

HUTCHINS FARM PLANT CATALOG 2010

The following list represents our expected offerings for the coming season, complete with brief variety descriptions, notes on cultivation, expected price and season of availability. We are unlikely to successfully produce everything on the list, for a variety of reasons, so bear in mind that not all items may be available during the specified season (or at all), and supplies are limited for all items. Those who are especially interested in a specific item or variety, or are interested in an item they don't find on the list, may contact us directly to try to ensure availability. E-mail is the best way to communicate with us, as the messages are easier to organize and track. We can be reached at hutchfarm@earthlink.net, or by phone at 978-369-5041. **Please contact us with your requests as early as possible, as they will be honored in the order which they are received.**

All our vegetable and herb plants are grown from seed or cuttings taken from our own 'mother' plants and are certified organic by Baystate Organic Certifiers. Our ornamental plants are grown according to the organic rule, but we have decided again this year not to certify them. The varieties and species we sell are all farm-tested (unless specified) for best flavor, reliability, yield and/or other traits that we find important. Many of these 'professional grower' varieties are not to be found at typical garden centers because of the high seed cost.

In addition to plants, we may be offering selected organic growing supplies.

New varieties for 2010 are in red.

ARTICHOKE—'Imperial Star'—4" pots @ \$3.50

AVAILABILITY: May-June

SPACING: About 1 square yard per plant.

CULTURAL NOTES: Artichokes are half-hardy perennials usually propagated by division. Plants usually begin to produce in their second season, but for those of us who live in a climate where they don't survive the winter, this seed propagated variety (if started early enough) will produce buds the first season. Beautiful thistle-like plants grow quite large with enough space and fertility.

HARVEST: Buds usually begin to arise in July and continue to form through the fall. Cut when they have achieved maximum size but before they begin to open.

ARUGULA—'Astro'—small peat pots with multiple plants @ \$0.75

SPACING: Pots can be set quite close together, almost side by side.

AVAILABILITY: May-June, Aug-Sept by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Arugula does best in the cooler weather of the early and late season—in hot weather it tends to 'bolt' (go to flower and seed) before it has made much leaf growth. We recommend that gardeners buy seed for this vegetable—seeds germinate readily and rapidly and the plants are ready for harvest in a month or less. We will be offering seeds and pregerminated seeds in peat pots, which should be planted whole. Do not try to divide up the seedlings in an individual pot as the disturbance can cause the plants to bolt more quickly. Plants do best under cover to keep out flea beetles, which chew holes in the leaves. We seed throughout the season, but will have plants for sale

primarily in May and June. Because Arugula is cold-tolerant and fast growing, seedings can be made until about mid-September or later if protected.

HARVEST: Because the harvest window for Arugula is so brief, we usually pull up the entire plants by their roots, and just keep seeding for continued harvest. Home gardeners may prefer to pick individual leaves to get the most from each plant, particularly in the fall when the plants bolt more slowly.

BASIL—6-pack inserts @ \$3, 3” pots @ \$2

SPACING: We set Basil plants 6” apart in rows about 12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-August

CULTURAL NOTES: Among the most tender (least tolerant to cold) of common garden plants, Basil suffers anytime temperatures go below 50 for an extended period. Row covers can be of great assistance for early and late season, and because Basil thrives in tropical heat, they can be left on all summer to exclude pests like Japanese Beetles. Basil seed germinates and grows readily in warm, moist soil, but can be prone to fungal disease in less than ideal conditions. A single planting, frequently cut back, well watered and fertilized, can produce over the entire season. We usually make several plantings to ensure top quality.

HARVEST: Plants can and should be cut back frequently and quite severely, making sure to leave some active growth to replace the harvested material. Plants that have begun to flower can be made to resume leaf growth by cutting back. Cold temperatures and moisture can cause Basil leaves to turn black. We never refrigerate Basil, but rather store it at room temperature with the cut stems in fresh water, the leaves covered by a plastic bag. Cooking diminishes the fresh, full flavor, so basil is best added to dishes just before serving.

VARIETIES: Genovese—‘the’ pesto Basil, also wonderful paired with tomatoes. Our most popular Basil by far.

Spicy Globe—Common in Greece, this charming, small-leaved, bushy variety grows into an attractive mound. Flavor is reminiscent of Genovese, but leaves are small enough to use whole and do not require cutting (which can result in discoloration). Restaurants in Greece often have a plant on each table so diners can season their food as they wish.

Queenette—Strong growing variety of ‘Thai’ basil--ornamental purple tinged plants have a strong anise-clove flavor, widely used in Southeast Asian cuisine.

Red Rubin—With its highly ornamental purplish-bronze foliage, this variety is beautiful in the garden and on the plate. Flavor is similar to Genovese.

BROCCOLI—6-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties @ \$2.50

SPACING: We plant broccoli 18” apart in rows three feet apart, but home gardeners can tighten up the spacing to about half.

AVAILABILITY: Because summer heat adversely affects the quality of broccoli, we plant one time in the early spring, then resume in July. Plants will be available in May, then again in July and August by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Broccoli does best in soils with a near neutral pH and high fertility. Heads that mature in hot weather are often strong flavored and loose or ‘ricey’, and the individual yellow flowers can begin to open prematurely. Heads that mature

under relatively cool conditions are better flavored (those that undergo several light frosts are the sweetest) and they hold longer in the field.

We cover our spring planting to protect from flea beetles and root maggots. All plantings need protection from a trio of caterpillars: Imported Cabbageworm (the bright green, fat caterpillars) and the smaller Diamondback Moth and Cabbage Looper. These can be effectively and safely controlled with row covers, or with one of two biological insecticides: *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) var *kurstaki* (trade name Dipel et al.) which affects only Lepidopterans (caterpillars) which ingest the substance, and Spinosad (trade name Monterey Garden Spray) which can control caterpillars and is also effective on flea beetles, thrips, leaf miners, and Colorado Potato Beetles. Both materials are most effective on larvae (caterpillars in this case) and have very short period of activity before they break down—spray in the evening for maximum effectiveness.

HARVEST: Broccoli should be cut when heads are fully formed, but before they begin to loosen up (which can happen rapidly in hot weather). We check broccoli every other day when it begins to mature and cut those heads whose florets separate readily when moderate pressure is applied. A week or two after the main head is cut, a number of side shoots will begin to appear which can be cut and used like the main head. Keeping them cut will encourage extended production.

VARIETIES: Packman—50 days—Early variety. Good size and widely adapted, but plants sometimes ‘button’ or form premature, stunted heads under stressful conditions. Everest—52 days—Older variety newly available to organic growers (who can only use untreated seed). Consistently large and dark green, but prone to leaf growth in the heads. Gypsy—58 days—The best all-around variety, with excellent tolerance to adverse conditions and disease, and consistent good size and flavor.

Belstar—62 days— The first commercially available hybrid variety with organically produced seed, Belstar produces big, heavy, well-domed heads, but doesn’t tolerate heat.

Blue Wind—49 days—Newer variety purported to be an improvement on old standard ‘Packman’—very early, lightweight but large.

Fiesta—65 days— Fiesta is another new hybrid with organic seed. Proved to be late and large, well domed, with excellent production of secondary shoots.

Green Magic—57 days—Our new standard variety has impressed us with its uniformity, quality and unsurpassed production of secondary shoots.

Windsor—56 days—popular variety long available only in treated seed, this is the second year we have found untreated seed. Supposed to perform well under heat stress and exhibit considerable disease resistance.

Arcadia—63 days—Vigorous, with exceptional tolerance to heat and cold. Large plants have a unique ‘frosted’ appearance and bear large, heavy heads.

Diplomat—63 days— Its strong performance for two seasons has made ‘Diplomat’ one of our new favorites. Uniform, productive and heat-tolerant.

Marathon—68 days—The most widely grown variety in the US, only suitable for Fall crops in the Northeast. Good tolerance to cold.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS—6-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: We set plants 18” apart in rows 3 feet apart. Home gardeners could get away with a somewhat tighter spacing, but plants do well with ample space.

AVAILABILITY: We plant Brussels Sprouts only once—plants will be available early to mid-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Similar in most respects to Broccoli, but Brussels Sprouts require much longer to mature. Plants and sprouts are quite cold-hardy, often remaining usable well into December. Sprouts become sweeter after several frosts. We encourage sprouts to form along the whole stalk by cutting the very tops off the plants several weeks before we expect to begin harvest.

HARVEST: Individual sprouts begin to mature from the base of the plants and can be snapped off as they are needed. Harvest continues as additional sprouts form higher on the stalk.

VARIETIES: Franklin—90 days—We’re trying this new early variety to replace our old favorite ‘Oliver’ which has been dropped from the trade.

CABBAGE—6-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties, @ \$2.50

SPACING: We plant cabbage 18” apart in rows 3 ft apart, but home gardeners can plant more closely than this, recognizing that spacing directly affects the size of the head.

AVAILABILITY: Like broccoli, we plant one time in the spring, then resume planting in July as the cabbages that mature in the cooler fall weather have much better flavor.

We will have plants available in July and August by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Cabbage is closely related to Broccoli and almost identical in culture. Cabbage is relatively more tolerant to heat stress than Broccoli.

HARVEST: Cabbage can be harvested anytime the heads have become firm. Allowing heads to stand too long in the field after they are mature can cause them to split.

VARIETIES:

Gonzales—66 days— Developed especially for the production of high-quality small heads. Can be planted close together (about 12”).

Alcosa—72 days—Savoy-type, especially popular in Italy. Heads are not as dense as typical varieties.

Super Red 80—73 days—The earliest red cabbage we know of, with medium size heads, exceptionally dense with excellent flavor.

Storage #4—95 days—The best green cabbage for long-term storage with wide adaptability. Can be harvested early for fresh use, or allowed to enlarge for storage. Stands well in the field.

Ruby Perfection—85 days—Very uniform and high quality red cabbage with good storage characteristics. Requires a long season.

CAULIFLOWER—6-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties @ \$2.50

SPACING: We set plants 18” apart in rows 36” apart. Cauliflower is finicky and requires ample room to mature successfully.

AVAILABILITY: Like broccoli and cabbage, we make one spring planting and several more in late summer. Plants should be available in July and August by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Virtually identical to Broccoli in its requirements, Cauliflower can be more sensitive to adverse weather and pest pressure. We offer the most reliable, trouble-free varieties we have found and continually trial new and promising varieties.

All of our varieties are considered ‘self-blanching’, i.e. their leaves provide adequate protection from light to produce snow white curds, but many growers like to tie the

leaves together as the head develops to completely exclude light which can cause unappealing yellowing or browning.

HARVEST: We check Cauliflower every other day when they begin to mature and harvest any heads where the white curds can be seen peeking out from the wrapper leaves. Growers who choose to tie leaves will need to untie to check head development. Unlike Broccoli, Cauliflower plants do not produce side shoots after the central head is removed.

VARIETIES: Fremont—62 days—The earliest, most reliable, most adaptable variety we have yet found. Big plants with uniform maturity.

Cassius—65 days—During its first season last year, we found Cassius to be dependable—comparable to Fremont but a couple days earlier.

Cheddar—58 days—This beautiful orange cauliflower holds well in the field and boasts exceptional flavor, raw or cooked. Heads from a single planting mature at different rates for extended harvest period.

Symphony—76 days—Quite late, but very large and uniform in quality and maturity.

Whistler—72 days—New to us last year, another contender for our late slot.

Violet Queen—54 days—Unique cauliflower-type plants produce large purple broccoli-type heads that do not require blanching (exclusion of light). Turns a chartreuse color when cooked and is quite delicious. Harvest like broccoli, but don't expect side shoots.

Veronica—78 days—Hybrid variety of 'Romanesco', an Italian specialty. Plants resemble typical cauliflower, but the heads (when they finally appear) are absolutely stunning—conical and light green, composed of smaller, cone shaped florets. Very appealing appearance and taste.

Tipoff—80 days—Although we're pleased with 'Veronica', we decided to try another hybrid Romanesco-type for comparison. This one is a few days later and performs nearly as well.

CELERY/CELERIAC—6-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: We set celery plants 9" apart in rows 3 feet apart, though the distance between rows could be reduced by as much as half.

AVAILABILITY: Mid-May through Mid-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Descended from wetland plants, Celery requires uniformly moist soil throughout the season for best results. High fertility and ample moisture help to produce succulent, juicy stalks. Although celery plants are fairly hardy, extended exposure to cool temperatures can cause the plants to go to seed (as biennials, they 'think' they have gone through a winter) so we postpone planting until the weather has warmed sufficiently.

HARVEST: We cut the entire plant at ground level, but home gardeners may choose to harvest individual leaf stalks as required. Mature celery tolerates moderate frost but can be damaged when temperatures go into the low to mid twenties.

VARIETIES:

Tango—82 days—Early, robust and delicious—a definite improvement over varieties we have grown in the past.

Mars—110 days—Celeriac or Root Celery. This is the same species as common celery, but selected over many generations for a large, tender root (leaves are edible, but best used as a flavoring). Roots are uniformly large, with white interiors, and have real celery

flavor in a more versatile form—they can be eaten raw, shredded, fried, pureed, roasted, etc.

CHARD—6-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: We plant Chard a foot apart in rows a foot apart, but plants can be spaced more closely.

AVAILABILITY: May-June, and until August by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Like Celery, Chard is a hardy plant that can respond to extended cold temperatures by flowering prematurely—therefore we hold off planting until early to mid-May. Chard is relatively trouble free, and much more tolerant of heat than spinach (which it can replace during the summer). A single planting can produce all season (up until heavy frosts) with ample water and fertility.

HARVEST: We snap individual leaves off a little above ground level—take care not to dislodge the plants. Plants can also be completely trimmed a couple inches above the growing point. Chard continues to regrow as long as it isn't cut below the growing point from which the leaves emerge.

VARIETIES:

Bright Lights—55 days—AKA 'Rainbow Chard', this variety is highly ornamental as well as delicious. Stems can be gold, pink, orange, purple, red or white. Somewhat less cold-tolerant than other varieties.

Bright Yellow—57 days—Selected out from the Bright Lights gene pool, this color is particularly attractive.

Ruby Red/Rhubarb—59 days—Standard red chard, with striking stems and veins. Beautiful, delicious and productive.

Silverado—55 days—More savoyed (crinkly) than other green varieties, slow to bolt with some tolerance to Cercospora Leaf Spot. New to us in 2007 and won us over.

Fordhook—57 days—Old standard green leaf chard, with larger leaves and heavier yields than 'Silverado'.

CHERVIL—Small peat pots with multiple plants @ \$0.75

SPACING: Plant pots 4-6" apart in rows 8-12" apart

AVAILABILITY: Chervil is extremely cold-hardy but fares less well during the summer. Plants will be available Late April-May, then again in August-September by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Chervil grows edible leaves, prized for their delicate anise-parsley flavor, then goes to flower and seed during the same season. Root disturbance can cause plants to bolt more quickly, so multiple plants in pots should be planted together without separating them.

HARVEST: In the spring, when temperatures are getting hotter, plants bolt quickly, so it is best to pull entire plants promptly as soon as they are large enough. In the fall, it is possible to extend harvest by picking individual leaves or clipping most of the top growth, allowing plants to regrow.

CHIVES—3” pots @ \$3.00

SPACING: Chives can be spaced as far or close as desired, but as perennials they divide and form clumps over the course of several years, so closer spacings may need to be dug and divided sooner than those spaced far apart.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-July.

CULTURAL NOTES: Chives are easy to grow and will readily colonize any reasonably fertile sunny spot. Chives send up beautiful, edible flowers early in the spring.

Thereafter, they will continuously produce leaves as long as they are kept cut and watered. Clumps should be dug, divided and replanted every several years.

HARVEST: Snip above the base of the plant with scissors. Keep cut to avoid having old, yellowing leaves. Chives generally do not dry successfully.

VARIETIES: Purly—Standard chive variety with good leaf production.

New Belt—Variety of the species known as Garlic Chive, Chinese Chive, or Chinese Leek. Leaves are flat, not round and hollow like standard chives. Uses are similar, but the flavor has a distinct garlic note. Garlic Chives produce white edible flowers in the late summer.

CILANTRO—Small peat pots with multiple plants @ \$0.75

SPACING: Plant pots 4-6” apart in rows 8-12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: We seed Cilantro about every other week all season to ensure a consistent supply—we will have a good supply of plants from late April through June, thereafter by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Cilantro is similar to (and related to) Chervil, but tolerates heat somewhat better. We recommend that people plant seed directly in the garden, but because seed can take up to three weeks to germinate, we offer customers the convenience of pre-germinated seeds in peat pots. General guidelines are the same as Chervil.

HARVEST: Leaf harvest is similar to Chervil. We pull plants up with their roots (which are also edible) when leaves are large enough, but late summer plantings can be leaf-picked without worrying about bolting. Cilantro seeds are the Coriander of the spice trade and can be allowed to form and used as such, or saved and planted.

CUCUMBERS—4-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: Set plants 8-12” apart in rows 4 or more feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: We plant Cucumbers five times during the season to ensure a constant supply of high quality fruit. Plants will begin to be available in May and June, and by special request until early August.

CULTURAL NOTES: Many growers direct seed Cucumbers in the garden or field as they are notoriously resentful of root disturbance. We have had success using transplants and do so exclusively now for the following reasons:

1. More control over conditions of germination means less work thinning and less wasted seed (which has become increasingly expensive)
2. Transplants have a significant jump start on weeds.
3. Transplants can more easily outgrow insect damage which might decimate newly germinated seedlings.

Cucumbers are very sensitive to cold—it is best to wait until the weather and soil have warmed to plant them. They are also quite sensitive to root disturbance which can cause significant stunting—plants should be removed from their containers with care to maintain the root ball. If there is more than one plant in a cell, they shouldn't be separated—they can be planted together, or one can be clipped off at soil level. We cover our cucumber plantings with row covers to provide an extra measure of warmth and protection from pests, particularly Cucumber Beetles. Row covers should be removed when the plants begin to flower to allow pollinators access to flowers.

For best production, plants need consistent moisture and ample fertility. On the farm, our plants usually succumb to disease/pest pressure after a couple weeks of good picking—home gardeners may have better results. Rather than resorting to time-consuming, expensive, and often ineffective sprays, we simply continue planting new fields as long as time remains to mature a crop.

HARVEST: Cucumbers size up rapidly. Cucumbers should be picked regularly to promote extended production—we try to pick every other day, although we can wait a little longer under cool conditions. We usually clip Cucumbers from the vine to avoid damaging them.

VARIETIES: Sassy—52 days—Highly productive 'pickler' or 'Kirby' variety, these are usually picked between 2-4" long. Although bred for pickling, these cucumbers are quite good eaten out of hand and are a good size for snacking.

Ballerina—52 days—New to us last year, this pickler is 'parthenocarpic' meaning that it can set fruit without pollination. Reported to be very productive over a long season—appearance is virtually identical to 'Vertina'.

General Lee—60 days—This has been our main season 'slicer' for several years now. Dark green fruits are abundant and average 8-8 ½" long at maturity.

Orient Express—58 days—This excellent Asian variety produces copious quantities of long (12-15"), slender, bumpy fruit that is crisp, sweet, free of any bitterness, with a small seed cavity.

Olympian—52 days—We're giving this standard 'slicer' variety a fresh look after hearing positive reports from university variety trials.

Dasher II—58 days—This older variety (I used to grow it fifteen years ago) remains the standard commercial 'slicer' for yield, appearance and flavor. We're going to see how it compares to some of our new favorites.

Babylon—63 days—Territorial Seed Co. claims that there is more seed sold worldwide of this variety than any other hybrid cucumber. Reported to have exceptional yields and flavor—classified as a 'Mediterranean-type slicer', best picked at 4-6".

Speedway—54 days—We were impressed by the earliness and flavor of this variety during its rookie season and have added it to our roster.

Cobra—60 days—New to us last year. Cobra is noted for its tolerance of stress and disease, especially late in the season.

Dvir—56—New to us last year. Organically produced hybrid Beit-Alpha type, very sweet, smooth with a small seed cavity. Outperformed 'Diva' with similar quality.

Tasty Green—62 days—Another Asian variety, new to us last year. Similar to Orient Express, but smoother, similar in appearance to the individually shrink-wrapped greenhouse cukes found in the grocery store.

Vertina—49 days— This is a French ‘cornichon’ type cucumber (similar to a pickler, but spinier). Extremely early. Performed well during 2007, the first season we grew it.

DILL—peat pots with multiple plants @ \$0.75

SPACING: pots 4-6” apart in rows 8-12” apart

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June, by special request thereafter until September.

CULTURAL NOTES: We treat Dill exactly the same as Cilantro, planting them together in the same bed at the same time and harvesting them in an identical way.

HARVEST: As Cilantro, except that Dill flowers and immature seeds are also cut as they arise to be used like the leaves or, especially, for pickling.

EGGPLANT—3” pots @ \$2.50

SPACING: We plant Eggplant 18” apart in rows about 3 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June. Plants may be available as late as mid-June by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Eggplant is sensitive to cold and should be planted after temperatures have warmed. Eggplant considered to be in the same genus as potatoes and shares several pests in common. The Potato Flea Beetle (similar in appearance to but distinct from the Cabbage Flea Beetle) chews holes in the leaves and can completely defoliate small plants. Colorado Potato Beetles are as attracted to Eggplant as they are to Potatoes and the orange larvae can very quickly eat even a large plant down to a skeleton. Both of these pests can be excluded with row covers, but check the plants periodically because if even a few Potato Beetles get underneath, they can wreak havoc. We usually cover directly after planting to protect small plants from flea beetles and provide a warmer environment. When the plants are large and ready to bear, we remove the covers (for convenience—Eggplants are self-fertile and don’t require pollinators to produce fruit) and control Colorado Potato Beetles with Spinosad (see Broccoli) or by picking them off by hand. Because Eggplants are growing and producing over a long season, providing fertilizer at about the time they bear their first fruit can promote a longer productive season.

HARVEST: We cut or pull fruit off the plants when they are good sized but while their skin is still glossy. Eggplant can be cut quite young, but don’t let fruit hang too long—a truly ripe Eggplant whose skin has lost its gloss becomes bitter and seedy. Eggplant are best kept cool at high humidity levels, but are occasionally damaged by low temperatures in the refrigerator.

VARIETIES: Beatrice—62 days—New in 2006, this was probably our highest yielder that year, but didn’t fare as well in 2007. Very attractive large fruit of the ‘Rosa Bianca’ type, with violet skin and rounded shape. Excels for making vegetarian ‘scallopini’.

Birgah—64 days—New to us last year—another hybrid ‘Rosa Bianca’ type with large rounded fruit with violet purple skin.

Bride—Classic Japanese shape (elongated 8-10”x 1 ½”) with beautiful pink and white streaking. Later and not as productive as ‘Ichiban’ types, but very attractive and high quality.

Calliope—64 days—Very impressive in its first year of production, Calliope was our most productive eggplant in 2007. Small to medium size oval fruit is white streaked with lavender. Abundant and extended production.

Clara—65 days—Attractive and productive white-skinned variety, much better than others we have tried. Reminds us why they’re called ‘Eggplant’. White varieties show chilling damage (both on the plant and after harvest) more than other varieties.

Dairyu—61 days— New to us last year, when it proved to be early and productive. ‘Ichiban’-type Japanese eggplant with abundant long, slender fruit.

Dancer—65 days—New to us last year—produced abundant, medium-sized, beautiful pink fruit.

Irene—65 days—Second year trial. Irene is supposed to have the most resistance to Verticillium Wilt, a common ailment that causes foliage to dry and wilt, of any commercially available variety. Irene bears standard egg-shaped purple-black fruit.

Nadia—67 days—This Italian-style Eggplant is similar to the standard varieties in its purplish-black coloration, but the fruit is more elongated. Our main crop variety for the last two years.

Nubia—70 days—Hybrid version of the heirloom ‘Listada di Gandia’, Nubia bears large fruit of the typical shape but with gorgeous purple and white streaking. Can be a stingy producer under less than ideal conditions.

Orient Express—58 days—Japanese-type (like Dairyu), early and abundant.

Pingtung Long—58 days—Although the ‘official’ days to maturity don’t indicate it, we find that this variety matures several days after Ichiban. Fruit is light purple, very slender (only about 1” diameter) and quite long (12” or more) with mild flavor and long harvest window. In most years, it is less productive than Ichiban, but more than Bride.

Santana—61 days—New to us last year, ‘Santana’ impressed us with its sustained production of large and jumbo fruit of the standard eggplant type.

ENDIVE/ESCAROLE—6-pack inserts @ \$2

SPACING: We set our plants 1 foot apart in rows about 1 foot apart. Frisee Endive probably doesn’t need quite this much space, while Escarole could use more.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-May, July-August by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: These close relatives of Lettuce are similar in culture, but are more prone to bolting under hot conditions. Spring plantings need ample water and fertility to form a full size head before they begin to stretch, and should be harvested promptly as soon as they reach usable size—late summer plantings are more forgiving.

HARVEST: Like lettuce, cut at the base. When they are ready, the leaves in the center of the head begin to bunch together and fold over.

VARIETIES: Rhodos—42 days—Known as tres fine or frisee Endive. Bears long, deeply cut and toothed leaves. The leaves in the heart are blanched, tender and more sweet than bitter. Outer leaves are more strongly bitter.

Keystone—45 days—First year trial, possible replacement for Rhodos.

Natacha—48 days—Classic Escarole forms a large plant with tender leaves and a creamy yellow blanched heart.

FLORENCE FENNEL—6-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: We set plants 1 foot apart in rows about 1 foot apart, but the spacing can be tightened if soil fertility is high.

AVAILABILITY: We will have a few packs available in late April-May, and we plant again in late June-July. Plants should be special ordered to ensure availability.

CULTURAL NOTES: In the same family as Dill, Chervil, and Cilantro (not to mention Carrots, Parsley, and Celery) Fennel dislikes root disturbance, so care should be taken not to disturb the root ball when planting. Fennel thrives during cooler weather, but requires a long season. Plants have ferny leaves (which are edible) but are grown primarily for the swollen base or ‘bulb’ which forms just above the base of the soil. Fennel responds best to consistent soil moisture and high fertility.

HARVEST: We cut Fennel when the ‘bulb’ is thick and rounded, but before the scales start to separate and stretch (at which point the plant is starting to flower, and becomes tougher). We cut with clippers at the base of the bulb—the root is tough, so be careful if using a knife.

VARIETY: Orion—80 days—the largest, most reliable variety we have found, Orion is the only one we grow. We’ve found certified organic seed for this variety.

FLOWERS—mostly in 4-pack inserts, some in peat pots or 3” pots. We will be offering the following species for sale, primarily in May and June: Morning Glory, Nasturtium, Rudbeckia (Black-Eyed Susan), and Zinnia. All but the Morning Glory and Nasturtiums are cut-flower varieties.

KALE AND COLLARDS—6-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: We set plants 1 foot apart in rows about 1 foot apart. In row spacing can be reduced to about 8”.

AVAILABILITY: Like Broccoli, we make one early planting of Kale, but make several larger plantings to mature in the cooler weather of late summer and fall when the flavor is best. Plants are available May/June, then again by special request from the beginning of July until the end of August. To ensure availability, place an order.

CULTURAL NOTES: Most varieties are considered to be the exact same species as Broccoli, Cauliflower, Cabbage and others. Kale suffers from the same pests and problems outlined under Broccoli. Kale is exceptionally hardy and can continue to produce well into December. Cold weather improves the flavor.

HARVEST: We snap leaves off as they enlarge. The whole plant can be clipped directly above the growing point (where the newest leaves are emerging). Growth is continuous, but slows in extreme heat or cold.

VARIETIES: Top Bunch—50 days—Collard (originally ‘Colewort’) variety boasts large, dark green rounded leaves with slight savoy. Very tender and flavorful.

Toscano—65 days—Italian heirloom variously known as Lacinato, Dinosaur Kale, and Cavolo Palmizio. Leaves are narrow, very dark green and blistered in appearance. Production isn’t as high as other varieties, but flavor and nutrition are unsurpassed.

Redbor—60 days—Typical curly kale in a beautiful shade of red which intensifies as the weather gets colder.

Red Russian—50 days—Unlike most Kale varieties, this Siberian heirloom is actually more closely related to Rutabaga than Cabbage. Oak shaped leaves are thin and tender with purple stalks. Very sweet and tender after a few frosts.

White Russian—55 days—Like ‘Red Russian’ but without the purplish coloration. Considered one of the most cold-hardy varieties.

Winterbor—60 days—A very productive and uniform variety of the traditional curly Kale. Very attractive, high yielding and flavorful, particularly after cold weather sets in.

KOHLRABI—6-pack inserts @ \$2

SPACING: We set plants 6” apart in rows 12” apart.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-May, July-August by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Perhaps the oddest member of the Broccoli/Cabbage species, Kohlrabi is grown for the swollen base of the stem. Similar in culture to its close relatives (see Broccoli), Kohlrabi is more tolerant to heat and much quicker to mature.

HARVEST: We clip the tough root at the base of the ‘bulb’ when it is 2-3” in diameter and before it begins to elongate. Kohlrabi are peeled, and the interior pith is sweet and crisp and wonderfully versatile—can, among other things, be eaten raw, sautéed, stir-fried or pickled. Very similar to the inner portion of a Broccoli stem

VARIETIES: Winner—32 days—Our favorite for quick maturity, vigor, size, uniformity, reliability, appearance and flavor. Very slow to become tough.

Kossak—80 days—New storage variety is reported to stay tender up to about 8” in diameter and keep for months in cold storage.

LEEK/SCALLIONS—3” pots with multiple plants @ \$2

SPACING: We set Leeks about 5” apart in rows 3 feet apart, although rows could be spaced more closely. Scallions can be set closer, about an inch apart is sufficient.

AVAILABILITY: May-June, up until mid-July by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Separate the clump of plants in the 3” pot into individual leeks, and set them deeply with only an inch or so of green above the level of the soil. Leeks grow quite slowly and require ample moisture and fertility. They are exceptionally cold-hardy, with some varieties lasting all winter. The entire plant is edible, but the choice white portion is preferred—‘hilling’ or heaping soil up around the shank will increase the proportion of white, blanched stem. Scallions are grown in much the same fashion, but are much quicker to mature.

HARVEST: When plants have acquired sufficient girth (at least 1”) we pull them by hand, peeling and trimming the roots and some of the green leaves as we go. In tighter soils, it may be necessary to loosen the soil with a digging fork before pulling.

VARIETIES: King Richard—75 days—Very long and quite early, the stalks are often over a foot long before the leaves begin to fan out.

Lincoln—75 days—Similar to King Richard, but lighter green and even taller, with longer shanks. Good for early harvests of ‘baby’ leeks.

Lancelot—90 days—‘Winter’ leek with a stouter, shorter shaft than the previous two. More cold-hardy than ‘Lincoln’ or ‘King Richard’.

Nabechan—65 days—Traditional scallion variety from Japan, where this vegetable is particularly esteemed.

Shimonita—60 days—Scallion—New to us this year, specialty Japanese type with a short, stout stalk and exceptional flavor.

LEMON VERBENA—4” pots @ \$4

SPACING: We set this herb about a foot apart in rows a foot apart. Could be more closely spaced.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Botanically known as *Aloysia triphylla*, Lemon Verbena is an intensely lemon-scented herb used for flavoring a wide variety of dishes including dressings, marinades, fish and poultry. Makes a wonderful tea. Lemon Verbena is a perennial, but isn't reliably winter-hardy at temperatures below about 15 F.

HARVEST: Cut individual leaves and stems as desired. Regular cutting promotes growth.

LETTUCE—6-pack inserts with six different varieties @ \$2

SPACING: We plant lettuce one foot apart in rows about a foot apart. Plants can be spaced somewhat more closely (8”) in the row if desired.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June, then June-September by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Lettuce is relatively easy and quick to mature, but does better in cool to mild temperatures—heat causes plants to begin flowering, often before they have grown a full size head. Growing lettuce is more challenging during the summer months, when more attention must be paid to water, maturity, and variety selection. We select varieties that do best under the expected conditions (i.e. lettuce plants bought toward the end of June will be of varieties that, in our experience, tolerate summer heat).

HARVEST: We cut the heads off at the base, but in the spring and again in the late summer and fall, gardeners may choose to pick or clip leaves and allow lettuces to regrow—this is not a good option when temperatures are hot.

VARIETIES: We grow too many varieties to list here, and only sell them in mixed packs. We grow multiple varieties in each ‘class’, including green and red romaine, green and red leaf and oakleaf, green and red Boston, green and red Batavian, and others that don't fit neatly into any category.

LOVAGE—3” pots @ \$3.00

SPACING: 12-18” apart in rows about 2 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Lovage is a hardy perennial related to celery. Plants begin growing early in the spring, ultimately growing into a large (4-6') plant when it is in full flower. Leaf production resumes after flowering is complete.

HARVEST: Individual leaves are cut or pulled at the base. The aroma and flavor are quite strong and reminiscent of celery—a little bit goes a long way. Small amounts are welcome in potato salad, soups and stews.

MARJORAM—3” pots @ \$2.50

SPACING: About 8” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Annual relative of Oregano with a sweeter flavor—leaves and flowers are edible.

HARVEST: Cut any time plant is large enough—keep flowers cut to encourage production. Marjoram retains its flavor dried.

MELONS/WATERMELONS—4-pack inserts, some with multiple varieties @ \$2.50

SPACING: We plant melons 1 ½ feet apart in rows six feet apart, but ideally, they would be spaced 2 feet apart or more.

AVAILABILITY: May-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Melons are closely related to Cucumbers and are treated in much the same manner. Watermelons are relatively less susceptible to Cucumber Beetles and the diseases they spread than other melons.

HARVEST: Watermelons are a little tricky to harvest—because they do not continue to ripen after picking, it is important to correctly judge ripeness in the field. One sign of ripeness is a yellow spot where the fruit rests on the ground, but what we look for is that the curly tendril nearest to where the fruit is attached to the vine is brown and dried.

Because Watermelons have a long shelf life, it is usually best to err on the side of caution, allowing fruits to remain on the vine for a day or two after the above ripeness indicators have been observed. Other types of Melon vary in the way they are harvested—see the following variety descriptions.

WATERMELON VARIETIES: All our Watermelons have seeds.

Little Baby Flower—70 days—New to us in 2007, this red flesh Watermelon bears abundant small 2-4 lb fruit. Quite sweet with a distinctive rind pattern.

Lantha—74 days—New variety with dark green ‘Sugar Baby’ type rind. 14-15 lb fruit are reported to be prolific and delicious.

New Orchid—80 days—This unusual variety bears 8-12 lb fruit with bright orange flesh. Very sweet and attractive.

Petite Yellow—75 days—New to us in 2007. This is another mini-Watermelon, this one with bright yellow flesh. Fruit average 4-5 lbs.

Quetzali—85 days—The only non-hybrid Watermelon we grow, Quetzali has been a consistent performer, producing lots of very sweet pink flesh fruit in a variety of sizes, from 8 to 12 lbs. or more. Rind is unusual—dark green with lime green sponge prints. The flesh has very few seeds.

Sangria—88 days—Very sweet and juicy with bright red flesh, also quite large with the typical oval shape. Rind is dark green with lighter striping.

Starlight—75 days—Large round fruit average 10-12 lbs. and have red flesh of excellent flavor and crisp texture. Rind is deep green with dark green stripes.

Yellow Doll—68 days—Quite early and manageable in size (5-7 lbs. on average),

Yellow Doll is one of our favorite varieties—beautiful yellow flesh is consistently sweet and refreshingly crisp and juicy. Rind is medium green with darker stripes.

OTHER MELON VARIETIES: Athena—80 days—With its thick rind and dense orange flesh, Athena is our most consistent ‘Muskmelon’ type, both in production and quality. Harvest when the fruit detaches easily from the vine with a slight tug. Athena is the variety most resistant to cracking or softening in the field. About 3lbs. on average.

Arava—80 days—New to us last year, a hybrid Galia melon, seed produced organically in Israel. Reported to be sweet, fragrant, refreshing and productive even in cool conditions. Green flesh, harvest when skin turns from green to yellow.

Atlantis—82 days—New this year, advertised as an Athena-type melon with similar appearance and improved eating quality.

Goddess—70 days—‘The best early melon we have ever seen’ gushed one catalog, and we concur. Fine-flavored, fragrant 7-8lb. fruit. Muskmelon type. Harvest at forced slip.

Sarah’s Choice—76—New last year. Described as medium-sized (~3lb.) with superior flavor and resistance to Powdery Mildew. Muskmelon type, harvest at full or forced slip.

Sensation—80 days—New to us last year, with a finely netted orange rind and tender white flesh with outstanding flavor. ‘Ananas’ type, skin turns yellow and fruit slips when ripe.

Wrangler—76 days—New to us last year, described as an Italian type cantaloupe, 4-5 lbs. with an oval shape. Harvest when sutures pale from dark green and fruit slips.

Serenade—78 days—We’re trying this ‘butterscotch’ melon as a potential replacement for our lamented favorite, now unavailable, Sweetie #6. Single-serve size melons top out at about softball size. Harvest at forced slip.

Halona—79 days—We grew this one for the first time in 2006 seeking a replacement for the sometimes disappointing ‘Earliqueen’, and we think we have found it. Almost as early, Halona is much more consistent in size (about 4 lbs.) and flavor (exceptionally sweet). Also boasts better disease resistance. Harvest at full slip.

Hannah’s Choice—87 days—New to us in 2007 when it impressed us with its productivity, flavor, vigor and health. Harvest 3-5 lb. fruit at full slip.

Sivan—78 days—Authentic ‘Charantais’ melon, the true cantaloupe (as opposed to the muskmelons we know as cantaloupe). When grown successfully, these have incomparable quality: sweet and intensely aromatic. Do not allow to fully ripen in the field as they split quite readily—instead, watch for the skin color to begin to yellow, then check the small leaf where the fruit is attached to the vine: when this pales, the fruit should be cut from the vine. Allow harvested fruit to ripen several days at room temperature before eating.

OKRA—3” pots @ \$2

SPACING: Plant about a foot apart in rows 2-3 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: Mid-May through mid-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Okra isn’t commonly grown this far north because it thrives in consistently warm weather—we wait to plant until middle or late May. Plants benefit from protection (row covers) when they are small. Okra can grow quite tall, up to about 4 or 5 feet.

HARVEST: Clip 3-4” pods as they form in the leaf axils. Regular harvesting promotes continued growth and production.

VARIETIES: Millionaire—50 days—We’re trying this new hybrid variety to replace ‘Cajun Delight’, which is unavailable this season.

ONIONS/SHALLOTS—3” pots with multiple plants @ \$2

SPACING: We set onions about 5” apart in rows 3 feet apart, but the rows can be considerably closer together.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-May

CULTURAL NOTES: Separate the plants from the 3” pots into individual onions. We plant onions as early as we possibly can because they begin to form bulbs in response to the lengthening days rather than the size of the plant, so earlier plants have more opportunity to grow large before they begin to bulb, resulting in larger onions. For best results, Onions require fairly fertile soil and consistent moisture. They are very poor competitors with weeds, so must be regularly weeded.

HARVEST: Onions can be harvested at any stage. Those that are meant for storage should be allowed to fully mature, at which point most of the tops will fall over. At this point they can be pulled and allowed to fully dry in a dark, warm place. When fully dry, the roots and tops can be clipped

VARIETIES: Ambition—100 days—A red skin ‘French’ shallot with very large, flavorful bulbs. Like most shallots, these store exceptionally long.

Saffron—100 days—We’re trying this yellow ‘Dutch’ style shallot as a replacement for ‘Bonilla’ which hasn’t been consistently available.

Candy—110 days—This sweet yellow Onion can grow quite large, and is a dependable producer. Not as sweet as Vidalia or Bermuda onions, Candy is still quite palatable raw and stores considerably better than most sweet onions.

Copra—104 days—This beautiful yellow onion is unsurpassed in its hardness and storage qualities. Onions are medium to large in size. Although storage onions are typically quite pungent raw, they actually have higher sugars than ‘sweet’ onions and are much better for any cooked dish.

Gold Coin—80 days—Small to medium size ‘Cipollini’ onion, with attractive bronze skin and flattened shape. Very sweet when cooked, excels in stews and roasts. Store quite well.

Purplette—60 days—Miniature red onion varies in size from pearl to golf ball or slightly larger. Flavor is mild and suitable for raw eating. Not suitable for long storage, best used as a ‘fresh’ onion.

Red Torpedo—90 days—Italian heirloom variety, variously known as ‘torpedo’ or ‘bottle’ onion. Flavor is mild and appearance is very appealing. Size varies, but most are small enough to grill whole or shish kebab. Not suitable for storage.

Mercury—104 days—We’re trying this variety because of the mercurial availability of our old favorite, ‘Mars’.

Varsity—110 days—Yellow storage onion that can get quite large—1½ lbs. or more. Bulbs are hard and store exceptionally well.

OREGANO—3” pots @ \$3

SPACING: 12”

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Easy to grow, spreads readily. Dig, divide and replant clumps every several years.

HARVEST: Cut leaves as needed—flavor is most intense just before flowers open. Oregano remains flavorful when dried.

PARSLEY—3” pots @ \$2

SPACING: 12” or more.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June and beyond by special request.

CULTURAL NOTES: Parsley planted too early has a tendency to bolt—later plantings after the weather has warmed can be continuously harvested until heavy freezes arrive in the fall. For best sustained production, plants should be fertilized a couple times during the season.

HARVEST: Pick or clip individual leaves at their base. Plants that have begun to flower will not revert to producing leaves even if the flower stalks are kept cut.

VARIETIES: Krausa—Highly recommended curly variety. Curly parsley is commonly used for garnish, but is also easier to finely mince than flat leaf parsley. Less prone to bolting than flat leaf parsley, but less productive overall.

Gigante D’Italia—Large growing Italian flat leaf variety. Productive, flavorful and nutritious. Many people consider flat leaf parsley more flavorful than curly types.

PEPPERS—3” pots @ \$2.50

SPACING: We plant peppers 18” apart in rows about 2 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May through Mid-June

CULTURAL NOTES: Peppers are tender (i.e. not cold or frost hardy), so planting should be delayed until the weather warms. Chance early plantings should be protected with row covers, and can be kept covered until the weather warms or the plants become too large. University research indicates that peppers which are planted deeply—with a portion of the stem under ground—tend to produce earlier with higher yields. All peppers start out an immature color (can be green, purple, white or cream colored depending on variety) then eventually ripen to their mature color (can be red, yellow, orange or chocolate brown depending on variety). Peppers are subject to a few pests and several fungal diseases, all of which are quite difficult to control. Avoid planting in soil that can become waterlogged for extended periods and avoid watering late in the day when leaves won’t have a chance to dry before nightfall, or use drip irrigation.

HARVEST: Immature (green, purple or white) fruit can be picked as soon as it has grown large and firm to the touch. Pepper plants are brittle, so it is often advisable to use clippers to harvest the fruit. If mature (red, orange, yellow, brown) fruit is desired, the peppers need to hang on the plant for several additional weeks, during which time there is an increased chance of pest and disease problems. Peppers can be picked as they begin to change color and allowed to fully ripen in the safety of your kitchen—put them in paper bags to slow down moisture loss.

SWEET VARIETIES:

Bianca—69 days—Medium-large bell that goes from ivory to red. Productive and very attractive.

Carmen—60 days—Italian ‘bull’s horn’ type, about 6” long by 2 ½” wide with thinner walls than a bell pepper. This pepper is quite prolific and early, and we have had more success harvesting ripe red fruit from ‘bull’s horn’ types (which we call ‘fryers’) than the more common bells.

Diablo—70 days—New to us last year. Another ‘bull’s horn’ type for comparison with ‘Carmen’ and ‘Giant Marconi’.

Ringo—70 days—New to us last year. Hybrid version of ‘Corno di Toro Giallo’, a bull’s horn pepper that ripens a bright yellow color.

Early Sunstation—69 days—This bell pepper produces an abundance of large fruit that ripen from green to bright yellow. For some reason, we have found that it is usually easier to carry yellow-fruited varieties to maturity than red or orange-fruited varieties.

Fat ‘n’ Sassy—65 days—Very abundant and early yields of extra-large fruit that goes from green to red. One of our most reliable varieties.

Flavorburst—62 days—New bell variety is reported to ripen from light green to golden yellow exceptionally early with continuous yield. Performed admirably in 2009.

Giant Marconi—63 days—Another ‘fryer’ type, longer and with thinner walls than ‘Carmen’, but equally productive and dependable. Fruit can grow up to 10” long.

Karisma—71—New green to red bell is reported to have excellent fruit quality with sustained high yields of large fruit and considerable disease resistance.

Lantern—62 days—Big European-type elongated bell pepper, ripens red.

Pritavit—75 days—New to us last year, this is a hybrid ‘cheese pimiento’ type with flattened, tomato-shaped fruit and exceptionally thick flesh ideal for roasting.

Socrates—64 days—Earliest large, blocky bell to ripen red. Good disease resistance.

Revolution—72 days—This variety boasts the most complete disease resistance package available while yielding abundant, firm, large bell peppers that ripen from green to red.

Tequila—72 days—Quite early and productive, this is the best variety of purple bell peppers we have found. Medium to large fruit start out a beautiful lavender color and eventually ripen red.

Valencia—72 days—Bears large blocky bells that go from green to orange—ripe peppers are quite stunning as well as sweet.

Yummy—73 days—New miniature bell variety, ripens orange. Reported to have good continuous production.

Zsa Zsa—65 days—New to us last year. Hybrid Hungarian sweet pepper was prolific, early to ripen red, extremely sweet and quite beautiful.

HOT VARIETIES

Andy—85 days—Korean ‘cayenne’ type pepper is quite hot and dries very successfully. High yielding with long (7-8”) slender fruit.

Astry—70 days—Has performed well for us, despite being continually grazed by deer. We’re giving it another chance. Only moderately spicy.

Anaheim 118—75 days—Second year trial—we were suitably impressed last season with this ‘Anaheim’ (more properly known as New Mexican) type—mild, long green chiles that are wonderful for grilling or roasting. Ripe peppers of this type are used to make the ‘ristras’ commonly seen in New Mexico, although they are too thick-walled to dry successfully in our climate. These peppers will turn from green to red if allowed to ripen.

El Jefe—67 days—Hybrid jalapeno with big plants that become loaded with large fruit that is more tolerant to cracking than other varieties. Fruit is quite spicy. Jalapenos will ripen red if allowed to hang on the plant. The trendy Chipotle is actually a smoked ripe Jalapeno.

Habanero—100 days (ripe)—Although there are contenders, Habanero is generally conceded to be the hottest pepper. Bushy plants become positively loaded with fruit that ripens from a light green to orange. Habaneros are considered to be a distinct species from other peppers, and—if you can get past the heat—have a unique fruity flavor.

Holy Mole—80 days—New in 2008. The first hybrid variety of the ‘Pasilla’ type pepper, bearing long (up to 10”) slender peppers that turn from a dark green (at which stage they are known as ‘Chilaca’) to brown. Provide little or no heat—they are commonly used dried as a component of Mole sauces. This variety has proven itself to be far more productive than traditional OP varieties.

Kung Pao—85 days—Very large plants become covered in small, 4 ½” long, slender cayenne-type peppers that turn from green to red. Peppers are quite hot, and are thin walled enough to air dry successfully.

Poinsettia—90 days—These striking plants are ornamental enough for the flower garden, bearing upright clusters of 3-inch long peppers that ripen from green to bright red—pretty enough to put in a vase, or hang them stems upside down at the end of the season for a winter’s supply of summer’s heat. Very spicy.

Sahuaro—70 days—New ‘Anaheim’ type pepper with mild heat, large fruit size, and early maturity.

San Ardo—75 days—New to us in 2008, this ‘poblano/ancho’ performed admirably with good yields of large, heart shaped, moderately pungent fruit.

Serrano del Sol—75 days—This relatively new hybrid version of the traditional ‘Serrano’ is more vigorous than the original, somewhat earlier, with much larger fruit. Plants become loaded with peppers with the appearance of small jalapenos. Fruit turns from green to red, but is most often used green. Hotter than a jalapeno, but not significantly.

Thai Hot—82 days—This charming miniature variety bears loads of tiny upturned fruit that ripen green to red. Very ornamental, but quite edible (and seriously hot). Peppers dry easily—the whole plant can be pulled and hung up to dry for winter use.

Tiburón—65 days—Probably the finest variety of ‘Ancho’ type chile, Tiburón bears heavy yields of green-black, large, heart shaped fruit that are best known for making ‘Chiles Rellenos’. Known as ‘Poblanos’ when they are green, they eventually ripen red and are commonly dried, when they are known as ‘Ancho’. Peppers are medium-hot—slightly tamer than a jalapeno.

Zavory—90 days—New variety with the fragrance and flavor of ‘habanero’ but without the heat.

PUMPKINS—4-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: We set plants 18” apart in rows 12 feet apart. The in row spacing is probably a bit close, and should be more like 2-3 feet, while the spacing between rows could be significantly tighter, maybe 6 feet.

AVAILABILITY: June. Availability is limited, so special orders are recommended.

CULTURAL NOTES: Related to Cucumbers and Melons, Pumpkins share some characteristics with these plants—they are tender (not tolerant to cold and frost), susceptible to many of the same pests and diseases, and are sensitive to root disturbance. In the past, most growers seeded Pumpkins (and related crops) directly, but more and more transplants are being used for the reasons given under Cucumbers. We produce our pumpkins exclusively from transplants. We don’t cover our Pumpkins because they occupy so much area, but home gardeners might find it advisable to keep the Cucumber Beetles at bay as long as possible—remember to remove the covers when the plants begin to flower.

HARVEST: Pumpkins can be harvested anytime they have begun to turn orange—they will continue to ripen off the vine if kept warm and dry. Pumpkins normally need to be cut from the vine (maintaining as much of the stem as possible). Early harvest is desirable in that the fruits spend less time exposed to potentially adverse weather and disease and pest pressure. Pumpkins, under ideal conditions of moderate humidity and 50 degrees, can last well into the winter.

VARIETIES: Baby Bear—105 days—Very uniform mini-Pumpkin are 1 ½-2 ½ lbs., flattened and ribbed, with long, slender ‘handles’. High yielding and eminently edible, Baby Bear is excellent for pies and has semi-hulless seeds ideal for roasting.

Baby Pam—105 days—Old variety widely considered to be best for pies. Avg. 4 lbs.

Mystic Plus—105 days—We’ve had good results from this Mildew tolerant pie pumpkin.

Weighs in at 6-8 lbs., has a nice, firmly attached handle, and grows on semi-bush vines.

Racer—85 days—Extremely early to ripen and, in our experience, quite dependable and productive. Fruit is rounded and typically weighs 12-16 lbs.

Tom Fox—110 days—New to us last year, open-pollinated type, 12-20 lbs.

Winter Luxury—100 days—This heirloom variety has unique white netting overlaying its light orange skin. Production of 7-8 lb. is good, but the claim to fame for this variety is its excellent eating quality—the smooth, tender flesh makes the most decadent pumpkin pie. Not a good keeper—plan to use them within a couple of months.

ROSEMARY—4” pots @ \$3.50, some larger plants available.

SPACING: Rosemary in this climate is most often grown in a container, although they can be set in the soil at least 8” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-August

CULTURAL NOTES: Rosemary plants are not hardy enough to survive the winter in our area, so growers often leave plants in containers, bringing them inside when the weather gets cold. Rosemary likes sun, well-drained, limey soil and thrives when it is frequently cut.

VARIETIES: Arp—We grow only this upright variety, the hardiest available. Will survive frosts, but cannot tolerate temperatures below about 20 degrees.

SAGE—3” pots @ \$3

SPACING: 12” or more.

AVAILABILITY: Late April-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: This hardy perennial thrives in a sunny, well-drained spot. Sage forms a relatively large plant, but can become straggly after a few seasons if not kept cut back. Sage doesn’t form clumps and therefore can’t be divided.

HARVEST: Cut newly formed leaves as they grow. Flowers are attractive and edible.

Sage dries quite successfully.

SAVORY, SUMMER—3” pots @ \$2.50

SPACING: About 8” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: This annual herb should be kept cut for best production. Thrives in full sun, can’t tolerate frost.

HARVEST: Dark green leaves have a peppery flavor—keep them cut as they grow for extended harvest. Summer savory dries well.

SAVORY, WINTER—3” pots @ \$3.50

SPACING: About 8” apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Perennial cousin of Summer Savory with similar requirements. Has a more pungent, peppery flavor and will overwinter successfully.

SQUASH, SUMMER—4- pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: 12-18” apart in rows about 5-6 feet apart.

AVAILABILITY: May-June, through August by special order.

CULTURAL NOTES: Similar in most respects to Cucumbers, Squash tends to be a little more resilient and easy to grow. Keep picked to encourage continued production and to avoid raising baseball bats.

HARVEST: We usually cut Zucchini types with small paring knives or clippers, while other types can be twisted off by hand. Squash grow very rapidly and should be harvested every 2-3 days to avoid oversized fruits. Squash can be picked quite small—we consider them ready when the flower detaches easily from the fruit.

VARIETIES: Green Eclipse—44 days—We have been favorably impressed with the yield and appearance of this dark green zucchini over the past few seasons.

Eight Ball—38 days—Hybrid version of heirloom ‘Ronde de Nice’, a rounded zucchini ideal for grilling or stuffing.

Gentry—43 days—Hybrid version of the old ‘Yellow Crookneck’—Necks are stronger and less curved for less breakage.

Ishtar—45 days—New to us in 2007, this squash is known as Cousa, or Lebanese Zucchini. Similar to Zucchini in appearance, but shorter, fatter and lighter green. Very productive and gaining in popularity.

Lazor—42 days—New yellow straightneck variety is supposed to be extremely early with fewer misshapen fruit during early pickings.

Multipik—50 days—Prototypical yellow straightneck squash, very reliable, productive and delicious.

Raven—48 days—The best ‘black’ zucchini we have found, with stunning, glossy black-green fruit. Production is good, but not as extended as some other varieties. Dark green fruit are richer in some anti-oxidants than lighter green zucchini.

Sebring—50 days—A superior variety of lemon yellow zucchini, much improved over the old standard Gold Rush.

Sunburst—52 days—Bright yellow Patty Pan type with large plants and excellent yields.

Zephyr—54 days—Unique bicolor straightneck squash with good yields and exceptional flavor. Fruit are yellow with a green tip.

Zucchini Elite—48 days—Very early, prolific and attractive, Elite is our main crop medium green Zucchini variety.

SQUASH, WINTER—4-pack inserts @ \$2.50

SPACING: We plant Winter Squash 18” apart in rows 12 feet apart, but most varieties do better with more space in the row (2-3 feet) but the rows could be considerably closer (4-6 feet).

AVAILABILITY: June. Availability is limited, so special orders are requested.

CULTURAL NOTES: Virtually identical to Pumpkins, which see.

HARVEST: Specific directions are given under the varietal descriptions. All Winter Squash can be stored for extended periods at temperatures around 50 degrees and moderate humidity.

VARIETIES: Blue Hubbard—100 days—Bears large blue bumpy fruit that is tapered on each end—averages 12-15lbs. Harvest when the stem becomes corky and brown.

Blue Magic—100 days—New to us last year—hybrid, scaled down version of ‘Blue Hubbard’.

Bonbon—95 days—A big improvement over long-time favorite Burgess Buttercup, Bonbon has higher yields, more consistent fruit size and appears more tolerant to disease. Quality is excellent. Harvest when stem becomes corky and brown. Flavor improves after several weeks of storage—can be stored for 4 months or more.

Bush Delicata—80 days—Compact version of Delicata, with shorter, fatter fruit. Not quite as sweet and fine-grained as the original, but this strain has resistance to powdery mildew. Harvest when the background color pales from light green to cream.

Butterboy—80 days—New to us last year, this butternut type is described as having the best interior color of any butternut with extra-sweet flavor.

Carnival—95 days—Very reliable producer of highly ornamental multi-colored acorn-type fruit. Good flavor and yield, moderate storage. Harvest when the background color loses its greenness.

Jarrahdale—100 days—Attractive slate-grey pumpkin shaped fruit with sweet thick orange flesh. Fruit average 6-10 lbs. and are heavy for their size. Harvest when the stem turns corky and brown. Unblemished specimens can keep for several months or more.

Honey Bear—85 days—New acorn variety from Johnny’s, combines small fruit size (1-1 1/4 lb), exceptional flavor and texture, and resistance to powdery mildew.

Marina di Chioggia—100 days—Italian specialty squash with an unusual appearance, somewhat like a large buttercup with blue-green color and covered with warts and bumps. Average 6-12 lbs. Can keep a long time. Harvest when the stem turns corky.

Metro—105 days—New butternut variety with smaller fruit (2 ½-3 ½ lbs.) than the standard ‘Waltham’ and resistance to Powdery Mildew. Harvest when fruit lose their greenish cast.

Musque de Provence—125 days—New to us last year, this French heirloom is sometimes known as ‘Fairytale Pumpkin’. Has a flattened pumpkin shape and a tan color like butternut. Harvest when it loses its green color.

Nutty Delica—95—For trial this season as we seek a productive Kabocha type squash.

Red Kuri—90 days—Japanese squash also known as Hokkaido Pumpkin. Bright orange fruit look like small Hubbard squash and weigh 4-7 lbs. Flesh is smooth and sweet.

Harvest when stem becomes corky and brown.

Rouge Vif D’etampes—115 days—Flattened scarlet-orange pumpkin shaped fruits weigh in at 8-20 lbs. and are sometimes known as ‘Cinderella Pumpkins’. Harvest when stem turns corky and brown.

Speckled Swan—120 days—Large ‘langenaria’ type gourd produces agreeably attractive fruit with a distinctly birdlike appearance. Fruit are not edible (except when very young) but can be dried to make birdhouses among other things. Harvest when the skin hardens.

Sunshine—95 days—These bright orange Kabocha-style fruits are borne abundantly on healthy compact vines. Fruit quality and storage is excellent. Harvest when stem becomes corky and brown.

Sweet Dumpling—100 days—Fruit have a shape similar to acorn but with the coloration of Delicata. Fruit size is smallish, about 4” diameter, with excellent quality—extremely sweet and tender. Reliable and prolific producer. Harvest when background coloration loses its greenish tinge.

T-133 Kabocha—88 days—Another contender in our search for a productive Kabocha squash.

Table Star—New to us last year, an Acorn type purported to have high sugars and creamy texture—exceptionally productive and resistant to Powdery Mildew.

Tiptop—90 days—Newer Acorn type with resistance to Powdery Mildew along with excellent eating quality and production.

Waltham—105 days—The classic butternut variety (developed right here in MA). Best storage of all winter squash. Harvest when fruit lose any trace of green.

Zeppelin—100 days—Excellent Delicata variety with unsurpassed eating quality. Fruit are fairly uniform at a little over a pound. Production is moderate. Harvest when the background color loses its greenish tint and becomes cream-colored.

TARRAGON, FRENCH—4” pots @ \$4

Spacing: 12” more or less.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: This perennial herb is prized for its delicate anise flavor, welcome in sauces, salad dressing, and with poultry and seafood. French Tarragon does not reproduce from seed, so we take cuttings from our ‘mother’ plants to make new plants. Established plants can also be divided to expand plantings. Tarragon thrives in full sun and prefers well-drained soil of moderate fertility.

THYME—3” pots @ \$3.50

SPACING: 12” more or less.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Spreading perennial herb needs to be kept cut for best sustained production. Requires full sun and adequate drainage. Clumps should be dug, divided and replanted every several years.

HARVEST: Clip leaves as need—cut back heavily occasionally to encourage new growth. Thyme dries quite well, and the flavor is welcome in many dishes. When asked what she considered the one indispensable herb, Martha Stewart (after briefly considering parsley) chose thyme and I concur.

TOMATILLOS/HUSK TOMATOES—3” pots @ \$2.50

SPACING: We plant tomatillos 18” apart in rows 6 ft. apart. The large plants benefit from staking.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: We plant our tomatillos alongside our tomatoes, treating them identically. See notes under tomatoes.

HARVEST: Harvest when fruits completely fill their papery husks but before they begin to turn yellow at which point they lose their refreshing tartness and turn insipidly sweet.

VARIETY: Cisneros—75 days—There isn't much variation among varieties of tomatillos, but this one distinguishes itself by the enormous size of its fruits.

Goldie—75 days—sprawling, vigorous plants bear prolific quantities of small, cherry-sized fruit inside a papery husk. AKA Cape Gooseberry.

TOMATOES—4" pots @ \$3

SPACING: We plant our tomatoes 18" apart in rows 6 ft. apart and stake them.

AVAILABILITY: May-June.

CULTURAL NOTES: Tomatoes are prone to several fungal diseases—staking them minimizes foliar contact with the soil and promotes air movement, allowing the leaves to dry more quickly after a rain. Tomatoes have been shown to respond well to deep planting, setting a 2-3" section of the stem under the soil surface. Certain varieties (plum tomatoes, for example) are especially prone to a condition known as blossom end rot, where the bottom of the tomato turns black—this condition is caused by a calcium deficiency, brought on either by a soil deficiency or a temporary deficiency in the plant caused by inconsistent watering. To avoid this condition, plants should not be subject to wide fluctuations in soil moisture levels and can be lightly limed or fertilized with bone meal, both of which contain ample calcium.

HARVEST: Although tomatoes can be allowed to completely ripen on the vine, they are less likely to crack if they are picked slightly underripe—known as the 'breaker' stage--and allowed to fully ripen on the safety of your kitchen counter. We find that this practice sacrifices little (if any) flavor and allows us to successfully produce sound specimens of even the most fragile and crack-prone heirloom varieties. Only fruit that has begun to change color should be picked—dead green fruit will not ripen off the vine (unless you gas them with ethylene, like the abominations you find in the supermarket).

VARIETIES: We are happy to offer our gardening customers the full range of tomatoes we grow on the farm, plus several additional varieties that are especially suitable for container growing.

In the interest of orderliness, we divide our tomatoes into three broad categories:

The first group is the **hybrids**— hybrid varieties can be considered to be the progeny of arranged marriages, with the goal of producing plants and fruit with specific, desirable, and predictable characteristics, usually involving fruit size, shape, yield, or disease resistance. Hybrids tend to have the highest yields, and although they have often been developed without sufficient consideration for flavor, those that we offer are all very good, some exceptional. Because of the way the parent lines are crossed, hybrid tomatoes that are saved for their seed will not produce progeny with the same characteristics as the hybrid.

The second group is the **heirloom and open-pollinated varieties**—before hybridization became common, plant breeders used the slower process of selecting fruit from plants with desirable traits, growing out the seed, then reselecting over the course of many plant generations to develop stable varieties with desirable characteristics. Because

the development of most heirloom varieties predates the commodification of produce, characteristics such as flavor, color and yield were emphasized rather than shelf-life, perfect appearance or 'pack out'. This is the most diverse group, with tomatoes of every shape, size and color (even some with several colors). They are almost all quite delicious, though their flavors range from sweet and mild to quite tart (a little something for everybody). Because seed from these varieties will produce fruit like the original fruit, seed is quite easy to save, therefore inexpensive, therefore of little interest to commercial breeders. For this reason, there is little research on which varieties exhibit specific resistance to tomato diseases, but our observations are that they tend to fare as well as the hybrids during most seasons. They do, however, generally produce very soft, delicate fruit that can crack quite easily in adverse weather. In addition, heirloom varieties (with some exceptions) usually have lower yields than their hybrid relatives. Nonetheless, their aesthetic appeal, both in terms of flavor and beauty, are unexcelled.

The third group—**cherry and plum tomatoes**—is an arbitrary one, containing as it does both hybrid and heirloom members. The cherry tomatoes are usually highly productive, often grow on very large plants, and usually have a sweeter, more intense flavor than larger tomatoes. Plum tomatoes are usually medium sized, with a low moisture content, making them well-suited to rapidly boil down into sauce or paste, but less so for fresh eating. Plum tomato plants are usually relatively small.

Individual varieties within these groups are listed alphabetically, with an explanation of salient characteristics like flavor, fruit size and color, and plant habit. The following abbreviations are used:

Ind.—indeterminate, meaning that the plant can continue to grow and produce fruit over the entire season. Plants often grow quite large and require staking

Det.—determinate, meaning that the plant will grow to a certain size, produce its crop, and then, mission accomplished, go into decline. These are best grown using short stakes, but can be allowed to sprawl.

Comp. Ind.—compact indeterminate, can continuously fruit, but the plants are compact and manageable. See descriptions for details.

HYBRIDS

BETTER BOY: Ind. This is a long-time favorite of home gardeners, and with good reason. Big plants bear lots of round red, flavorful fruit. Very reliable under a variety of conditions. 75 days.

BETTER BUSH: Comp. Ind. Sturdy, self-supporting plants stay compact but bear delicious full-size red fruit all season. Developed especially to grow in containers. 68 days.

BHN826: Det. New to us last year, this commercial variety with the unassuming name is described as having exceptionally flavorful fruit borne on robust plants. 72 days.

BHN 871: Det. New to us this year, this variety is described as a 'Golden Girl' type with larger fruit, better disease resistance, with the same great flavor. 74 days.

BIG BEEF: Ind. This versatile variety bears loads of big, red beefsteak-style fruit with excellent flavor. Plants are vigorous and grow quite large, continuing to produce good-size fruit throughout the season. 73 days.

BLACK VELVET: Ind. New ‘hybrid heirloom’ similar to ‘Black Prince’, but with better production, fewer culls and firmer fruit.

BOLSENO: Ind. New to us last year—typical Italian variety: flattened globe shape with green shoulders and exceptional fresh flavor. 75 days.

CELEBRITY: Det. Though it is considered a determinate, Celebrity is an energetic grower and needs support. Prolific producer of consistently large, beautiful fruit with exceptional taste. 72 days.

EARLY GIRL: Ind. Reliably producing the first ripe tomato of the season, Early Girl has more to offer than precocity—although fruit size falls off over the course of the season, the sharp, real tomato flavor remains and many devotees seek it out by name even when the big mainseason tomatoes appear. 52 days.

FABULOUS: Det. In its second year of trial, Fabulous is described as an 8-12 oz. tomato with good looks, good yields and flavor to match its name. 77 days.

FIRST LIGHT: Ind. New last year—Johnny’s staff rated this one as ‘one of the best they ever tasted’.

JET STAR: Ind. Long time standard for home gardeners and roadside stands, Jet Star produces big fruit early on relatively compact vines, with a sweet, low-acid flavor—for safety’s sake, be sure to add lemon juice if you ‘can’ your bumper crop. 72 days.

LEMON BOY: Ind. An eloquent refutation of the common slanders against yellow tomatoes—they’re flavorless, insipid—Lemon Boy packs a lot of flavor (dare I say zesty?) with good looks to boot. Although prone to cracking and discoloration in adverse weather, Lemon Boy can potentially produce enormous crops of beautiful, clear yellow, delicious fruit. 72 days.

MARTIN: Ind. New to us last year. Like Bolseno, this is an Italian fresh-eating variety reported to have outstanding flavor—harvest when shoulders are still green. 76 days.

RED ZEBRA: Ind. New to us last year. New hybrid ‘heirloom’ is a nice visual complement to ‘Green Zebra’ with red, orange and yellow striping, similar size and good flavor. 75 days.

VALLEY GIRL: Det. One of our favorites—Valley Girl produces medium size bright red globes early in the season, setting fruit under adverse conditions, and continues to produce over a longer season than many determinate varieties.

HEIRLOOM/OPEN-POLLINATED

AMISH PASTE: Ind. Well-known ‘oxheart’ type which we characterize as an ‘heirloom plum’. Good yields of ½ lb. fruit which, like typical plum tomatoes, have low moisture content (though not as dry as most modern plums) but with more intense flavor. One of the best for sauce and salsa. 85 days.

ARKANSAS TRAVELER: Ind. A late season producer of big, beautiful pink-red globes—high yields even in extreme heat. Very juicy and flavorful. 85 days.

AUNT RUBY’S GERMAN GREEN: Ind. These big beefsteaks ripen from a pale green color to a deep amber-green color with a blush of pink on the blossom-end. In our opinion, these beautiful tomatoes are among the best fresh-eating tomatoes around. Fruit is fragile and the ripeness is somewhat difficult to judge—pick when the blossom end begins to soften, and allow to ripen another day or two on the counter. 80 days.

BLACK KRIM: Ind. Very productive and relatively early, this Russian heirloom bears large, brownish-red tomatoes with exceptionally rich flavor. Prone to cracking and deformities—it is best to harvest underripe and allow to fully ripen in the safety of the kitchen. 75 days.

BLACK PRINCE: Ind. More mahogany-red than black, Black Prince boasts flavor to match its deep, rich color. 3-5 oz globes are borne in abundance on relatively controlled vines. Weather stress (too wet, too dry) can cause cracking and splitting particularly in fruit that is almost ripe—pick while still firm if adverse weather threatens. 74 days.

BLUE BEECH: Ind. Like Amish Paste, we call this one an ‘heirloom plum’. Produces lots of elongated, deep red fruit late in the season. Fruit is meaty, with little juice and few seeds—makes outstanding sauce, but unlike typical plums the flavor is good enough for fresh eating. 90 days.

BRANDYWINE: Ind. With its unusual ‘potato-leaf’ foliage, huge pink-red beefsteak fruit, and incomparable flavor, Brandywine has become the poster boy for the resurgence of heirloom tomatoes. Its reputation for flavor is well-deserved, but the big plants often yield somewhat sparsely, often over a long period. 78 days.

CHEROKEE PURPLE: Ind. but with relatively short vines. This Tennessee heirloom has become increasingly popular over the last few years, rivaling Brandywine’s claim as ‘best tasting tomato’. Cherokee is earlier and more productive than Brandywine, with the purplish-brown coloration characteristic of ‘black’ tomatoes. The fruit is large, more globe-shaped than most ‘beefsteak’ types, and very fragile—harvest promptly to avoid excessive cracking. 72 days.

COSMONAUT VOLKOV: Ind. This variety hails from Russia, that treasure trove of heirloom tomatoes. The fruit is conventional in appearance—bright red 8-12 oz globes—but the flavor is outstandingly sweet and juicy, among the best we’ve tried. Expect good yields fairly early in the season. 65 days.

GARDEN PEACH: Ind. This is a most unusual tomato, and unlike many, the variety name is appropriate. Borne abundantly, the 2-3 oz. lemon yellow fruit have a pink blush, and (believe it or not) they are fuzzy like a peach. The flavor is very sweet with a slight tang. Fruit remain serviceable for a long time after they are picked—they can keep up to a couple months under the right conditions. Known in France as *Peche Jaune*. 71 days.

GOLDIE: Ind. Truly exceptional—from its phenomenal yields of (generally) defect-free jumbo fruit, to its unique ‘Creamsicle’ orange color, to its velvety texture and rich flavor, Goldie is one of our favorite tomatoes. 90 days.

GOLDEN QUEEN: Ind. Recommended to us by a customer, we’re trying this venerable variety again this year. Pale yellow with a pink blush, reported to have incomparable flavor. 75 days.

GREEN ZEBRA: Ind. Not a true heirloom, this increasingly popular tomato was developed using traditional breeding methods and is a stable strain (unlike hybrids). Big plants yield bumper crops of small to medium sized striped fruit that ripen to an amber-green color, often with a blush of pink on the blossom end. Sweet and tart, the flavor is outstanding, and the beautiful emerald-green flesh graces any dish. Prone to blossom-end rot (calcium deficiency brought on by inconsistent water supply) and cracking in wet weather, Green Zebra usually comes through with bountiful yields. 77 days.

LILLIAN’S YELLOW HEIRLOOM: Ind. This rare pale-yellow beefsteak tomato is esteemed among heirloom aficionados for its amazing flavor—late, somewhat sparse and

often irregularly shaped, Lillian's incomparable texture and complex flavor overcome her drawbacks. 88 days.

OPALKA: Ind. Polish heirloom with characteristics similar to 'Blue Beech', which may be in short supply this year. 82 days.

PINEAPPLE: Ind. Although there are many bicolor heirlooms available, Pineapple remains our favorite. The fruits are often enormous, mostly yellow, with a red starburst pattern on the blossom end that extends to the inside, resulting in stunning red and yellow marbled flesh. The flavor is mild and sweet with a complex fruitiness. 85 days.

PIRIFORM: Ind. New to us this year—another Italian variety, this one pear-shaped and full-flavored. Harvest when shoulders are still green. 78 days.

RUSSIAN 117: Ind. Large plants with wispy foliage produce enormous, bright red 'oxheart' type fruit. More prolific than most of its kind, the fruit is extremely meaty and juicy with few seeds, and the flavor is outstanding. 90 days.

RUTGERS: Ind. Before Big Boy and Better Boy and their hybrid kin took over the home garden, Rutgers reigned supreme. The fruit is medium size, borne in abundance, and justly renowned for its old-time tomato flavor—high acid makes it great for canning as well as cooking and fresh eating. 75 days.

CHERRIES AND PLUMS

BETTER BUSH CHERRY: Comp. Ind. Hybrid. Compact, stocky plants are self-supporting, especially suitable for growing in containers. Fruit are red, 1-3 oz. and quite delicious. Healthy, disease resistant plants produce all season long. 68 days.

BLACK CHERRY: Ind. Heirloom. Vigorous plants produce heavy crops of round cherry-size tomatoes with the classic 'black' tomato color and flavor. Unique and irresistible alone or in combination with the rest of the cherry tomato spectrum. 65 days.

FOLLIA: Ind. Hybrid. New hybrid version of 'San Marzano'—the quintessential paste tomato. 73 days.

GOLD NUGGET: Det. OP Deep yellow fruit are borne on extremely compact plants and are exceptionally early to ripen. 56 days.

GOLDEN SWEET: Ind. Hybrid. A yellow 'grape' tomato, we were amazed by this variety's productivity and flavor when we grew it for the first time last year. Very crack-resistant, fruit hold their quality for a long time. 60 days.

JULIET: Ind. Hybrid. The big sister of the original 'grape' tomato, Juliet shares many of Santa's qualities, but in a larger package. Crisp and flavorful, Juliet is very productive and one of the most reliable and resilient producers under a wide range of conditions. The size is perfect for eating out of hand, salads, drying and roasting. 60 days.

MARIANA: Det. Hybrid. New to us last year, reported to be a large plum-type tomato that has performed admirably in University trials. 74 days.

PLUM CRIMSON: Det. Hybrid. New to us last year, touted as a high yielding plum tomato with excellent size, uniformity, color, and a high lycopene content. 80 days.

SAN MARZANO 168: Det. Hybrid. This hybrid version of the classic Italian paste tomato boasts high yields of large fruit that quickly cooks down for the finest fresh tomato sauce. Not suited for eating raw. 78 days

SUGARY: Comp. Ind. Hybrid. Another pink-fruited ‘grape’ type, Sugary bears larger fruit than Rosalita on more compact, manageable plants. Good yields and fantastic flavor won this variety the AAS award in 2005. 60 days.

SUNGOLD: Ind. Hybrid. This one wins our vote for the best tomato variety ever developed—big plants bear loads and loads of sunny orange, bite-sized fruit with very intense sweet and tangy flavor. Sungold is usually the first tomato to ripen, and they keep coming for a long time. Their only drawback is a tendency to split after a heavy rain—a common characteristic of fruit with high levels of sugar. 57 days..

SWEET BABY GIRL: Comp. Ind. Hybrid. New hybrid cherry tomato varieties seem to come and go without impressing us enough to replace our long-time favorites, but this one has a lot to recommend it: much earlier than the old standard Super Sweet 100, less prone to cracking, with slightly larger fruit on average. In addition, the vines are much more compact and manageable and the flavor is excellent. 65 days.

TAMI-G: Ind. Hybrid. AKA Agriset, this is the best replacement we could find for the original ‘grape’ tomato, Santa, which was removed from general commerce so that one conglomerate could monopolize production. We think Tami-G is equal to Santa in most ways and superior in others, with a slightly larger fruit size, same crunchy texture and intense flavor. Plants are healthy and trouble-free, and fruit is consistently unblemished, abundant and absolutely refuses to crack (unlike most cherry tomatoes). 75 days.

YELLOW MINI: Ind. Hybrid. We have been favorably (flavorably?) impressed by this variety for several years—when the flavor and yields of ‘Sungold’ are in decline, these beauties remain abundant and delicious. Nice lemon yellow color, perfect size for snacking. 57 days.

ZEBRA CHERRY: Det. Hybrid. New this year, reported to be generous-size cherry tomatoes with red and yellow zebra streaked skin and outstanding flavor. 80 days.