



BLUE HOUSE FARM

CSA Newsletter

Rain, Rain, Go Away

July 1, 2011

Last week the farm purchased a new addition to our small fleet of delivery vehicles. We outgrew the Dodge pick-up with box on the back, which we have been using for the last few years. I found a small box truck for sale with low mileage, an insulated box, and a cooler unit. Basically, perfect for our needs. It is small compared to other box trucks, but to us, it seems huge. We pack, unload, and send a truck on deliveries five days a week. This means we spend a lot of time in the back of that truck and small things, like being able to stand up fully and not hit your head on the roof become really important. And being able to fit all the CSA boxes, flower buckets, market totes, tables, canopies, and baskets also become really important. The last couple of weeks, we have had to send out the Dodge followed by another small truck because we couldn't fit the last ten boxes or so. So we are very much enjoying the new space. And it is an accomplishing feeling to be producing enough volume of high quality produce to need a bigger truck. We also recently installed a new air conditioner on one of our walk-in refrigerators and love the extra space to keep those veggies cold.

The weather continues to baffle me. Yesterday morning was reminiscent of the two years I spent farming in Rhode Island when I was just out of college. In New England, it rains regularly throughout the summer and the fields always seem to have the "wet" look. The furrows are typically muddy and that mud sticks to your boots and makes them heavy, as it did yesterday. It is also difficult to have much control over weeds because the rains constantly germinate new weed seeds. Right now the farm is significantly weedier than I usually tolerate. We have just had very strange weather this year.

This week we are putting new potatoes in your boxes. A new potato is basically the name given to a potato when it is harvested early, before the skin has fully cured. The variety is "Sangre." Because the skins are so tender, we cannot use our potato harvester and instead dig them by hand with forks and shovels. We do our best not to damage the skins, but it inevitable happens. New potatoes are one of my favorite early summer treats. They are not as starchy as a fully grown and cured potato. It is best to cook these potatoes whole by boiling or roasting. If you cut them up, they fall apart very easily...unless if they're fried in rocket hot oil.

Also, some of you will be getting Watermelon Radishes, while others will be getting Purple Top Turnips, which to many might look exactly alike. If your large white roots have green patches, they're mild, slightly sweet Watermelon Radishes. If your white roots have purple shoulders, those are the turnips. If in doubt, cut one in half and see if the inside resembles a watermelon.

Flowers: I told you last week that we would have long-stemmed mixed bouquets for you this week and well... I was not expecting 3/4 of an inch of rain and two cold, cloudy days, which caused a delay. And the flower field is still on the edge of bursting into color, so please be patient with us and enjoy another week of sweet peas.

From The Field,
Ryan

Anticipated Harvest

Kohlrabi
Romaine Lettuce
Rainbow Chard
New Potatoes
Green Cabbage
Watermelon Radishes OR Turnips
Dill
Strawberries

Sometimes, a vegetables name is a perfect description of what it is. Case in point: kohlrabi, which translated from German means "cabbage-turnip." A member of the same far-flung cabbage family as broccoli, kale & brussel sprouts, kohlrabi looks and cooks very much like a turnip, albeit with the flavor and sweetly mild crunch of broccoli stalk.

Kohlrabi may be unfamiliar to most of us, but 500 years ago it was one of the most popular vegetables in Europe, and still today is a staple in Kashmir. Considering it's many uses and health bvenefits, kohlrabi is ripe for a comeback. It's juicy and crunchy enough to be eaten raw out-of-hand like an apple, and can be julienned for a crudite plate or grated for a coleslaw (or should I say kohlslaw?). It can also be cooked like a turnip; braised in butter or roasted in the oven. Kohlrabi is an excellent source of Vitamin C, Dietary Fiber, B-Complex Vitamins & Potassium.

Save The Date:

Strawberry Festival - July 17th 2011

Every year around midsummer the strawberry plants start going into overdrive, and we enjoy such an abundance of berries that we like to invite our CSA Members to come down to the farm and partake in supreme pleasure of sun-warmed strawberries straight off the plant. If that weren't enough, we'll be making strawberry shortcake and offering tours of the farm all afternoon. We'll also have an on-going work project for those eager to get their hands dirty and experience the life of a Blue House Farmer! Please be sure to bring sturdy shoes and gloves if you wish to lend a hand!

The 2011 Summer Strawberry Festival will be on **Sunday, July 17th, from 2 - 6 PM**, and is **FREE**. You can RSVP for the Festival on our Facebook page: facebook.com/bluehousefarm. Hope to see you there!



A scene from last year's Strawberry Festival.

Dum Monj - Kashmiri Kohlrabi

2 - 3 Kohlrabi
2 - 3 Cloves Garlic
1 - 2 T Ginger
3/4 C Water
2 tsp Sugar
1/2 tsp Turmeric
1 - 2 tsp Crushed Red Pepper
Olive Oil
Salt & Pepper

Halve the kohlrabis, then slice them 1/8" thick. Mince the garlic and the ginger.

In a skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for 1 or 2 minutes, until the garlic is golden and shiny. Add the kohlrabi and stir to coat.

Once the kohlrabi has gotten friendly with the garlicky/gingery oil, add the sugar, turmeric, red pepper and salt. Stir well, then sauté till the spices become well incorporated with the dish, about 2 to 4 minutes.

Add the water and cover, reducing heat to medium. Let simmer for 15 minutes, then remove the lid and raise the heat to medium-high again and cook off any remaining liquid.

Transfer to serving dish. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Sweet Pickled Salad

1 - 2 Watermelon Radishes
1 Small Spring Onion
1/3 C Orange Juice
2 T Olive Oil
2 T Cider Vinegar
OR
1 T Red Wine Vinegar
& 1 T White Wine Vinegar
Salt & Pepper

Slice the radishes and onion. Place into a large mixing bowl.

Add the remaining ingredients and toss to coat evenly.

Cover loosely with plastic wrap or kitchen towel and place in refrigerator for at least 8 hours (or overnight).

Serve chilled.

Beer-Braised Turnips

1 Bunch Turnips
1 Bottle (12 oz) Dark Beer
2 - 3 T Butter
1 T Summer Savory
Salt & Pepper

Preheat oven to 350. Peel, halve, and slice the turnips. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and add turnips and blanch for 7-10 minutes. Drain.

Transfer turnips to a baking dish. Dab the top of the turnips with butter, then pour in enough beer to just cover the turnips. Add salt, pepper, and savory.

Bake for about 1 hour, or until turnips are tender.

Cavolo Sofegao -

Venetian Smothered Cabbage

1 Head Cabbage
1 or 2 Spring Onions
1 T White Wine Vinegar
Olive Oil
Salt
Pepper
Crushed Red Pepper (Optional)
2 Eggs (Optional)
Parmigiano-Reggiano (To Taste)

Very thinly slice the cabbage, or shred using a box grater, and chop the onion.

Put the onion and some olive oil into a heavy skillet and place over medium heat. Sauté the onion till it just becomes translucent, then add the cabbage in intervals, stirring inbetween to ensure all the cabbage is coated in cooking fat. Once all the cabbage is wilted, sprinkle with the vinegar then cover and reduce the heat as low as it will go. Cook over very low heat, stirring occasionally, for 45 minutes to an hour.

Garnish with freshly ground black pepper, parmesan cheese, and if you feel crazy top it off with two fried or poached eggs. Serve with crusty bread.