



CSA Updates

Thank you for helping reuse the produce boxes throughout the season. You can either leave both of the boxes at the drop off and I will take care of disposal, or you can compost or throw the box yourself. Unfortunately waxed cardboard is not recyclable.

Look for an email coming soon with a short survey that will help me make improvements for next year. Thanks in advance for your participation in the survey.

I hope you decide to join me again next year! Let me know at any time if you would like a spot and I will remind you again next spring.

Storage share delivery will take place same place and time on Wednesday November 4th.

Sustainable Living this Winter

I hope that the CSA this year offered a fresh perspective on sustainable food and a window into local agriculture but what can we do now that the regular growing season is over? Fortunately there are still lots of ways to support our local economy this winter. Now that you will probably be spending more time in the produce section at the grocery store here are a few tips that I try to follow to minimize my footprint and enjoy quality and seasonal products throughout the year.

Buy organic when you can. Not only will this help you avoid pesticides and herbicides used in conventional produce but it will help encourage more farmers to grow organic and protect the planet. If you are on a tight budget and need to selectively buy organic, try and consult the Environmental Working Group's "Dirty Dozen" and "Clean 15" lists that show which produce is the most and least contaminated. Also try and compare prices—sometimes organic is only a few cents more.

Buy local or domestic. Winter is the time when I enjoy produce that I don't grow on my own and is not as locally available, especially fruit. Try and find the Michigan apples instead of the Washington ones to reduce the fuel inputs. Load up on citrus late winter. Prices are lower and

have better flavor, plus you can find interesting varieties like blood oranges and easy peel mandarins. Also, buying a Texas grapefruit or Florida mandarin has a much lower fuel input than an Argentinian plum or nectarine. It can be difficult to buy in state produce in Minnesota in the winter so look for specialty crop growers that might be easier to find in cold months like mushrooms, hydroponic greens or even frozen baked goods, pickles, or sauerkraut. **Ask your grocer or produce manager for more local produce options in the winter.** They do exist and should become more available as supply channels open up between winter growers and sellers.

Keep eating seasonally. We have been eating seasonal produce all summer—why stop now? It is time to accept that a winter tomato (even though bushel boy is Minnesota grown) will just not taste as good as one ripened in the August sun. Focus on items that store well like potatoes, onions, squash, apples and carrots. It will also be easier to find these locally (often from Iowa or Wisconsin later in the season). Delicious greens like spinach, arugula, kale, chard, and collard greens are also seasonal in the winter. An arugula salad with a blood orange vinaigrette and thin sliced red onion is a fresh winter treat, but watch for a variable supply of greens this winter as California still struggles with dry growing conditions.

Of course there are a lot of other ways you can have an impact before the New Year. Start some basil, parsley and cilantro indoors right now for a holiday herb supply. Dine at a farm to table restaurant. Create new ways to reduce, reuse, recycle at home. Find a favorite local soap maker at one of the many winter and craft markets around the cities. You can find winter produce at these markets too. Let me know other ideas you have for sustainable eating and living this winter.

Box 20 Items

Mixed Greens: This jumbo bag has kale, spinach and mixed greens. They can be prepared as one large salad or made in different recipes cooked or raw.

Carrots: Carrots are an item that will store the longest to help extend the season after the CSA is over. Two major frosts have sweetened the flavor of these carrots.

Broccoli: This broccoli is really exciting after the poor performance this spring and the variety is appropriately titled “green magic.” The broccoli greens are edible.

Red Onion: Red onions have a long storage potential. Store separately from potatoes for longer shelf life.

Eggplant: Also has a long shelf life. Small eggplants are tender and have a mushroom like texture when cooked.

Green Pepper: Green peppers stay crisp a long time if kept in a cool place in the fridge.

Yukon Gold Potatoes: Store potatoes in a dark cool location. Add one to a soup for thickness or in a broccoli potato quiche.

Spring Turnips: Red and white salad turnips are sweet and crisp when sliced thin and kept raw but are also good sautéed with butter, salt and pepper. Similar to beets and radish, the greens are edible and best removed right away and stored separately with other greens.

Butterhead Lettuce: Head lettuce usually keeps longer than mixed greens. This is great in a salad or for lettuce wraps.

Purple Scallions: Similar to a green scallion but with a more earthy pungent flavor. Use as a topping for pizza or add it to chili, soup or stir fry.

Recipes

Spring Turnips with Greens and Raisins

2 tablespoons butter
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 medium onion diced

2 turnips with greens
About ¼ cup raisins
Salt
12 ounces orzo or bowtie pasta

Heat 1 tablespoon 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 turnip 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 the greens are wilted and tender, another 3-4 minutes. Add remaining 1 tablespoon butter and salt to taste. Works as a side dish or toss with cooked pasta for a lunch to take to work.

Carrot and Ginger Soup

6 tablespoons butter
 1 large onion, chopped
 ¼ cup ginger root, finely chopped
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 6 cups vegetable broth
 1 cup dry white wine

2 lbs. carrots, cut into ½-inch pieces
 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 Pinch of curry powder
 Salt and black pepper to taste
 Parsley fresh and chopped

Melt the butter in a large stock pot over medium heat. Add onion, ginger, and garlic and sautee 15 to 20 minutes. Add stock, wine and carrots. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat, cover, and cook over medium heat until carrots are tender, about 45 minutes. Puree soup in a blender or food processor. Season with lemon and parsley and a dollop of yogurt. Makes 6 servings.

Butterhead Carrot Lettuce Wraps

3 Tablespoons oil
 2 Boneless skinless chicken breasts
 1 cup water chestnuts
 2/3 cups mushrooms
 3 tablespoons chopped onion
 1 Clove minced garlic
 4-5 leaves butterhead lettuce
 ½ cup shredded carrot

Wrap Sauce:

2 tablespoons sugar
 ½ cup water
 2 tablespoons soy sauce

2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
 1 tablespoon tomato paste or ketchup
 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
 1/8 teaspoon sesame oil
 1 Tablespoon hot mustard
 2 teaspoons hot water
 1-2 teaspoons red garlic chili paste

Stir Fry Sauce:

2 Tablespoons soy sauce
 2 Tablespoons brown sugar
 ½ teaspoon rice wine vinegar

Make the wrap sauce by dissolving the sugar in water in a small bowl. Add Soy sauce, rice wine vinegar, ketchup, lemon juice and sesame oil. Mix well and refrigerate the sauce until you are ready to serve. Combine the hot water with the hot mustard and set this aside as well. Eventually add your desired measurement of mustard and garlic chili sauce to the wrap sauce mixture to pour over the wraps.

Bring oil to high heat in a wok. Sautee chicken breasts for 4-5 minutes per side or done. Remove chicken from pan and cool. Reserve oil in pan. Mince water chestnuts and mushrooms to the size of small peas. Prepare the stir fry sauce by mixing soy sauce, brown sugar, and rice vinegar in small bowl. When chicken is cool, mince it as well. Heat the reserved oil in pan on high and add one more tablespoon vegetable oil. Add onion, water chestnuts, mushrooms, garlic and chicken to the pan and stir. Add the stir fry sauce and stir. Cook for 2-3 minutes until coated in sauce. Serve in lettuce leaves with shredded carrot and sauce on the side to drizzle on top.

Thanks

Special thanks to a few people for making Solar Fresh possible this season. Hospitality is at its best with Joe and Julie at Ridgeroll Farm who have provided me with everything I need to succeed including their passed down skills and knowledge. Our gracious hosts at the Minnetonka Lutheran Church, St. Philip the Deacon, and Lindblom Jewelers made each drop off a delight for me and I hope for CSA members as well. Sincere thank you to my sister Jennifer for helping almost every Wednesday all season and to every other helper. Your timing is always perfect, your company is uplifting, and your help was essential at that moment. And of course a huge thank you goes out to every CSA member for letting me pick your veggies, making time in your schedule to pick up and cook those veggies, and for embracing seasonal eating.