

Local Roots Community Supported Agriculture

Box Contents for July 12th & 13th

1 bunch tender white turnips (again)
½# shelling peas
2 kohlrabi
1 bunch Rainbow chard
1 bunch curly kale
1 head butter lettuce (green or speckly)
1 bunch green garlic
½# salad greens
1 or 2 zucchini

Large box additions

broccoli
¼# arugula
extra ½ # peas

Local Roots Farm News

Familiar Flavors and Improvisational Cooking

I've heard from several of you that you appreciate the recipes we've been sending this year. I'm not much of a recipe cook myself, so even the "recipes" that we include in the newsletter are a little loosey-goosey, I know. In any case, I am trying to accomplish two things with our recipes and suggestions: 1) provide simple recipes that will help you tackle your big pile of veggies each week, and 2) encourage you to do more improvisational cooking, whether it's substituting a new vegetable in a dish you already cook or inventing something totally new.

One CSA member remarked recently on the large amount of radishes saying that she since she couldn't curry them, they were beginning to accumulate in her fridge. Thinking about that, I realized a couple things. First, I don't make curry. Second, there are some basic families of flavors that we are all familiar with, each of which matches better with some vegetables than others. In our household, we do a lot of Mediterranean-flavored cooking, with occasional forays into Asian, Mexican, and attempts at Ethiopian dishes. Our meals tend to center around what we have on hand and which veggies are planted closest to the house. Last night I picked a few handfuls of shelling peas and we pulled a few green garlic to decide whether they were ready to harvest. For dinner, I made a version of pasta carbonara with a couple eggs, some bacon ends we traded for at the market, minced green garlic, and the freshly shelled peas. As side dishes, we added some roasted broccoli and a radicchio salad with caramelized onions. Whenever there's cilantro in the field, we have a lot of burrito nights. Refried beans (formerly homemade, out of a can since Felix came along), brown rice, rehydrated sweet peppers, and whatever veggies are at hand – we'll sauté kale or chard and add it to our burritos, shred cabbage, kohlrabi, and/or radishes for a quick slaw, chop some crispy lettuce, roast potatoes or turnips, and build huge piles of vegetable on our tortillas.

Some vegetables take well to all sorts of different cuisines, while others seem meant to match with a specific set of seasonings. I love bok choy, but I use it in a very limited number of recipes, almost all involving sesame oil and soy sauce. Cabbage, on the other hand, is found in recipes from all over the world, from Germany to India. If you have a recipe that you love that calls for leeks, try green garlic instead. Substitute chard for spinach, or turnips in place of potatoes. Add some toasted fennel seeds to your sautéed kale. It will probably be delicious!

Ideas and info for this week's produce

Shelling peas – Fresh shelling peas are a revelation, and only available for a short time in the early summer. Shell and eat fresh, or briefly steam/blanch. I mixed these with diced turnips and carrots the other night and simmered them in a little oil and water until tender. It looked kind of fancy and Felix liked it.

Green Garlic – This is the garlic equivalent of green onions, meaning that you can eat the whole thing. The cloves have not fully formed yet, and there's no outer peel to remove. The green stem is tender and mildly garlicky. Use in place of garlic in any recipe. Store in the fridge, like green onions.

Curly Green Kale – This is the best kale for making kale chips in the oven. Strip the leaves from the stems, and tear them into medium size pieces. Toss with a little oil and salt, moosh around with your hands a little to soften the leaves, spread on a cookie sheet, then roast under the broiler for about 2-3 minutes. The outer edges will turn brown and crispy when done.

Kohlrabi – This recipe is courtesy of our biggest kohlrabi fan, a German woman who buys several bunches each week at the Broadway farmers market. She brought us a sample of this last week, along with the translated recipe. I highly recommend you try it.

Recipe – Kohlrabi Spread

1 lb kohlrabi
4 oz cream cheese
4 Tbsp broth
2 Tbsp lemon juice
1 medium onion
1 clove garlic
2 ½ oz walnuts or hazelnuts
2 tsp chives
½ tsp peanut oil
salt & pepper to taste

Peel kohlrabi and cut in small cubes. Put in pot with broth and lemon juice, bring to boil, reduce heat, and simmer until soft. Let cool, then transfer to blender with chopped onion, chopped garlic, nuts, and cream cheese. Puree until smooth, then add chopped chives, salt, pepper and oil, mix, and put in fridge.