

Otter Hook Farms

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Traditional Family Farming



Week of June 30, 2009, Harvest Week 4

This week's share includes: Lettuce, Broccoli, Cabbage, Beets and Assorted Greens (Kale, Chard, Asian Greens)

Our plans for next week are Lettuce, Beets, Cabbage, Radishes and Green Beans

Frustrations – life is full of them, whether they be children who won't sleep, traffic that won't move, or rain that won't stop. I laugh when I hear Chris yell at the computer or the newspaper after reading something he doesn't like about the weather forecast or politics, because the thing that frustrates us is not an event itself, but our lack of control over it. We have been a bit frustrated with all this rain and a lack of drying days in between, but I'm pretty sure we'll never have a climate where the days are sunny and 75 degrees with a nice south wind blowing in just enough gentle rain for the evening to let the plants grow well. We'll have to be happy with the fact that we had lovely spring broccoli and cabbage this year, we have really nice fall brassicas growing, along with beautiful potatoes, tomatoes and eggplants. Many of our spring greens fell victim to flea beetles, and the lack of sun has slowed down the cucumbers, beans and summer squash, but they will all arrive in due time and with any luck they will flourish.

We had a lovely Sunday morning weeding carrots with Kristen – thanks for the help!!! There are just a few more fall crop transplanting days that should happen over the next couple of weeks, and then we'll just be concentrating on weeding, harvesting, cover cropping and adding soil amendments. We also have an intern starting next week, Mary Davis. She's a student at SUNY Binghamton and she's interested in learning more about organic farming, and specifically how organic farms maintain fertility. We are looking forward to working with her.

Cabbage has a long history of use both as a food and a medicine. It was developed from wild cabbage, a vegetable that was closer in appearance to collards and kale since it was composed of leaves that did not form a head. It was grown in Ancient Greek and Roman civilizations that held it in high regard as a general panacea capable of treating a host of health conditions. It is an excellent detoxifying vegetable, and promotes good gastrointestinal health. It is extremely high in vitamins C and K, but loses potency quickly after cutting, so try to prep as close to eating time as possible.

Some Easy Serving Ideas:

- Cabbage leaves are a great way to inspire leftovers. Spoon some leftovers such as rice salad or a vegetable mixture onto the center of a cabbage leaf and roll into a neat little package. Bake in medium heat oven until hot. Enjoy your easy and healthy version of stuffed cabbage, a traditional eastern European dish.
- Braise red cabbage with a chopped apple and red wine. This is a child-friendly dish, since the alcohol (but not the flavor or the flavonoids) will evaporate.
- Combine shredded red and white cabbage with fresh lemon juice, olive oil, and seasonings such as turmeric, cumin, coriander and black pepper to make coleslaw with an Indian twist.
- Sauté cabbage and onions and serve over cooked buckwheat for a hardy side dish.
- Use shredded raw cabbage as a garnish for sandwiches.

Braised Cabbage and Basmati/Lentil Pilaf

Braised Cabbage

2 T oil

1 c finely chopped onion

1 large garlic clove, minced

4 c thinly sliced green cabbage

1/2 c water

salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste

Pilaf:

2 c water

2/3 c white wine or chicken or vegetable stock

1-1/3 c uncooked basmati rice

1/2 c dried lentilles du Puy (french lentils) or brown lentils

1/2 t salt

1 t chopped fresh tarragon or 1/2 t dried tarragon

1 c cherry tomato halves

fresh-ground black pepper to taste

Saute onions in oil until they have softened. Add the garlic, cabbage, (1/2 c) water, salt and pepper and cook covered for 10 minutes, checking periodically to make sure that it doesn't scorch. Remove lid and cook additional 20 minutes over medium heat stirring every 5 minutes or so. While cabbage cooks, start the pilaf. Bring (2 cups) water to boil with the wine. Add the rice, lentils, tarragon, and salt. Cover and cook on low 20-25 minutes or until rice and lentils are tender. Stir the braised cabbage into the rice. Add the cherry tomatoes, season with salt and pepper and stir gently. Serve hot.