

Otter Hook Farms

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Traditional Family Farming



Week of June 23, 2009, Harvest Week 3

This week's share includes: Lettuce, Tat Soi, Broccoli, Radishes and Mint

Our plans for next week are Lettuce, Broccoli, Greens (Mustard or Chard), Radishes, Cabbage and Beets

We had expected and planned to have more Napa Cabbage this week, but their cores got slimy and rotted with all this wet weather. Hopefully this weather pattern will change soon; we need some sunshine! We are hoping to see the green beans and summer squash start to blossom over the next week or two to add some more variety to the share.

Our potatoes are starting to flower. Chris dug out a few to see how the potatoes are doing – they are forming nice little potatoes. He rushed on Friday and worked until dark to hill them again so that Saturday's rain wouldn't overwhelm the tiny babies. Then, in the rain on Saturday afternoon, Chris went over and dug more drainage ditches to divert more water out of that garden. In total, we've had over four inches of rain in the last week, but with different planting methods, we have been able to better handle this amount than we have in the past.

The cool weather has done wonders for the broccoli and cabbage. Even when we just gardened for ourselves we never had such nice broccoli heads as we do this year!

At home this week, we have waged war with the crows. It took us a couple of weeks to realize it, but they have been stealing our eggs! We let the chickens lay their eggs where they want to, so they have about six spots in the woods where we collect eggs. Several days passed where we would see a chicken sitting in her spot getting ready to lay, then go back ten minutes later and find no egg. Hmm. We paid more attention and saw the crows sweeping in. So, Chris turned vigilante and has been patrolling at laying time in his pajamas with a pellet gun. The hens are so used to going where they want to when they want to that we don't want to start confining them at laying time now.

We also had a large black bear at our house checking out the compost pile and the chickens and their grain a couple of nights ago. Exciting week!

The Best Broccoli

1 or 2 Heads of Broccoli cut into rather large florets
2-3 cloves garlic, peeled, but not chopped
3-4 Tbsp Olive Oil
Salt & Pepper to Taste
Zest and Juice of half a lemon
1/4 Cup Parmesan Cheese

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Make sure broccoli is completely dry before tossing with 2 or 3 Tbsp oil, garlic, and salt & pepper. Spread in one layer on a cookie sheet, and roast 20-25 minutes until crisp-tender and the tips are starting to brown. Take out of the oven, zest lemon over broccoli, squeeze out juice on it, toss in remaining Tbsp oil and the cheese. Enjoy!

Broccoli is known as a "wonder food" with claims of lowering your risk of cancer, heart disease, cataracts and bone loss, while boosting immune function. Not only does a cup of broccoli contain the RDA for vitamin C, it also fortifies your immune system with a hefty dose of beta-carotene, and small but useful amounts of zinc and selenium, two trace minerals that act as cofactors in numerous immune defensive actions.

To retain the maximum nutrient value, steam, sauté or roast. Try these simple serving ideas:

- Sprinkle lemon juice and sesame seeds over lightly steamed broccoli.
- Toss pasta with olive oil, pine nuts and sautéed broccoli florets. Add salt and pepper to taste.
- Purée cooked broccoli and cauliflower in broth, then combine with seasonings of your choice to make a simple, yet delicious, soup.
- Add broccoli florets and chopped stalks to omelets.

Power Food Broccoli Salad

Dressing

6 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 teaspoon fresh ginger
Salt to taste
Fresh pepper to taste (don't skip)

Salad

1 pound fresh broccoli, mostly crown, some stalk is ok
1 apple, cored and chopped
1/2 a sweet or red onion, diced very small (or 1/2 cup chopped green onion)

Additions or substitutions – toasted nuts, dried apricot, grapes, fresh blueberries

Whisk dressing ingredients in a large bowl. Peel any broccoli stems, then cut stems and crown into small bites. Drop into dressing as prepped, stirring to combine with each addition. Stir in apple, onion and other additions. Transfer to a serving dish.

May be refrigerated for several hours before serving but flavors are best eaten at room temperature.