

My MN Farmer

Our Family Blessed
To Feed Yours

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Plan, Plant, Pray, Pick, Prepare, Pack (and repeat!)



PLANT - Farmer Dean plants beans on July 6. With ideal weather conditions, members will be eating these beans in early September.

Midsummer is a good time for us to share our summer routine at My Minnesota Farmer. Our goal is to deliver a fresh, colorful box of produce to you each week. With that in mind we:

- **Plan** - Each year about Christmas time we search our favorite seed catalogs and websites for seeds best suited to Minnesota's growing conditions. We order them and discuss when and where to plant each variety.

- **Plant (and plant and plant again!)** - In February we plant the first early-season crops in the greenhouse. From that time on we plant and plant and plant, almost on a daily basis! We plant in the greenhouse and the fields throughout the entire growing season. Green beans, for instance, need to be planted several times during the year. Fields and

high tunnels are used for one crop, harvested, and then replanted later in the summer with another crop. And some plants (like microgreens and radishes) have to be replanted every week or two because they grow quickly. And everything we plant in the greenhouse gets transplanted into the field or high tunnels once the plant is well established.

- **Pray** - This is most important! As farmers, we trust that the God will help us water our crops and keep the high winds, hail and monsoon rains away. Each summer is different, and with God's help we are ready to respond to the challenges and fun surprises presented.
- **Pick** - Our goal is to do the majority of our harvesting on Mondays and Fridays so the produce is as fresh and beautiful as possible on your delivery date. But we always watch the crops closely to be sure we don't

let produce get past its peak. When the ripeness of produce changes the harvest day, our huge onsite cooler helps us keep the produce in good condition before it's sent to your dropsite.

- **Prepare** - Eggs and leaf lettuces need to be washed, onions need to be cleaned and bundled, bok choy needs to rest and soak. Every crop has its own special prep, and we diligently practice the required food safety regulations. Organically-grown produce doesn't necessarily look the same as factory-farmed, store-bought vegetables, but you can rest assured that it is fresh and chemical free.

- **Pack** - Once everything is packed we roll out our portable conveyor belt and line up the kids and employees to pack the boxes. Every packing event is a kind of party as we get to see the box contents come together.



PACK - Our young farmers get ready to help pack shares.



PREPARE - Farmer Jean and employees wash and spin mixed lettuce for shares.

So that's the routine for produce and eggs. There are dozens of additional chores to accommodate care of cattle, pigs, lambs, rabbits, chickens and ducks so our members can have the best organic protein on their plates. Add in family fun, farmers markets, volunteering, church, 4-H animal training, fairs and summer camps for the kids, and it makes for a full, wonderful summer! **THANK YOU for your very important part in supporting our family farm!**

In your share box this week

- ❖ **Cucumbers** - Enjoy these in your favorite cucumber salad, refrigerator pickles or cucumber sandwich! Or dress up your salad with fresh cucumber chunks.



- ❖ **Summer squash or Zucchini** - Slice and saute with onion for a quick, easy side dish. Or eat raw, sliced into rods with salt, hummus or ranch dressing. Or cut them up in chunks for a salad. Or bake them in casseroles or spaghetti.



- ❖ **Baby Red Potatoes** - Baby Reds are so good roasted with a little garlic. Or slice or chunk them, wrap them in foil with onion, and put them on the grill. Or boil them whole for a simple side dish with butter and salt and pepper.



- ❖ **Kohlrabi** - Kohlrabi is a tasty, healthy choice when you're looking for that yummy crunch! Cut off the outside and slice to eat fresh. Can also be grilled or added to salads.



- ❖ **Yellow Onions** - Great for sautees, burgers, in salads, casseroles or side dishes.



- ❖ **Kale** - Kale is a powerhouse of nutrients. Enjoy kale in salads, make kale chips, or a kale smoothie.

- ❖ **Peppers or Tomatoes** - We hope to include peppers and/or tomatoes in your share boxes this week.



Garlic Roasted Potatoes

- 3 lbs small red potatoes
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 ½ tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsp minced fresh parsley

Preheat oven to 400° F. Cut the potatoes in half or quarters and place in a bowl with olive oil, salt, pepper and garlic; toss until the potatoes are well coated. Transfer the potatoes to a sheet pan and spread out into 1 layer. Toast in the oven for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until browned and crisp. Flip twice with a spatula during cooking in order to ensure even browning. Remove the potatoes from the oven, toss with parsley, and season to taste. Serve hot!

From <http://mymnfarmer.com/recipes/all/garlic-roasted-potatoes>. For more recipes, go to mymnfarmer.com/recipes.

Please practice drop site etiquette

We are so happy to have you as part of our community! We are looking forward to a great year. As this may be new to some of you, here are a few tips to make everything go smoothly when you pick up your box:

- Check the list of names at your pickup site. Verify you are on the list, and see exactly what items you ordered. Pick up the items you ordered and sign behind your name so we know you've received them.
- **Half or Whole Share?** Please double check that you are taking the right size share. The majority of the calls I receive about drop site issues are because someone orders a half or whole share box and only the other size is there when they get to the drop. **Black boxes are half shares and white boxes are whole shares.** Thank you for being considerate to your fellow members by double checking you are picking your produce out of the correct sized box.
- Please bring your own container to transfer your produce into for the trip home.
- Stack the boxes in the shed - one pile of half share black boxes, one pile of whole share white boxes and one pile of lids. This will help keep the shed clean for people coming after you.
- Go home and enjoy your fresh goodies!
- Please call or text with any questions. I try to always have my phone with me. **612-245-6271**. Thanks!