



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

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## Note from Farmers Richard & Andrea:

Last week we featured an article written by Gwen entitled: **A Giant Success for One Small Municipality.** Gwen reported about Mals, a small region in South Tirol, Italy where the citizens came together and spoke up to defend their right to live in an area free of chemicals by becoming the first place in the world to ban pesticides. We think this is a pretty remarkable story and an encouraging example of how simple citizens can drive big change. If you didn't have a chance to read the article last week, we encourage you to do so this week. Gwen also referenced an excellent video that was done by Friends of the Earth. If you don't do anything else, we encourage you to at least watch this video which is less than 15 minutes long. Unless you speak German, you will need to turn on closed captions for the English translation. We'd love to hear your thoughts about this region and the changes they made to ban pesticides in their region. Imagine if we could do the same in Minneapolis, Madison, LaCrosse, Viroqua and Onalaska!

## A Giant Success for One Small Municipality by Gwen Anderson

The story we want to share with you this week is filled with hope and encouragement. It has been exciting for us here at Harmony Valley Farm over the past few weeks as we've dug deeper into this rich story. There is far too much for us to be able to sum up in one article, so we've shared some resources for you at the end of article and encourage you to dive into this story and learn more. The story is about a small township called Mals, which is (to our knowledge) the first municipality in the world to ban pesticides. We first learned about Mals when we read about it in an article in September's issue of *Acres U.S.A.* The article was an interview with Philip Ackerman-Leist, a farmer and professor of Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems at Green Mountain College in Vermont, who is also the author of *A Precautionary Tale*. Ackerman-Leist is very familiar with the area surrounding Mals, since he lived and worked in the area as a farmer in the early 1990s. In both his book and the article we read, he highlights the struggles Mals went

## What's In The Box?

**LEEEKS:** We're almost finished harvesting leeks. Remember to wash well to remove any dirt that may be in between the layers.

**ORANGE CARROTS:** If you haven't noticed, we consider carrots to be a staple ingredient in our diets. They are very versatile and can be eaten in so many ways. Don't get too fancy though, they are really delicious when simply cooked with a pat of butter and salt to accentuate their natural sweetness.

**SWEET YELLOW ONIONS:** This is a great onion to use for making onion jam or marmalade which is delicious added to eggs, spread on sandwiches, crackers, etc.

**GARLIC:** Mix roasted garlic into cream cheese and use it as a spread on your morning bagel along with slices of fresh tomato!

**GOLDEN GRAPE TOMATOES:** These are my go-to tomato if I need to make a super-fast pasta dish. Cut them in half, sauté with garlic and onion, then add a splash of white wine. Simmer for a few minutes and then toss with cooked pasta and top with fresh herbs and Parmesan cheese.

**POBLANO PEPPERS:** The poblano peppers in this week's box may be dark green or red. You can tell the difference between the poblanos and the green bell peppers because poblano peppers have a pointy tip.

**GREEN BELL PEPPER:** Green bell peppers are more blocky in shape than poblano peppers, don't get them confused!

**BROCCOLI:** It looks like we may have a very nice fall broccoli season! This crop usually grows best and tastes the best in the cool of fall.

**WHITE, YELLOW OR PURPLE CAULIFLOWER OR BROCCOLI ROMANESCO:** The harvest crew surprised us this week and brought in quite a load of cauliflower! We should have a few weeks of nice harvest.

**MINI-SWEET PEPPERS:** These are the small red, yellow and orange peppers packed in a brown, paper bag. They are sweet. Check out last week's vegetable feature for their story!

**ORANGE KABOCHA SQUASH:** Take a moment to read this week's vegetable feature for more information about this vegetable!

**LACINATO KALE:** Fall is our favorite time of year to eat kale, and kale chips are one of our favorite ways to prepare this vegetable!

**EDAMAME:** This is the last edamame of the season. Savor each last sweet bean or blanch and freeze them so you can enjoy them in the winter.

through on its long and difficult journey to become a pesticide free municipality. Their story is one of perseverance, tenacity, convictions, and the desire to, as Farmer Richard would say, "do the right thing."

Mals (pronounced Mahltz) is a township located in the Upper Vinschgau Valley of the Italian Alps, in a region called South Tirol. The township is made up of 11 villages ranging in altitudes of 3,000 to 5,500 feet. The largest of the villages lends its name to the municipality, so the villages are collectively known as Mals. Even though the township is in Italy, the inhabitants speak German and retain their Austro-Hungarian heritage. The residents of Mals have been farmers for 30-35 generations, tending their small family farms and carrying on traditions of rotating grain crops with vegetable crops and keeping their soil healthy. Most of the farms are small dairy farms, owning 8-12 cows, who grow their own vegetables and have a handful of fruit trees near their homes.

See our **blog** for the rest of this article!

## Featured Vegetable: Orange Kabocha Squash

This week we're packing one of our longtime favorite squash varieties, orange kabocha. The varietal name for this squash is "Sunshine," something we will take in any way we can get it given the recent rains and gray skies! You'll recognize this vegetable by its bright orange skin and rounded, disc-like shape. This variety is also sometimes called a Japanese Pumpkin and is similar to other squash varieties such as orange kuri and buttercup. This squash has a thick wall of flesh and a small seed cavity. The flesh is dark orange in color and has a silky, custard-like texture when cooked.

This is a very versatile squash and may be used for a variety of preparations including soup, puree, baked goods, curries, stews or simply roasted. You can often use this squash variety in recipes that call for buttercup, butternut, or orange kuri as well as any recipe calling for pumpkin. The flavor of this squash is excellent and surpasses even the best tasting pumpkin.

You'll find kabocha squash to be a very dense squash that will require a little bit of effort to cut into. Unlike some other winter squash, kabocha squash has a very thin skin that can be either peeled away or just eaten. The skin is most tender shortly after harvest and toughens up the longer it is in storage, thus may not be as desirable to eat. There are several ways you can cook this squash. My go-to easy, low maintenance method is to just cut the squash in half, remove the seed cavity and put the squash halves, cut side down, in a baking dish. Add a little bit of water to the pan and bake the squash at 350°F until the squash is soft and tender when pierced with a fork. Remove the squash from the oven and turn the halves over so they can cool.

*See our **blog** for the rest of this vegetable feature article as well as an additional recipe!*

## Cooking With This Week's Box!

We have made the transition to fall, it's official. Our Harvest Party is coming up this weekend and we have orange kabocha squash in this week's box! This is one of my favorite squash varieties and this week I'm sharing two recipes with you from Amy Chaplin's beautiful book, *At Home in the Whole Food Kitchen*. The first one is for **Kabocha Squash Bread with Toasted Walnut Cinnamon Swirl** (see below). I make this bread throughout the winter and we eat it for breakfast with a hard-boiled egg or sometimes have it as dessert with lunch or dinner! It's delicious on its own, but even better spread with soft butter or coconut oil. It calls for spelt flour, which I really like, but I would guess you could also just use all-purpose flour. If you're not into baking and sweet things this week, consider trying Amy's recipe for **Kabocha Nishime** (see our blog). This is a Japanese preparation for kabocha squash where the squash is steamed until tender and very delicately flavored with kombu, fish stock and mirin. You can eat it on its own or turn it into a bento bowl by serving it with rice, steamed kale and pickled vegetables.

This week I went back through our recipe database because I was looking for a few recipes I thought we had featured before. I found several recipes that I had forgotten about including one we featured last year for **Carbonara with Leeks, Lemon & Bacon**. This recipe calls for sweet corn, which we don't have, but you could easily substitute edamame or carrots instead. This is a rich dish, but very delicious with the silky leeks, the sweetness from the peppers and the tang from the lemon.

*See our **blog** for the rest of Chef Andrea's suggestions for utilizing every item in your box including recipe links!*

## Kabocha Squash Bread with Toasted Walnut Cinnamon Swirl

Yield: One 9-inch loaf

### **Cinnamon Walnut Swirl:**

1 cup toasted walnut halves, chopped  
2 tsp ground cinnamon  
2 Tbsp maple sugar (may substitute brown sugar)  
2 Tbsp maple syrup

### **Squash Batter:**

½ to 1 medium kabocha squash,  
peeled, seeded, and cut in ½-inch  
dice (about 3 ½ cups raw)\*  
2 cups spelt flour  
2 tsp baking powder

¼ cup plus 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil  
½ cup maple syrup  
2 Tbsp milk (dairy or non-dairy)  
½ tsp sea salt  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
1 egg, beaten

1. **Make the Cinnamon Walnut Swirl:** Place walnuts, cinnamon, maple sugar, and maple syrup in a bowl; mix to combine and set aside.
2. **Make the Batter:** Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly oil a loaf pan and line bottom and two longer sides with a sheet of parchment paper; set aside.
3. Steam squash for 10 to 12 minutes or until soft. Place in a medium bowl and mash with a fork. Measure out 1 ½ cups cooked squash puree and set aside. \*(see note below)
4. Sift spelt flour and baking powder into a medium bowl and stir to combine. Add olive oil, maple syrup, milk, salt, vanilla, and egg to the mashed squash; whisk until smooth. Using a rubber spatula, fold flour mixture into squash mixture until just combined. Spread half of batter over bottom of loaf pan. Layer cinnamon-walnut mixture evenly over batter and top with remaining batter. To create a swirl, use a small rubber spatula or butter knife to zigzag back and forth through the batter (across pan) and one stroke straight through the center of the loaf (lengthwise).
5. Place in oven, and bake for 45-50 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Remove from oven and allow loaf to sit 5 minutes before carefully turning out and placing on a wire rack. Slice and serve warm.

**\*Chef Andrea Note:** Alternatively, you can cut the squash in half and put the two halves, cut side down, in a baking dish with a little water in the bottom. Bake in a 350°F oven until tender when pierced with a fork. Remove from the oven and turn the squash over so they can release steam and cool enough to handle. Scrape out the seed cavity and discard it. Scrape the remaining flesh away from the skin. Mash it with a fork or puree it in a food processor. Measure out 1 ½ cups for the bread and refrigerate or freeze the remainder for another use.

This recipe comes from Amy Chaplin's book *At Home in the Whole Food Kitchen: Celebrating the Art of Eating Well*.