

March 09 Newsletter

Carrots – Much of our own carrot crop was frost damaged during Jan/Feb and we already knew they were unlikely to see us through until the new season's crop, so we have bought some direct from an organic grower in Yorkshire. We still have some of our own, which we will sell at the farmers markets we attend, and they may be in the boxes again depending on availability elsewhere.

We had got used to the mild winters of late and hadn't covered our crops with straw, which would have offered some protection for the carrots.

95% Home-Grown We have managed to supply the box scheme with our own carrots for the last 2 years, and, even with buying in carrots now, we still expect to achieve our target of 95% home-grown vegetables in the box scheme for this current season.

New Season;s planting and sowing – the last 2 weeks of mild, dry weather has been a welcome relief from the persistent frosts, and has seen us sowing early crops of onions, broad beans, outdoor salad, carrots and yesterday (28/2) early potatoes. All of these early sowings are a bit of a gamble, which will pay off in a mild, not too wet spring but could come to nothing if the weather doesn't treat us kindly.

And the first seed tray sowings in the glasshouse of leeks, lettuce, spring cabbage and parsley are all showing their green shoots.

Box Contents

Staples- Potatoes in the boxes may be any of the following:- , 'Valor' – white skin, Ambo red/white skin, 'Arran Victory' – purple skin, v. dry flesh so a good roaster and 'Romano' – red skin, firm .

Onions and carrots (see above) will be in the boxes weekly

Greens –seasonal greens are purple-sprouting broccoli (eat the leaves and flowering shoots), spinach, green chard, cabbage, leeks and black kale ('Cavalo Nero') and sprouts (almost finished).

Salad – you may receive salad again later on in March, but not weekly yet

Other – Beetroot and swede will be in the boxes once a month. We have a spring cauliflower variety, which should be ready March/April and we may also buy some in from Andrew Ward, organic grower at Wingham . Parsnips should still be in the boxes every 2 weeks during March.

Squash There is just a small amount of 'Crown Prince' squash left now, so this may only be in the boxes once more for this season. Best to de-seed the squash piece, keep in the fridge, and use within a week.

Mushrooms – We may buy in organic mushrooms again this spring, to add some variety to the boxes.

Wye Farmers Market The next few dates are March 7th & 21st and April 4th and 18th

Whitstable Farmers Market The next few Markets will Mar 14th & 28th and April 11th and 25th

Extras with Boxes The following can be ordered as extras with your standard box	Standard White Potatoes 'Valor'	1kg @ 80p 4kg @ £3.20	10kg @ £7
	Roasting Potato – 'Arran Victory'	£1 / kg	
	Red Potato – 'Romano'	£1 / kg	10kg / £8
	Salad Potato – 'Charlotte'	£1.20 kg	
	Carrots	£1 / kg	
	Onions	£1 / kg	

Leek & Potato Soup - a classic combination. Use 2-3 leeks and 2-3 med potatoes for 2 portions. Chop and fry in oil or butter for 5-10 mins. Add 1 pint of stock and cook until veg are soft. Remove from heat and liquidise or leave as is for a chunky soup. The 'Charlotte' potatoes stay together well so would work well in the chunky version, but you could use some floury potato in too to thicken the soup. Season as liked, and add cream if you fancy it.

Thanks for your continued support, from all at Ripple Farm Organics