



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 269 ~ December 13, 2010 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Winter 2010 - Week 3 of 11

Harvest list is online

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our online recipe archive*



CSA Winter Break is Next!

Remember that there will be no pickups during the last two weeks in December, that is on Tuesdays December 21 and 28, and on Wednesdays December 22 and 29.

That's when Farmer Frank and the Crooked Sky Farms crew, and of course the CSA crew as well, all take a well-deserved annual break.

Pickup days will resume after the New Year on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 4 and 5.



Newsletter editor

Philippe Waterinckx

RADISHES

The French breakfast radish is a spring radish. It is milder and more tender than the round radishes you generally get at the store, which are winter radishes and tend to be more pungent. As with any radish, you can serve radishes raw as part of hors d'oeuvres or as a complement to salads.

Whenever radishes show up at the CSA, the trading baskets fill up with them rapidly. Now, with so many end-of-year parties going on at the moment, these radishes can come in really handy. They're fast, easy, delicious and very portable, and you can use them to make a radish dip! Just taste it and you will be won over. Guaranteed!

Radish Dip

1 bunch radishes, sliced in coins
1 bunch green onions, chopped
1 32-ounce tub Greek yogurt
Salt and ground black pepper to taste

Just mix it all together. Be generous with the black pepper. Serve with sliced bread or pita bread.

PURPLE TOP TURNIPS (*Brassica rapa*)

The most common type of turnip is mostly white-skinned apart from the upper part, which protrudes above the ground and is purple, red, or greenish wherever it has received sunlight. This above-ground part develops from stem tissue, but is fused with the root. The interior flesh is entirely white. The leaves grow directly from the above-ground shoulder of the root, with little or no visible crown or neck (as found in rutabagas).

Turnip leaves are sometimes eaten as "turnip greens" and they resemble mustard greens in flavor. Turnip greens are a common side dish in southeastern US cooking, primarily during late fall and winter. Smaller leaves are preferred; however, any bitter taste of larger leaves can be reduced by pouring off the water from initial boiling and replacing it with fresh water. Varieties specifically grown for the leaves resemble mustard greens more than those grown for the roots, with small or no storage roots. Varieties of *Brassica rapa* that have been developed only for use as leaves are called Chinese cabbage.

If you believe turnips are not your friends, try one or more of the three recipes featured on the back page.

MUSTARD GREENS (*Brassica juncea*)

The leaves, the seeds, and the stem of the mustard plant are edible. The plant appears in some form in African, Italian, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, and soul food cuisine. The leaves are used in African cooking, and leaves, seeds, and stems are used in Indian cuisine, where a famous dish called 'saag' (mustard greens) is prepared. The mustard made from the seeds is called brown mustard.

Brassica juncea is more pungent than the closely-related *Brassica oleracea* greens (kale, cabbage, collard greens, et cetera) and is frequently mixed with these milder greens in a dish of "mixed greens." As with other greens in soul food cooking, mustard greens are generally flavored by being cooked for a long period with ham hocks or other pork products.

Mustard Saag

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

The strong flavor of mustard greens calls for equally strong seasoning. The chile, garlic and ginger in this recipe are assertive enough to stand up to the pungent greens. If you have found from past experience that you don't care for mustard greens, try blanching them in boiling water for about one minute before you use them. Wring out the excess water and proceed as usual with the recipe. This is a great trick for any strong flavored greens. If you like, you can add a bit of yogurt to this finished dish. Serve the saag with rice and lentils for a complete meal.

2 bunches mustard greens, washed and finely chopped
½ green chile (or to taste), finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, mashed
1 inch ginger, grated and mashed with garlic
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
2 teaspoons oil and/or butter

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add cumin seeds and stir for about 20 seconds, then add chiles, garlic and ginger paste. Stir quickly for another 20 seconds then add mustard greens. Stir to coat with oil and spices. Cover, reduce heat to medium low, and cook for 5-10 minutes, checking occasionally to make sure you don't need to add water to prevent burning. When greens are completely wilted, add salt and pepper to taste and serve.

Mustard Greens and Pork Casserole

Philippe, Tucson CSA

Strong and/or bitter greens are tasty when cooked with pork. The fat in the pork seems take the bite out of the greens and mellow out their flavor.

½ pound ground pork or ¼ pound bacon (sliced)
1 onion, chopped
2 potatoes, cubed
1 bunch mustard greens or endive, coarsely chopped
¼ teaspoon thyme (or other herb)
Salt and pepper to taste

Sauté meat, potatoes and onion in a skillet. If using sausage, break it up as you brown it. When meat is brown or rendered, add greens and thyme. Cover and simmer for 45 minutes or until potatoes are tender, stirring occasionally. Add 1/4 cup water or more if the mixture seems dry. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Turnips Baked in Dijon Mustard

Maggie Newman, Tucson CSA

5 or 6 small to medium turnips peeled and sliced (about ½ inch thick)

¼ cup softened butter
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
Cracked black pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350°. Peel and slice turnips. Mix mustard and butter, spread on turnips. Place turnips in single layer in a lightly oiled, shallow baking dish (8×8) and sprinkle with black pepper. Bake until tender, at least 20 minutes for young turnips; more for older ones.

Curried Turnips

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Haven't tried curried turnips before? Give this recipe a try. Curry spices are also delicious sprinkled over roasted turnips or rutabagas, as well! And the curry spices, cumin, coriander, turmeric and ginger are all powerful digestive aides, for those who find turnips hard to digest.

1 bunch turnips with greens, cleaned, roots diced and greens roughly chopped
1 small onion
1 clove garlic
About 1 tablespoon freshly grated ginger
1 tablespoon good curry powder
¼ cup canned, chopped tomatoes
Oil
Fresh chopped cilantro, for garnish

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add onions and cook until beginning to brown. Smash garlic and ginger into a paste and add to skillet, then add curry powder. Cook stirring well, for one minute then add turnips and tomatoes and about ¼ cup of water. Cover and cook until turnips are tender. Stir in greens and cook until wilted. Season to taste with salt and garnish with fresh chopped cilantro.

Amish Turnips

Philippe, Tucson CSA. Adapted from Phoenix CSA

2 medium to large turnips, or 4-5 smaller turnips
2 cups bread crumbs
2 tablespoons sugar
Salt to taste
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups milk
2 tablespoon butter

Scrub turnips and cut into chunks. Put the chunks in a large saucepan and cover with water. Add 1 teaspoon of the salt. Bring to a boil; reduce heat, cover, and simmer for about 25 to 30 minutes or until tender. Drain and let dry in a colander or in the pan with the top ajar. Mix with all remaining ingredients and only half of the bread crumbs. Place in greased casserole. Cover with the rest of the crumbs and bake 45 minutes at 350°. Turnip haters like this dish.