



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Spring 2016

Harvest list is online

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Kohlrabi

Kohlrabi is a distinctive-looking vegetable with a swollen, nearly spherical, Sputnik-like shape, pale green and purple-tinged, marked by points where the leaf stems were attached.



Its taste and texture are similar to those of a broccoli stem or cabbage heart, but milder and sweeter.

The leaves of the kohlrabi can be eaten but must be cooked. They have a flavor similar to kale. But it is the kohlrabi bulb that kohlrabi is really grown for. The bulb can be eaten either raw or cooked. It can be prepared as crudité, grated, used in gratins, soups, stews or purées, sautéed or steamed.

Kohlrabi must be peeled to remove the fibrous layer just under the skin. It can be peeled before or after cooking.

Peel kohlrabi, cut it into 1/4" slices or sticks and sauté in butter or olive oil, or boil and mash like potatoes. You can also grate it and add it to salads and slaws.

Crooked Sky Farms and Sleeping Frog Farms

In the early 2000's, Farmer Frank from Crooked Sky Farms pioneered the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model in Arizona. Through it he inspired, encouraged and helped a whole generation of farmers in our state. He supported Tucson CSA when it started with only 15 members in 2004, and he continues to supply fresh, organic produce to our members.

For a while now, we've been thinking about how to maintain our relationship with Farmer Frank while also supporting another local farm. Over the past few years, we've developed connections with the folks at Sleeping Frog Farms and we feel that the time has come to incorporate them into the Tucson CSA. They started on a small plot of land in a neighborhood in northwest Tucson and right away were attracted to the CSA model. But it was not until they moved to their current location in Cascabel (north of Benson) that their operation really took off. Sara - yes, our very own Sara, worked at Sleeping Frog Farms as a part time harvester in 2010 and 2011 and saw the introduction of beehives for pollination and honey, the construction of three huge greenhouses, the expansion of many fields and improvements to their storage areas. Several young people from the Tucson community have learned about growing food in Southern Arizona by working on the farm and many have continued their work in our community. Sleeping Frog Farms supplies local restaurants, schools and markets and they are excited to be working with the Tucson CSA to supply our Wednesday members with their produce.

We are lucky to be able to work with two farms committed to growing a diversity of produce for us. There are some differences in the seasonal climates of the fields farmed by Crooked Sky and Sleeping Frog Farms. So the Tuesday and Wednesday produce shares, while often overlapping, will also show seasonal variations. Generally, summer crops will start earlier and last longer at Crooked Sky Farms.

Next week, Wednesday members will get their first delivery of Sleeping Frog Farms produce. Tuesday and Wednesday shares should be fairly similar in the first few weeks of April as both farms still have robust crops of kale, turnips, chard, lettuce and other greens and root vegetables. Our farmers at both locations grow many of the same crops and varieties, based on their success in growing the vegetables in our region and feedback from customers. We can expect items like Hakurei turnips and other specialty spring vegetables like fennel, to be included in both Tuesday and Wednesday shares.

With our warm spring weather, the very first squash are already being harvested at Crooked Sky Farms in Phoenix. Tuesday members are likely to see both squash and cucumbers in their shares before the end of the month. Since Sleeping Frog Farms, which is located at a higher elevation along the San Pedro river valley, has much cooler nighttime temperatures, the transition to summer crops will likely come a few weeks later. They will still send plenty of variety in the Wednesday shares, and members can expect to see leafy crops, including spinach, tatsoi, mizuna and kale as well as a wide variety of carrots and other root vegetables.

We are looking forward to a good fruit year with both farms, so Tuesday and Wednesday members should see plenty of stone fruit in their shares this summer. Crooked Sky Farms will be harvesting apricots, plums and peaches from trees planted in the past few years in their orchards in Duncan. Sleeping Frog Farms has a long-running relationship with Aravaipa Orchards, where they get stone fruit during the season (check out their awesome apricot preserves for sale at the CSA). We are likely to see some apples and pears on both days later in the summer, as well.

Kohl-slaw

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Also works great with turnips instead of kohlrabi. Because of its crisp, crunchy texture, kohlrabi is great served raw. If you want to practice your knife skills, julienne the kohlrabi, otherwise, it is fine grated.

3 small to medium kohlrabi bulbs, peeled and grated
1 small clove garlic, minced
2 tablespoons mayo
1 heaping teaspoon Dijon mustard
About 2 tablespoons orange juice, plus the zest from one orange
1 handful arugula, chopped into thin ribbons
1 tablespoon poppy seeds (optional)

Whisk together the garlic, mayo, mustard and orange juice. Pour mixture over kohlrabi and toss to coat. Add arugula just before serving to prevent wilting.

Stir Fried Pak (Bok) Choi

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

2 teaspoons oil (canola or peanut)
Few drops toasted sesame oil
1 quarter-sized piece fresh ginger, cut into julienne sticks
1 clove fresh garlic peeled and cut into thin slices or julienne sticks
1 bunch or bag Pak Choi leaves, or Pak Choi on the stem base, cut lengthwise into four to six pieces each
1 teaspoon rice wine vinegar
Drizzle of tamari or soy sauce, to taste

Heat oils over medium heat in a 10-inch frying pan or wok until it is very hot, about 2-3 minutes. Put in ginger, garlic and Pak Choi and stir vigorously with a wooden spoon or paddle to circulate the greens. When the greens are cooked through but the stalks are still crispy, add the rice wine vinegar and the tamari or soy sauce. Cook for one more minute and serve.

Quick Pickled Turnips

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

The Japanese Hakurei turnips that we get in our shares are mild and delicious. Lightly pickled, with some of their greens, they also make a great side dish. Adjust the seasoning to your taste.

1 bunch Hakurei turnips, cleaned and thinly sliced, plus a few turnip greens, roughly chopped
1 pinch of salt
1 tablespoon rice wine or apple cider vinegar
1 teaspoon soy sauce
1 pinch sugar
Freshly grated ginger
Red chile flakes
Sesame seeds, for garnish

Toss sliced turnips and greens with the salt and squeeze and toss gently. Combine rest of ingredients and massage those into turnips as well. Put turnips into a sealable bag and refrigerate for at least one hour before serving. Serve sprinkled with sesame seeds, if desired.

Pasta with Root Vegetables and their Greens in Mornay Sauce

Philippe, Tucson CSA

This is a beefed up macaroni and cheese, a hearty and comforting dish. For the greens, I usually use the tops of the root vegetables.

1 lb pack pasta (macaroni, elbow noodles, or penne)
1 lb turnips, cubed, thick-juliened (fries-size), or slice in coins (if small)
1 or 2 bunches greens (blanched for 3 minutes, drained, and roughly sliced in ribbons)
5 tablespoons butter (or oil)
3 cups grated cheese (typically a mix of Parmesan and Swiss but Cheddar works also)
4 tablespoons all purpose flour
4 cups milk
1/4 cup fresh dill (minced)

Optional

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
2 tablespoons mustard
Salt pepper

Boil pasta according to pack instructions. Sauté the turnips in one tablespoon butter for 10 minutes, until soft but still firm (al dente). Add salt and pepper. Set aside. Meanwhile make mornay sauce. In a saucepan, on medium heat, melt four tablespoons butter. Add flour. Stir until flour and butter are well mixed. Add milk a little bit at a time, stirring continuously and vigorously with a whisk to prevent clumping or sticking to the bottom, and bringing mixture to a light boil at regular interval. After all the milk has been added, add grated cheese, salt, pepper, nutmeg, mustard and dill. Stir until cheese has melted. Add some extra milk if necessary: the sauce should be thick but still fairly runny. In a large serving dish, gently and uniformly mix together pasta, greens, radishes. Pour Mornay sauce on top. Shake the dish a few times to make the sauce settle into the pasta. Serve as is or, if desired, pour into a 9 x 18 baking dish, sprinkle with some extra grated cheese on top and put under the broiler for five minutes or until the top is slightly browned.