



What to find in your share:

Delicata Squash
Leeks
Potatoes
Garlic
Scallions
Celeriac
Cabbage
Lettuce
Salad Mix
Tomatoes
Eggplant
Peppers
Basil
Cilantro
Dill
Beets
Carrots

Reminder:
*Final CSA Pickup
will be next week,
October 15/18.*

Squash and Fall Veggies Fill the Bags

After several hot and humid days, it finally is starting to look and feel like fall again. We lost some lettuce and greens to the unusual heat, but everything is now much happier to have the cool weather. We're coming up on the end of the season, and fortunately, we still have many items to offer you. This week we add hearty winter squash along with leeks, potatoes, garlic, celeriac, and other fall veggies. We also are happy to offer some of our baby salad mix.

Winter Squash- Squash was first cultivated in Mesoamerica 8,000-10,000 years ago. Winter squash are harvested with hard skins and mature seeds inside while summer squash are harvested young and tender. Winter squash is generally cooked before eaten. Winter squash are good sources of complex carbs, fiber, niacin, potassium, iron, and beta-carotene. Generally, the darker the skin, the higher level of beta-carotene is present. Delicata squash is also referred to as "Bohemian squash" and is creamy, sweet, and moist. It is an heirloom variety known for its flavor, similar to that of a sweet potato, and high levels of Vitamins A and C.

Baked Delicata Squash

There are multiple ways to enjoy winter squash, although I think baked squash provides the best opportunity to enjoy the true flavor of each variety.

*Slice the squash in half lengthwise and put in baking dish.

*Add 1-2 Tbs butter, olive oil, or a small amount of water. You can also use apple juice or cider.

*Add generous amounts of salt and pepper.

*Bake at 375 F until soft, about 30 minutes.

You can experiment around by adding different herbs or spices. Delicata is great prepared with hot peppers, or sweet with cinammon and apple cider.

News and Highlights

Farm Meats- We still haven't finalized plans for the chickens and turkeys. The chickens will be ready sometime in our final week of pickups or the following weekend. The turkeys will be ready the following week or two. We will let you know as soon as we have more specific details.

Pick Your Own- We have plenty of NZ Spinach, flowers, and some squash available if you'd like to pick any. Let us know and we'll show you where.

Farm Stand- We have plenty of organic hot cocoa, baking cocoa, tea, and mugs, all great gift items, available. We will have the farm stand open 'till late October.

Wal-Mart: The True Cost of Cheap by Curtis Feather

There are a plethora of issues we see on the news each day such as, global warming, child labor, environmental degradation, outsourcing of U.S. jobs, recalls of lead tainted toys, bacteria filled beef and spinach, and poisoned dog food. Our entire system of mass production, global trade, and corporate dominance promote and enable these issues to occur. While many of us feel weak politically and see little opportunity for true change in our democracy, we must realize that we have the ability to make the most radical and drastic changes from the bottom up. Every dollar we choose to spend or invest directly influences global politics, social, and environmental issues. Massive corporations and companies violating labor and environmental standards rely on consumers, such as you and I, to buy their products and to empower them. Today we will take a look at America's largest employer and the world's largest corporation, Wal-Mart. Although you may be able to find cheaper prices at Wal-Mart, we hope this article will help you realize that the negative environmental, social, and economic impacts of Wal-Mart on both the local and global scale far outweigh saving a few pennies.

Wal-Mart is a corporation, and the primary reason for the existence of a corporation is to make profits. Wal-Mart has been highly successful, and since opening in 1962 it now operates over 7,000 stores and wholesale clubs in 14 countries. Unfortunately, much of Wal-Mart's growth and profit margins can be attributed to substandard labor practices, cheap and destructive building practices, aggressive business plans, and questionable product safety and sources. Basically, Wal-Mart offers cheap prices because they do not truly invest into their communities, their workers, or the environment, and because they bring low quality food and products from China and other countries where they take advantage of cheap labor and limited regulations.

Attending college in Missouri, not too far from Wal-Mart headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas, I was able to get a personal view of Wal-Mart, its business strategy, and its impact on communities. I had friends in college whose parents worked in upper level management for Wal-Mart and I learned many disturbing things about the company. In the Midwest, Wal-Mart sets up retail stores in rural areas that still have thriving local businesses. Wal-Mart may build 5 to 10 stores in a region and then they aggressively try to stomp out competition. Due to their massive purchasing power and scale, Wal-Mart is able to get items at low cost and often they will sell items below cost to drive local businesses under. After the stores have successfully devastated the local economy, Wal-Mart then builds a Supercenter and simultaneously closes the surrounding 5 or 10 retail stores. According to Wal-Mart's website, a Supercenter employs 350 associates while each of the retail stores employ about 225 associates. This leaves a massive number of people jobless and a whole rural region's local economy and businesses obliterated. Suddenly, Wal-Mart is the only option and people must drive from 45 minutes away to shop.

We have chosen to highlight Wal-Mart for several reasons, including their overall track record as well as a proposed store nearby. You likely have noticed the "Say NO to Higher Taxes" and "Stop the Megamall" signs on lawns throughout Freetown and Assonet. Wal-Mart is planning to put in a 400,000+ square foot Supercenter right on the edge of the Assonet River and Assonet Bay. The center will be built on a fly ash landfill. Fly ash is a waste product from coal-fired power plants and the fine particulates contain many heavy metals including arsenic, uranium, and lead. These fine particles are very difficult to control when moving and will undoubtedly end up eroding into the Assonet River and blowing around the region with the wind. Although the developers plan to use water to spray the land when excavating, a building project the size of a Wal-Mart Supercenter and parking lot will without question stir up huge amounts of dangerous waste. The Assonet River is already a delicate system and the last thing it needs are more pollutants. Recently, a new species of turtle was discovered right where Wal-Mart intends to develop. Although Wal-Mart execs could care less, this turtle could prove to be the town's strongest ally in blocking the development.

Wal-Mart Turned Green? by Anna Harris

Wal-Mart has gone organic. Should we commence rejoicing? I think not. Despite Wal-Mart's recent attempts to frame its image in an ever so earth-friendly green light, there are several reasons why the prospect of one of the nations largest retailers going "all natural" is a serious cause for concern for American families.

First, there is Wal-Mart's environmental track record. Wal-Mart has been fined for oil storage problems in Florida, building on wetlands in Illinois, and most disgustingly, attempting to erect a store on historical Mayan land, near the 2,000 year old pyramids of the Teotihuacan Empire in Mexico. The corporation's record for contaminating water is particularly grimy. Wal-Mart became the first company ever to be fined by the EPA and Justice Department in 2001 for breaking recently updated standards for storm water runoff. The company paid \$5.5 million for these violations in four states, including Massachusetts, and \$1,550,00 to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection for similar water violations in 2005.

Murphy Oil USA Corp., the company that distributes gasoline at Wal-Mart gas stations, emitted more than 20 times the allowable level of sulfur dioxide in the last decade than federal environmental law is meant to tolerate. Wal-Mart's stores are huge, and the company deserts their smaller start-up stores in favor of Supercenters, leaving a vast wasteland of Wal-Mart carcasses in several towns, after having destroyed local competing businesses. In 2005, Wal-Mart was cited as utilizing over 12,163 acres of retail space, not including their parking lots in the U.S. alone, and has approximately 300 buildings for lease and 70 for sale at any given time. These statistics do not include the some 2,700 stores in 14 countries outside the U.S., which have no doubt been purchased too cheaply and built with the same reckless abandon as the monstrous structures in our country.

But what specific problems does the onslaught of Wal-Mart's organic market create for the environment? More than it can possibly solve by going organic in the first place. One would expect that an abundance of authentic organic foods at a lower cost would serve our planet and our tummies well, but it is not so. More organic food means more land unexposed to pesticides, which is a wonderful concept, and ultimately one of the goals of expanding the organic market. Yet, the land that Wal-Mart intends to use to cultivate most of their organic products is primarily overseas where labor is cheap, and standards are sketchy. Growing organically on Chinese land is particularly problematic, as we know the air and soil in China is polluted far beyond the point of calling exposure to it "natural." What's more, the shipping of internationally grown produce means more pollution caused by transportation and a lesser quality of freshness than we would expect from local farmers. Local farmers, if they were to be utilized in Wal-Mart's scheme, would be getting paid far less for the same amount of work they could be putting into small scale farm stands and CSAs, so that Wal-Mart can adhere to its promise to sell low.

As if it could not get more disturbing from here, from the start of Wal-Mart's organic endeavor, it has been charged with fraudulent signage denoting organic products by Cornucopia, the nation's most fierce overseer of organic farming nationwide. Apparently, several natural, but not organic, foods have been marked as organic in Wal-Mart stores this year and last despite warnings from Cornucopia including a formal legal complaint. So, let's recap: questionable quality, notorious environmental faux pas time after time, and sneaky green signs that confuse consumers. Can you say boycott?

Community Impact by Kelly O'Neill

A simple Google search for "Wal-Mart" yields interesting results. The first is a link to the Wal-Mart site with their new tag line "Save Money, Live Better." There's also the ubiquitous Wikipedia link, and then a barrage of anti- and pro- Wal-Mart links. These include Walmartfacts.com, a website provided by Wal-Mart claiming to provide straightforward facts about the retail giant, as well as WalmartWatch.com, a website claiming to provide the harmful realities for American families about the impact of Wal-Mart. If a Google search is any indication, and I think it probably is, you can see that the effect of Wal-Mart has been hotly debated in recent times (shocking to me was a visit to a Wal-Mart forum where I found out just how heated the debate can get).

The new Wal-Mart slogan, "Save Money, Live Better", suggests that if you shop at Wal-Mart, life will be better. Why? Because you are saving money? Yes, Wal-Mart is great for consumers, but Wal-Mart is so dedicated to providing shoppers with the lowest price possible that it arguably loses sight of providing its workers, suppliers, and shoppers with quality. That is, quality healthcare, wages, and working conditions for workers. While the average U.S. retailer provides workers with benefits after 3 months, Wal-Mart waits 6 and less than 50% of their employees are enrolled in their health plan, far below the national average. Rather than providing more affordable and better coverage, Wal-Mart promotes state health plans for their employees, funded by taxpayers. Wal-Mart fiercely fights unionizing of employees

and is currently facing over 80 lawsuits for labor violations. Likewise, their suppliers have been bullied by Wal-Mart's policies and many have had to cut jobs and outsource to countries with slave-labor conditions. As for shoppers, products found at Wal-Mart are cheaply made and often shoddy.

And how does this affect the community that Wal-Mart has moved into? It might ease consumer woes, but Wal-Mart often out-competes local businesses, within town and in neighboring towns, with their lower prices and convenient one-stop shopping Supercenters. As a result, empty lots can mark the landscape where local businesses once were. Superstores are creating a similar issue because for each Wal-Mart Supercenter built, smaller Wal-Mart stores must close. Studies have shown that there are 350 vacant Wal-Mart lots across the country at any one time.

Supporters of Wal-Mart say that a new store in town is a blessing because it boosts the economy and provides a plethora of jobs. In reality, these jobs are low paying with low benefits. Likewise, a study in 1999 showed that for every job Wal-Mart created, 1.5 jobs were lost. Along with job loss, Wal-Mart is often criticized for an increase in traffic and an increase in crime rates.

Wal-Mart is currently the biggest corporation on the planet with a reported \$256 billion in sales in 2004. It sells more than Target, Sears Roebuck, Costco Wholesale, Home Depot, and The Kroger Co combined. With its aggressive business model it is able to out compete most stores. In the natural world, the best ecosystem is one with a high rate of species biodiversity. I'm not an expert, but I don't see why things would be any different in the retail world. Wal-Mart's monopolizing influence is already crippling, and their plan to continually expand is overwhelming.

Wal-Mart has an extremely aggressive business strategy that they have streamlined to be exceptionally efficient. As a result, other retailers have to adapt and adopt their strategies. These strategies are great for business, though workers and suppliers often suffer as a result. Overall, Wal-Mart is great for consumers, but the low prices are associated with a high cost. We must ask ourselves, are we really living better if money is all we're saving?

A Time to Take Action by Curtis Feather

We have just covered the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Wal-Mart issues, but hopefully you have taken notice and have some concerns. In every aspect, from employee benefits to environmental actions to product safety and quality, Wal-Mart fails the test. Our society has become so concerned about buying cheaply and consuming as much as possible that we have pushed Wal-Mart to the rank of the world's largest corporation. We have largely turned a blind shoulder and allowed Wal-Mart to devastate local economies and the environment. Even when issues are brought up, we easily are wooed by commercials and advertisements, websites, and flashy graphics telling us that Wal-Mart has gone green and is good. When will we stand up and ask the tough questions? Who will drive past the Wal-Mart and continue to support the local business? Who will demand answers?

Links

www.saveassonetbay.com -Local campaign to stop the development.

www.walmartwatch.com -Very informative site.

www.wakeupwalmart.com -How to stop Wal-Mart from coming to your town.

www.walmartmovie.com - Cartoon showing Wal-Mart's impact.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/viewArticle.asp?articleID=19527>

<http://walmartcrimereport.com/crimereport.html>

<http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/77/walmart.html>

http://www.inthesetimes.com/article/the_wal_mart_effect/

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/business/wal-mart/unique.html>