



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Winter 2010/2011 - Week 10 of 11

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Rutabagas

The rutabaga originated as a cross between the cabbage and the turnip. The roots are prepared for food in a variety of ways, and its leaves can also be eaten as a leafy vegetable.

"Rutabaga" is the common north American term for the plant. It comes from the Swedish word Rotabagge, meaning simply "root bag". "Swede" (from Swedish turnip) is the preferred term used in much of England. In the U.S., the plant is also known as "Swedish turnip" or "yellow turnip".

Tips

Mash a boiled rutabaga or two into your next batch of mashed potatoes. Not only will you get a beautiful golden color, your guests will wonder where the delicious, interesting taste comes from. Keep it a mystery and don't tell them.

Try boiled or steamed rutabagas with mustard butter. (For a simple mustard butter, combine 1/4 c. soft butter with 2 to 3 tsp. Dijon mustard, one minced garlic clove, and some finely chopped parsley.)

You can generally substitute rutabagas for turnips, although you might need to cook them a bit longer.

The best way to cook a rutabaga is to roast it. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. After peeling your rutabaga, cut it into bite size pieces, rub the pieces with olive oil, season it with salt and black pepper, then roast it for about 45 minutes to an hour in the middle rack of your oven and turn it once. And while you're doing that, you might as well roast some carrots, potatoes, or any other root vegetables.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are rolling in. In a very few cases, members have made small mistakes while signing up, so we urge you to read all instructions and information on the screen as you work through the online subscription process.

We regret that the price for produce shares has gone up by just one dollar per week as the result of a price increase from Farmer Frank. In the past, the Tucson CSA has paid Frank less per share than his other CSA's in Flagstaff and Phoenix, despite the fact that we're the farthest away. This was simply historical, the result of the price we started at with him. With this price change, all CSA's supplied by Farmer Frank are now paying the same price. He's been asking for this increase for some time now to equalize his prices, and in fairness to Frank, we felt we could no longer continue to say no.

UPDATED DIET GUIDELINES

Earlier this month the Obama Administration released the updated federal dietary guidelines, recommending that we all eat more fish, fruits and vegetables and less sugar, fat and salt.

Updated every five years, the guidelines are developed by the departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services and after a review of both scientific literature and extensive public comments.

Though most of us never read the guidelines, they have several significant impacts. The kinds of food served in public schools, foods obtainable for those who use food stamps, as well as the information offered on food packaging are all influenced by the guidelines.

The new guidelines are a direct response to the growing rate of obesity in America, and for the first time stress the importance of eating less.

Another major recommendation is for people to reduce their salt intake. Americans consume on average 3,400 milligrams of sodium each day, much of which is found in processed foods, increasing their risk for high blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes.

The guidelines suggest no more than a teaspoon of salt a day, or 2,300 milligrams of sodium, for average Americans. For people over 51 years of age, African Americans, and those with high blood pressure, diabetes or chronic kidney disease, that recommendation is lower--no more than 1,500 milligrams.

The Washington Post summarized the other key guidelines as follows:

- *In general, avoid "oversized" portions.*
- *Drink water instead of beverages containing sugar.*
- *Eat more fruits and vegetables. (Half the food on your plate should be fruits and vegetables.)*
- *Consume less than 300 milligrams of cholesterol each day.*
- *Alcohol should be consumed only in moderation, which means up to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men.*
- *Consume more fat-free or low-fat dairy products, such as low-fat milk, yogurt and cheese.*
- *Consume more seafood and replace some meat and poultry with seafood. Breast-feeding women should consume 8 to 12 ounces of seafood per week from a variety of seafood. But they should limit intake of white tuna to 6 ounces per week because of its high mercury content and eat no tilefish, shark, swordfish and king mackerel for the same reason.*

Easy Minestrone Soup

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This soup is perfect for winter vegetables. Rutabagas give the soup a nice sweet flavor, but you can use potatoes or turnips, too. Almost any greens will do nicely in here, but remember they will shrink a lot. One whole bunch isn't too much. And remember that different greens will add different textures, so try adding a few varieties.

3-4 medium rutabagas, peeled and diced
1-2 bunches greens, cleaned and chopped
2 carrots, diced
1 sweet yellow onion, diced
3 cloves garlic or ½ bunch green garlic
1 tablespoon tomato paste
1 can diced tomatoes
1 can beans, drained
1 large handful small pasta
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon thyme
1-2 tablespoons oil
Salt and pepper to taste

In a large saucepan, sauté onion in oil over medium high heat until beginning to brown. Push onion to one side and add tomato paste to pan. Cook, stirring continuously, until paste has darkened a shade or two. Add garlic, herbs, canned tomatoes and about 2 cans of water. Stir in remaining veggies, except greens. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 15 minutes, until rutabaga is mostly tender. Add beans, pasta and greens and continue cooking until pasta is ready. Season to taste with salt and pepper and a drizzle of balsamic vinegar, if desired. Serve garnished with shredded parmesan and croutons.

Rutabaga Fries

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Like other root vegetables, rutabaga is great baked. Try making fries with your share and you won't be disappointed. These fries will be more like sweet potato fries, in that they will never get perfectly crisp like a potato. To help them crisp better, switch them to broil right when they are almost tender. That will give them more color and a better texture than just baking.

1 share rutabaga, peeled and cut into French fry strips
2 teaspoons oil
Salt and pepper
Curry powder, paprika, cayenne or any other spice mix you like

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Toss rutabaga with oil, salt and pepper and spices. Spread in a single layer on a baking sheet and place in oven. Cook about 10-20 minutes (depending on the thickness of your slice). Once almost tender, switch oven to broil and cook until nicely browned. Serve immediately.

Onion Mustard Crackers

Felice Gaia, Tucson CSA

Can't figure out what to do with your mustard greens? These crackers make a surprisingly wonderful, and healthy, snack. The mustard takes a back seat and is so mild. I hope a few members may get motivated and enjoy. This is a raw recipe that uses a food dehydrator, but you should be able to bake the crackers on a very low oven setting, if you need to.

1 bunch mustard greens, well cleaned
1/2 large yellow sweet onions
About 1 cup of almonds (preferably sprouted)
3/4 cup of golden flax seed
About 1 teaspoon turmeric, to taste
Himalayan salt to taste

Puree mustard greens in a blender. In large bowl add mustard greens to the flax seeds. The moisture from the greens will start to 'gel' with the flax seeds. Puree the onions and add them too. Allow to sit for at least one hour. Grind sprouted almonds in food processor. Add to mixture. Add seasonings with your clean loving hands so ingredients get mixed thoroughly. Let sit for another hour, until the mixture gets a firm pliable texture. Spread on dehydrator sheets to cracker thickness. Dry at 105 degrees for up to 18 hours. Or, spread on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake at 250, checking every 30 minutes or so until cracker is mostly dry and firm.

Beet and Walnut Pasta

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Simple ingredients make a satisfying dish in this easy recipe. Pre-roast the beets earlier in the week, when you have the oven on, then the dish will take only as long as the pasta boiling. Add the beet greens if you like, or save them for another dish. Try using cooked grains in place of the pasta.

1 bunch beets, roasted, peeled and diced
1 handful parsley, finely chopped
1 handful walnuts, roughly chopped
½ bunch green onion, thinly sliced
1 pound pasta, cooked
1-2 tablespoons olive oil
1-2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
Salt to taste

While pasta is cooking, prepare other ingredients. Drain al dente pasta and quickly toss with remaining ingredients. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve hot or cold.