



Veggies on Wheels



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"Veggies on Wheels" (edited by Wolfgang W.) generally appears around the beginning of every month.

Dear Pfenning's Food Box Community, May Flowers...

As we had assumed beginning April, the ample rainfall we have been seeing at the end of the month has manifestly been contributing to those much-coveted May flowers. Any warm and dry stretches were eagerly taken advantage of by growers and farmers all around to plough their land and prepare it for sowing and planting activities – which is precisely what began last week and is now under way throughout our growing area, as weather permits. Of course, anyone with a greenhouse, especially a heated one, – such as Organic Oasis (see a *glimpse of their greens on the right*), from where we get a lot of early greens – has a head start of several weeks. You will have been seeing and enjoying their fresh greens, such as [Spinach](#) or [Mixed Salad Greens](#), especially in your [Local Baskets](#). Still, all you Local Basket lovers must have been challenged by the abundant selection of long-storage root vegetables that have been in the offering for the past couple of months. How welcoming are those fresh, local greens now, such as Vernon's [Rainbow Chard](#) and [Green Kale](#), or Organic Oasis's [Spinach](#) and [Mixed Lettuce](#).



You likely know that you can see a selection of some of our long-standing and trusted suppliers on our [About Us](#) page (*scroll to the bottom of the page*). Once the first fruits of current growing endeavours will be ready to harvest, we will be seeing many of them on a more regular basis throughout the summer when we make our weekly pick-up run to their farms and operations.



Things Growing at Golden Acres Farm

One of our most faithful and well-experienced growers is surely **Golden Acres Farm**, whom you probably recognize from the many fabulous products we get from Dianne to enrich our Baskets ([Carrots](#), [Garlic](#) and greens in the summer), especially the [Local Basket](#). Dianne – friends with Almut for some 4 decades – is happy to share her wisdom, as she recently did on [FB](#), suggesting a witty method to start your own seedlings. With the example of [Zucchini](#)s, she shows us how you can start them in a simple cardboard basket – which may supply you with some inspiration for your own planting efforts. Once the seedlings are big enough, just plant the entire basket out That way the roots are not disturbed, there is more starting soil for a good start in life, and the basket is finally a substitute for peat pots. How ingenious is that! Well, at least for us small-time farmers.

Going Bonkers Over Bananas

On a more exotic note, we heard from some of our customers that they have been running into the challenge of either too green or too yellow [Bananas](#). We do try to send out Bananas in those Baskets that include them ([Blenders](#), [Fruits](#) and [Smoothies](#)) that are “just right,” so neither too green nor too yellow. However, what a challenge!

For the most part, our Bananas arrive here more on the green side, which is desirable, as you can considerably influence the ripening process (as we will explain in a moment). On their journey up north to us from where they are produced – have a look at this interesting video, “[Harvesting and Packing Bananas](#),” on our [Videos](#) page – Bananas are subjected to a gas called ethylene which is naturally produced not only by Bananas themselves, but by other plants, actually quite few, such as [Apples](#), [Bananas](#), [Tomatoes](#), [Avocados](#), Melons, [Pears](#), [Squash](#), and stone fruits such as Mangoes. Ethylene serves to ripen these fruits faster – so take care to NOT store these plants with those that are sensitive to ethylene. On a side note: you may see a bit of plastic wrapped around the cut stem of your Banana bunches. This is put there on purpose to stop the ethylene naturally produced by the Bananas from emanating and inducing the ripening process too quickly.

By the way, you can find four very informative links to sites expanding on how to best store your fruits and veggies on our [Links](#) page.

You can control how to keep Yellow Bananas from ripening further and getting too brown, and how to make Green Bananas ripen faster.



How to Keep Bananas from Turning Brown?

If you have received quite yellow Bananas with your Basket, check out [this site](#) for some tips on how to slow down their ripening process. Essentially, they suggest to keep them aerated, cool (even in the fridge) and separate from other brown, bruised or very ripe Bananas and ethylene-producing produce as mentioned above. Even super ripe Bananas are still good for baking, such as for Banana Bread, and for Smoothies or Banana Ice Cream.



How to Ripen Green Bananas?



If you run into the opposite problem of receiving Bananas that are too green, you can speed up the ripening process – as [this site](#) also suggests – by storing them together in a bunch with other ethylene-producing plants (see above), especially Apples and Tomatoes, in a paper or even plastic bag in a very warm spot for a few days or as long as it takes (and remove any plastic wrapped around the stems so the ethylene can escape). As we have seen many times in our own experimentation, they cannot help but ripen, in spite of themselves!

Milk Orders now by TUESDAY and Eby Manor Cream Update

Finally, always something new to look into! Due to some changes in the logistics of our Milk suppliers, we now need to request our customers to kindly let us know about their [Milk](#) orders or any changes to Standing **Milk Orders by TUESDAY 6 p.m.** if possible. Or give us a call early on Wednesday morning at the Store at **(519) 725-4282**. Please, also remember that Yogurt and Kefir jar deposits are now \$2.00, just as for glass milk bottles! What's more, some last-minute news from **Eby Manor**, the Guernsey Milk people: Due to lack of demand, Eby Manor **10% Cream** will no longer be available in 1L bottles, but **only 500ml bottles** – news which may impose a tad of melancholy upon some of you coffee and Guernsey cream lovers out there.

**Nonetheless: Have a Merry Month of May,
Wolfgang**