



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Winter 2014

Harvest list is online

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Join us in the courtyard this week to celebrate our 10th anniversary! Music, pickling demos, drinks, and of course, a birthday cake, await you!

GREEN GARLIC

Farmer Frank had intended to send us green garlic last week, hence we featured it in last week's newsletter, but in the end the fields were too muddy after the rains for it to be harvested.

So, we are getting it this week! If you missed the green garlic article, you can find it in last week's newsletter (#427, available online).



BLACK SPANISH RADISHES

(Farm Update –As we were about to print this newsletter with no time to change it, we got an e-mail from the farm saying we would get carrots this week instead of black Spanish radishes. Once again, the farm has demonstrated that changes to the harvest based on conditions in the field is a part of CSA life. We're likely to get these radishes in the future, but we don't know when. We'll try to refer you to this article, always available online, when that happens.)



The black Spanish radish (*Raphanus sativus*) has, despite its rough demeanor, something very stylish about it: when thinly sliced, the contrast of its translucent white flesh with its thin black skin gives it something of a designer look!

The black radish is a big radish, with a sometimes round, sometimes elongated shape, a course black skin and a spicy white flesh. In France it is known as "le gros noir d'hiver," or "the big black one of winter," where it has been documented as early as the mid-16th century. In the 19th century the black radish was a common garden variety in England and France, and in the US it was the mainstay radish of American farmers. It was primarily grown for winter storage. In the spring, after sweeter roots such as carrots, turnips, and celeriac had been eaten up, the black radish would be ready and waiting. Its strong mustardy flavor would be gone and it would taste clean, crisp, and mild.

Use black radishes as you would regular radishes but be aware that they are spicier: when fresh, black radishes can be almost as pungent as horseradish, and are firm and rather dry.

If served raw, which we recommend, they are excellent simply grated into a salad. They also makes a wonderful slaw when grated with salt, pepper, lime or lemon juice and thinly sliced scallions. The lime or lemon juice neutralizes the black radish's natural spiciness.

In many parts of Russia and in Russian (particularly Jewish) households throughout the world, black radishes are enjoyed as an appetizer, but rarely eaten straight. They are either coarsely shredded or sliced thin, salted to mellow the bite, then rinsed, drained, and bound with sour cream or chicken fat. This unlikely and delicious duo is usually offered with pumpernickel or chewy sour rye bread (try it with Barrio Bread's Multi-Grain Boule, or Peasant Levain).

If they're too spicy for you, give them a preliminary salting to tame the bite and harshness. Using about 1 teaspoon of salt per 1-1/4 cups chopped, shredded, sliced, or julienned radish, toss the two together to mix well. Cover the surface of the vegetable (not the bowl) closely with plastic, then overlap and seal the edges of the container (the smell is fierce). Set a weight on top of the radish and let stand for an hour or longer. Rinse, drain, and pat dry.

When cooked, black radishes taste like firm, rather strong turnips. Sliced, diced, or shredded, they add a piquancy to soups, stews, braises, or stir-fries. Or chop fine to add to meatball or meatloaf mixtures.

HOW TO DEAL WITH LETTUCE ABUNDANCE!

If you are a seasoned CSA member, you know what it's like: every so often, we get a particular vegetable week after week after week, even months sometimes (remember the cucumbers of last year!) But I don't think we've ever had such a plentiful supply of lettuce. We thought all the lettuce might have bolted in the fields by now, but they haven't quite yet.

If you are a seasoned CSA member, you also know that the best way to deal with CSA abundance is to embrace it. And when you think about it, few vegetables are as easy to embrace as lettuce. All it takes is to think about lettuce on a different level. For example, check out the back page for two easy lettuce recipes that go beyond the ubiquitous green side salad: turn your lettuce into a soup, or substitute it for rice or pasta. The soup is easy: just follow the recipe. The rice/pasta substitution is more a method than a recipe: instead of serving sautéed vegetables with rice or pasta, toss them with thinly shredded lettuce dressed with a salad dressing. It's still a salad, but now it's a tasty main course instead of a side dish.

Radish Potato Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Radishes make a great foil for a creamy potato salad. If you have the time and inclination, make the aioli. If not, use store-bought mayonnaise and add the garlic to it.

1 pound red potatoes, cooked and roughly chopped
4-5 green onions, chopped
½ bunch radishes, sliced or grated
2 hard boiled eggs, chopped
About ½ cup aioli

Stir together all ingredients. For the best flavor, let the salad sit in the fridge for an hour or so.

Making the aioli

Use it with a potato salad or as a dip for steamed artichokes or raw vegetables. Also makes a good sandwich spread!

1 large egg yolk at room temperature
1 teaspoon Dijon-style mustard
Salt
2 to 3 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
¾ cup peanut oil or mild olive oil (or half of each)
4 to 6 garlic cloves, finely chopped

Whisk the egg yolk in a small bowl until light and smooth, then stir in the mustard, a pinch of salt, and the lemon juice. Whisk in the oil until the egg and oil emulsify (thicken). Stir in garlic. Keep covered and refrigerated.

Lettuce and Green Garlic Soup - new

Philippe Waterinckx, Tucson CSA

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 onion, chopped
1 whole stalk green garlic, finely chopped (use a whole head of garlic if you don't have green garlic)
1-2 teaspoons ground cumin
2-3 heads lettuce, chopped
Optional: any other chopped greens if you have them, such as kale, Swiss chard, Asian greens or mustard greens
4 medium potatoes, cubed
2 quarts vegetable or chicken stock
Salt and black pepper to taste
Crème fraiche or sour cream
Grated Parmesan for garnish

Heat olive oil over medium heat in a large pot. Brown the onion. Add garlic and cumin and sauté for 1 minute. Add lettuce, potatoes and stock. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Blend in blender or with an immersion blender. Add salt and pepper.

Serve in individual bowls. Add a dollop of cream and sprinkle with grated Parmesan.

Swiss Chard, Mushrooms and Pork Belly - new

Philippe Waterinckx, Tucson CSA

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 bunch Swiss chard, chopped
1 onion, chopped
¼ cup dry quinoa
1 cup dry mushrooms
½ lb pork belly, cut in small cubes
½ tablespoon brown sugar
1 cup water
Salt and black pepper
Grated Parmesan

Heat oil on medium heat in large pot. Add chopped onions, diced pork belly, and sugar. Cover and braise for 30 minutes or until slightly browned. Note: if you don't have pork belly, used chopped bacon, omit the sugar, and only cook for 5 minutes until bacon begins to brown.

Add Swiss chard, dry mushroom (shiitake mushrooms work well in this recipe), quinoa, and 1 cup of water. Stir together, cover, and cook on medium heat for 20 minutes. Stir occasionally.

Sprinkle with grated Parmesan before serving.

Shredded Lettuce and Sautéed Veggies – new

Philippe Waterinckx, Tucson CSA

This is more a method than a recipe and it is basically a way to replace starchy sides with lettuce: instead of serving a main course of sautéed veggies with rice, potatoes or pasta, serve it on a bed of dressed lettuce, or simply toss it with dressed lettuce. It makes for delicious lukewarm savory salad dishes that are low in carbs and calories.

Chop 2 heads of lettuce fairly finely. Add to a bowl and toss with 4 tablespoons of salad dressing of your choice. Add some sunflower seeds or chopped nuts (walnuts, pecans, peanuts, etc.)

In a bit olive oil, sauté any vegetables of your choice (potatoes, cauliflower, turnips, beets, carrots, broccoli, etc.) with a chopped onion. Add any seasoning of your choice, including salt and pepper. Cover and cook until tender. When cooked, toss with the dressed lettuce and serve.

Note: if you are using cauliflower or broccoli, a nice extra is to add ½ cup of shredded cheddar at the end of the sautéing process and let it melt on the veggies, before adding to the lettuce.