to produce well

HARVEST: Peppery leaves and shoots can be harvested anytime, they add interest to salads, sandwiches and soups.