

THIS WEEK'S HARVEST:

KOHLRABI

SWISS CHARD

BEETS

BEKHANA SAVOY

TURNIPS

IITOI ONIONS

RADISHES

CITRUS

ALSO AVAILABLE:

COFFEE

MOCHI

HONEY

OLIVE OIL

YUMMY SOAP

BREAD

BOOKS

EGGS

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WEEK OF MARCH 9TH, 2009

Courageous Heads Ascend

Some mornings I awake and can do nothing before first stepping outside to sniff at the new day. The crisp March wind carries bird songs and seasons my steaming tea with trills and jubilations.

Right now I am sitting outside watching courageous greens and yellows begin to poke out of a cold, but thawing, ground. My initial reaction to the bulbs' brave ascent was "Whoa, guys! Are you going to be okay? I'm worried about you!" (After writing this I learned that they're probably right on time...and can withstand pretty cold weather.) Just as last year many harvests were compromised by a late freeze—or were they just tricked by warmer than usual seasonal temperatures?—I don't want to see such hope and beauty massacred by prematurity this year.

Then my fear shifts and I begin to feel something more magnanimous toward these brave little noggins popping up. They are doing the only thing they can: Grow! And they can't wait until *I* think it's the right time for them to arrive, they must just follow their little flowery hearts...and most of the time they're right.

Nature acquiesces to the involuntary pull toward growth and change just like we humans do. There is no point resisting when the ground in which you live helps push you up and out with encouragement and cajoling! Just as our bodies enter new stages of development without asking us if we're ready or if it's okay, nature too must follow innate cycles and rhythms.

Even though they're just following their genetic paths, these bulbs are still brave in my eyes. They poke up and look around as if playing a game of hide-n-seek, joyfully announcing their presence with an ecstatic, "Ready or not! Here we come!" It takes some sort of strength to simmer quietly through the winter and make a grand entrance when the weather warms.

As spring makes herself known by chapping our noses and making the prospect of staying indoors difficult to fathom, may we be reminded to accept the myriad changes life brings with grace and compassion, patience and wisdom. From conception to birth to adolescence to mid-life to death, it takes courage to exist, strength to shine, and gump-tion to burst out of the ground with your yellow flowers blazing.

News

Please take a minute to accept the invitation to the Flag CSA google group. The group is necessary so that we can continue to send out emails with the anticipated harvest and the newsletter. Our gmail account was too big and would not allow us to send emails out to everyone. It's really easy and doesn't take long, thanks. Also, if you are planning to join us for the Farm visit, please contact Lauren at Iberutich@grandcanyontrust.org. Payments for the remaining half of the season are past due, if you owe we need the payments mailed in or brought this week. Spring season is quickly approaching and contracts will soon be available, if you are already a member you do not need to fill one out. Just talk to Karna at the pick up. Thanks for continuing to spread the word about Flagstaff CSA.

Kohlrabi: (*Brassica oleracea* var. *gongylodes*)

Full, full, full of vitamins A and C, potassium and calcium, very high in fiber and only 40 calories per cup! According to *Healing with Whole Foods*, kohlrabi “improves *qi* energy circulation and eliminates blood coagulations and stagnancies; reduces damp conditions in the body. Treats indigestion and blood sugar imbalances—used for hypoglycemia and diabetes; relieves painful or difficult urination; stops bleeding in the colon; reduces swelling of the scrotum; alleviates the effects of intoxication from drugs or alcohol. The juice is drunk as a remedy for nosebleed.” The uses are endless...

(*Healing with Whole Foods* and *From Asparagus to Zucchini*)

Swiss Chard: (*Beta vulgaris*)

“Indigenous to the Mediterranean, chard is often referred to as Swiss chard due to its initial description by a Swiss botanist in the 16th century. Swiss chard has gone through eras of popularity and disdain over time. Currently it is gaining recognition in this country as a flavorful yet mild leafy green that is nutritious and versatile. Chard will soon rival spinach as a culinary staple in everyone’s kitchen. The common beetroot evolved from the leafy Swiss chard. Chard is high in vitamins A, E, and C, and minerals like iron and calcium. Minerals are more readily absorbed from chard than they are from spinach, chard also contains no oxalic acid, an element present in spinach that tends to bind minerals and render them unavailable during digestion.”

(*From Asparagus to Zucchini*)

Beet: (*Beta vulgaris*)

“Ahhh, beets! The beetroot is perhaps the most controversial of the common garden vegetables. Many a palate has sworn off beet cookery, but the beet is making a comeback. For starters, beets are very versatile, lending themselves well to basic usage, both cooked and raw, and incorporation into recipes. Beets are high in nutrients, such as vitamins A and C, and also the carotenes. If you are using your beet greens, you also get generous portions of vitamin C, calcium, and iron. The joy of beets does not end there. Beets are tremendously long-storing, sweet and delicious, and colorful. Discover a favorite beet recipe for yourself and rediscover beets. If you are able to grow beets, you are in luck. They are available much of the year. In cooler climates, you may enjoy the first baby beets of the season mid- to late June. Beets are usually hearty in the garden through-

out the season, finishing their growth with the first frosts. After harvest, beets will retain their integrity for three months or longer if stored under optimum conditions.”

(*From Asparagus to Zucchini*)

Turnips: (*Brassica rapa* var. *rapifera*)

“Turnips are one of the most ancient and globally used vegetables. They’ve played an important role as a reliable storage crop in times and places where diets were seasonal by definition. Despite this, the turnip has often been ridiculed, falling in and out of favor in cultures and cuisines. In Europe, turnips were once the vegetable of choice to throw at someone as an insult, and an eligible English maiden would present her suitor with a turnip when rejecting him. Along these lines *un navet*, the term for turnip in French, can also mean ‘a play that flopped.’ Despite the centuries of abuse, the turnip is making a comeback; its virtues of storability, nutrition, and versatility are overcoming its comic reputation. The turnip’s simultaneous sharp and sweet flavor is loved by many. Turnips are a good source of vitamin C (particularly raw), potassium, and calcium. Turnip greens top the nutritional charts as an excellent source of vitamins A, C, and B complex, and the minerals potassium, magnesium, and calcium. Turnips are also one of the cruciferous vegetables believed to prevent cancer. As many of us ‘return to our roots’ and explore the importance of a local seasonal food supply, turnips and other root vegetables, commonly rejected in standard American fare, become important once again.”

(*From Asparagus to Zucchini*)

Radish: (*Raphanus sativus*)

The name radish is derived from the Latin word *radix*, meaning root. Radishes vary in size, shape, color, and pungency, from the classic cherry-size red (also popular in white and purple) to a variety of finger-size icicle radishes. There are large black winter radishes and a group of Asian varieties, the most popular of which is the long, thick Japanese daikon radish. The daikon radish accounts for 15% of the total vegetable production in Japan, where it’s eaten fresh, cooked, and pickled. U.S. consumers purchase more than 400 million pounds of radishes annually, mostly the familiar small red bunched varieties. Illustrations of radishes have been found on the inner walls of Egyptian pyramids dating from 2000 B.C. Egyptians grew them largely for radish seed oil, used before they acquired the olive. Radishes were popular throughout Europe during the Middle Ages, and the leaves were valued as much as the root. The radish root is 94 % water and claims

modest nutritional value, offering a smattering of minerals like potassium, phosphorus, magnesium, and iron. The greens, however, rank way up there with the other dark leafies as an excellent source of vitamins A, C, and the Bs. Radishes are beneficial as blood cleansers and digestive aids as well.”

(From Asparagus to Zucchini)

Onion: (*Allium cepa*)

There are 300 species of onion within the allium genus, 70 of which are native to North America. They vary in size, shape, taste, and smell, and include our familiar kitchen varieties, scallions, shallots, leeks, onions, and garlic. The bulb onion is the most universal seasoning used by humans. The onion probably originated in the Middle East and southwest Asia. References date back to 3200 B.C. The ancient Egyptians saw the concentric circles of the onion as a symbol of the universe and treated it as an object of worship. In North America, native peoples used wild onion long before European settlers arrived with cultivated varieties. The compact leaves of the onion form an edible bulb. This is the plant’s nutrient storage for the following years growth. Most onions are biennials and will go to seed in the spring if not harvested the preceding fall. Our common bulb onions are reddish purple, white, or yellow with a tan skin. The purple and white tend to be sweeter and milder, while the tan-skinned storage onion is the most pungent. Bulb onions are available summer through fall, and throughout the winter with proper storage. In spring and early summer we rely on chives, scallions, and bunching onions to satisfy our onion needs. Baby bulb onions and the first of the leeks follow soon thereafter. The pungency of the onion reflects the amount of sulfur in the soil in which it was grown. A compound within the onion turns into sulfuric acid when it comes into contact with the water in eyes, causing a cook painful tears. The many gifts of the onion are worth it. Besides flavor, the onion is touted for its various health and healing benefits. Join the global community and chop an onion.”

(From Asparagus to Zucchini)

Spring is like a perhaps hand
by e.e. cummings

III

Spring is like a perhaps hand
(which comes carefully
out of Nowhere)arranging
a window, into which people look(while
people stare
arranging and changing placing
carefully there a strange
thing and a known thing here) and

changing everything carefully

spring is like a perhaps
Hand in a window
(carefully to
and fro moving New and
Old things,while
people stare carefully
moving a perhaps
fraction of flower here placing
an inch of air there)and

without breaking anything.

(from www.poets.org)

A Call for Submissions!

Have you ever dreamed of seeing something you’ve written in print? Well, the CSA newsletter has a place for you. We’d love to have submissions of any and everything you’ve got; poetry, recipes, songs, essays, reflections, stories...anything goes!

Please, please, please contribute!

Contact me: macy.mouritsen@gmail.com

Low-Fat Kohlrabi Cakes with Yogurt Mint Sauce

Makes 4-6 servings

Sauce:

1/3 cup plain yogurt

3 Tbsp chopped fresh mint leaves

1 tsp. lime juice

Pinch of salt to taste

Kohlrabi Cakes:

4 kohlrabi bulbs

1/4 cup chopped green garlic*

2 eggs, beaten (egg replacer works too)

2 Tbsp dried bread crumbs

1 tsp. salt

1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes

Black pepper to taste

Oil for cooking

Ok, now mix the sauce ingredients in a bowl and chill at least 30 minutes before serving. Meanwhile, peel and shred kohlrabi; transfer to a mixing bowl by fistfuls, squeezing out excess moisture as you go. (This is very important.) Combine kohlrabi with garlic, eggs or substitute, bread crumbs, salt, red pepper flakes, and black pepper; stir until blended. Heat a large skillet and spray it generously with cooking spray or oil. Drop mixture by large spoonfuls into the hot pan and fry the cakes in batches until golden brown, 3-4 minutes per side. Drain on newspaper or paper towels. Serve hot with the yogurt mint sauce. This recipe is adapted from *The New Basics Cookbook* by Julee Rosso and Sheila Lukins. *If you don't have green garlic, use green onions and add a small clove of finely minced garlic.

(From Asparagus to Zucchini)

South-of-the-Border Kohlrabi Snacks

Servings vary.

Peeled kohlrabi

Fresh lime juice

Chili powder

Slice the kohlrabi into fairly thin rounds. Dip the lower third of each round into lime juice, then into chili powder.

(From Asparagus to Zucchini)

Beth's Grandmother's Pickled Beets

Makes 3 pints!

2 pounds beets

1 medium white onion, sliced

1 cup sugar

1 1/4 cups white vinegar

1 tsp. whole allspice

2 whole cloves

1 stick cinnamon

Boil or steam beets until tender. Reserve 1 cup of the cooking liquid, then drain beets and let them get cool enough to handle. Peel, slice, and pack beets and onions into 3 pint jars. Combine reserved liquid, sugar, vinegar, allspice, cloves, and cinnamon in a pot; bring to a simmer and cook 5 minutes. Strain, pour over beets. Cool, cover, and refrigerate for 24 hours.

(From Asparagus to Zucchini)

Spring Turnips with Greens and Raisins

Makes 3-4 servings

2 Tbsp butter, divided

2 tsp. olive oil

1 medium yellow onion, diced

1 bunch spring turnips and greens

About 1/2 cup raisins

Salt

12 oz. orzo or bow-tie pasta, cooked and cooled (optional)

Heat 1 Tbsp of the butter and all the oil in a large skillet over medium flame. Add onions and cook, stirring often, until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Meanwhile, wash turnips and trim the leaves from the root. Chop the roots into 1-inch-dice. Discard any yellowed leaves and roughly chop the nice ones. Once the onions are softened, add the turnip roots. Sprinkle with a bit of salt, stir, and cover. Cook until the turnips can be easily pierced with a knife, about 8 minutes; uncover, turn the heat up to medium high, and cook, stirring now and then, until turnips turn light brown at the edges. Add the chopped greens and raisins and cook until the greens are wilted and tender, about 3-4 more minutes. Add remaining 1 Tbsp of butter and salt to taste. Eat this as a side dish or toss it with cooked pasta for a main course.

(From Asparagus to Zucchini)