

# FIELD TO FRIDGE

## PART 1- HARVEST





# HARVEST TOOLS



- Victorinox harvest knife. Available from Farmers Friend for \$25 with sheath.
- Snips - ARS needle nose pruner. Available on Amazon for \$26
- Standardized harvest totes
- Belly Bucket. Johnny's for \$35
- Quick Cut Harvester. Farmer's Friend \$750
- Undercutter Bar. Tilmor around \$1,000











# ORGANIZING HARVEST

- Specific harvest days- ideally 2-3 days out of the week devoted to harvest.
- Consistent order deadlines if possible
- Harvest Board to keep crops and quantities organized and clear for all workers.



HARVESTING	PRODUCT	HARVEST TOTAL	PACKED	CSA	MARKET	SO	PP	B's	NG	BNF
✓	Salad Mix	126.5-lb ✓	✓	81	75	40	50	6lb	8lb	24
	Celery	73		21	40				12	
✓	Curly Kale	94 ✓		15	35	20	24			
	Cilantro	25			25					
✓	Carrots	244-lb		46	100	50	24			24
✓	Spinach	21-lb ✓				24	12			24
	Scallions	55		10	25	20				
✓	Yellow Squash	All ✓	✓	75						
	Basil	55		25	30					
	MG-Broccoli	57		25	20	12				
	MG-Salad Mix	118		40	30	24				24
	Tomatoes	All		48						
✓	Collards	25		10	15					
	Lacinato Kale	45		20	25					





# HARVESTING IN THE HEAT

- Early morning harvest for any heat sensitive crops. All lettuce and leafy greens such as kale, collards, etc.
- Irrigating before harvest on heat sensitive crops can greatly decrease wilt during harvest and packing. An hour if possible.
- Take harvested items into the indoor packing area often to cool. You might make multiple trips while harvesting a single crop.
- Spray down bins of lettuce and greens if not washing immediately. This removes some of the field heat which will still cause wilt even once indoors.





# HARVESTING IN THE COLD

- Allow time for the crops to thaw completely before harvest.
- A cold wind will wilt greens as fast as summer heat. Keep things out of the wind as much as possible.
- Keep close watch on the forecast and adjust harvest times based on temperatures.





# BUNCHED LEAFY GREENS

KALE, COLLARDS, CHARD, CELERY (WINTER)

- Very heat sensitive
- We bunch all greens with rubber bands
- Cleaning bad leaves off plants while harvesting greatly speeds up future harvests and keeps plants healthy





# ROOT CROPS

## CARROTS, RADISH, TURNIPS, BEETS

- These do moderately well being harvested in heat
- Generally we harvest with the greens attached, and bunch with rubber bands. We find nearly all root crops sell better with the tops on. Carrots are the exception we have found.
- When the greens are not quality, we will take only the root and leave the greens in the field. Pressure wash and store in plastic totes in the cooler. We find roots will stay fresh for a month stored this way. Weigh and bag as needed before deliveries.





# LOOSE LEAF GREENS

## BABY LETTUCE, SPINACH, ARUGULA

- High heat sensitivity
- We grow Salanova baby lettuce varieties which are harvested by hand using the serrated Victorinox knife.
- Spinach (transplanted) is harvest by hand also with the serrated Victorinox knife.
- All direct seeded baby greens are harvested with Farmers Friend Quick Cut Greens Harvester. Arugula, baby kale, and spinach (when direct seeded.)





# HEADING CROPS

## HEAD LETTUCE, CABBAGE, BOK CHOY, BROCCOLI

- Bok Choy and head lettuce are more heat sensitive than broccoli or cabbage. Harvest in the cool of the day to prevent wilt.
- Clean all bad leaves off in the field during harvest.
- Broccoli. Needs harvested very frequently- often we need to harvest it outside of our normal harvest windows to keep up with its rapid growth as broccoli flowers very quickly.





# FRUITING CROPS

TOMATOES, EGGPLANT, PEPPERS,  
CUCUMBERS.

- These are the most heat tolerant crops to harvest, however they can not be left sitting in the sun. If set in the shade, even on hot days they will not be affected much.
- Most are harvested with snips into the belly buckets and then transferred to large harvest bins.
- Tomatoes are harvested directly into clean yellow bins and only stacked one layer deep. These are stored in the barn (NOT in the cooler unless they are 2'nds). Routine assessment is needed to remove any compromised or split tomatoes.





# JUDGING PROFITABILITY WITH HARVEST

- We feel that a crop should be making minimum \$100/hour on harvest time
- If a crop does not feel profitable to harvest are there things that you can do to change that? Are there unnecessary steps you are taking?
- Harvest is not the only means to judge if a crop is profitable but it is a big aspect to consider