

This week's share:

Potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic, kohlrabi, parsnip, squash, cayenne peppers



Next week's guess...

Potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic, beets, rutabaga, celeriac, squash



The Cedar Post

Cedar Down Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Winter CSA, Week 6, January 12, 2010

On the farm...

Roasted Root Veggie "Fries"

From "Friday Night Dinners" by Bonnie Stern

3 lbs combination of potatoes, carrots, parsnips (you can also add kohlrabi, squash or sweet potatoes)

3 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil

2 tsp salt

1/4 tsp pepper

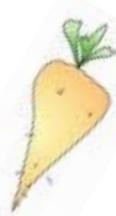
2 tbsp fresh thyme or 1/2 tsp dried

2 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley or 1 tsp dried

Peel vegetables and cut into sticks about 1/2 inch thick.

In a large bowl, toss vegetables with oil, salt, pepper and thyme. Spread on one or two baking sheets (so they are mostly in one layer) and roast in a pre-heated 425° oven for 40 to 50 minutes or until vegetables are browned and tender, turning halfway through cooking time.

Toss with parsley.



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Last year's cows chewing their cud!

Over the last few days we've been fixing gates, stringing electric fence, clearing out the barn and finding water troughs. This is because we'll shortly be getting 25 organic beef calves from Gerald Poechman (a local organic farmer and Cedar Down CSA member!) to tend for the winter. This will be our second winter doing this, and it works great for both parties; Gerry gets more space in his barn, and we get wonderful manure to feed our crops (not to mention it's nice to have some animals in the barn!)

We'll keep these calves until spring, when we'll scrape up the manure and bedding and make it into a pile. This pile will be turned a couple of times throughout the summer to incorporate oxygen, allowing the microorganisms to thrive and changing the raw manure into a stable and biologically active compost. Compost, along with cover crops, is our main source of fertility on the farm.

Organic agriculture is defined in some ways by the presence of animals in the production system. As organic farmers we are interested in reviving the mixed (animal and crop) farm of the past, where manure (made into compost) was an asset to be valued and not a pollutant to be disposed of. Over the past 50 years conventional agricultural trends have been defined by specialization. Instead of having a small herd of cattle and enough crop land to use the manure, we have huge feedlots with nowhere to spread the manure, and crop farmers who need to purchase huge amounts of artificial fertilizer in order to grow food. What we end up with from this specialization is manure polluting our ground water and rivers and soil that is sick and salty from too much artificial fertilizer.

Here at Cedar Down Farm our goal is to integrate livestock into our system, and stop having to purchase compost. Hopefully over the next few years we will be slowly building up our business in that way. The ultimate goal is to have a farm which uses the symbiotic relationship between crop and animal production and is in that way healthy and self-sufficient. In the mean time we are happy to have Gerry's cattle this winter - feel free to stop in and see them if you're in our neighborhood!

Parsnip

I know some of you may be a little scared of the parsnip. Maybe you think it's trying to pass itself off as just a little ol' white carrot and then - bam! - it's a parsnip - not a carrot at all. Or maybe, like me, you have memories of gulping down mushy pieces of it so that you could get to the rest of your chicken soup. The texture, in that context, left something to be desired.

Well, I say, forget all that and give parsnip a chance! It has a wonderful spicy-sweet flavour that lends itself beautifully to roasting and purées. Add it to puréed soups with carrot, celeriac or other veggies to give an earthy sweet flavour. Try some new parsnip recipes and you just might love the humble parsnip - like we do!

Kohlrabi-Carrot Slaw

1/4 cup mayonnaise (or 1/3 cup of plain yoghurt)
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/2 giant kohlrabi trimmed, peeled, and julienned
2 carrots, julienned
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper

Whisk together the mayonnaise, mustard, and lemon juice in a large bowl. Add the kohlrabi and carrot and toss to coat. Season to taste with salt and pepper, transfer to a serving bowl, and serve immediately.

Note: If you have Chinese cabbage left in your fridge, it makes a great addition to this slaw. Also great to add a little chopped red onion.

Buttermilk Whipped Potatoes

From "Cooking at Home with the Culinary Institute of America"

2 lbs potatoes, peeled and cut into large pieces
salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 Tbsp unsalted butter
1/4 cup buttermilk, warmed (can also be made with regular milk)

Place the potatoes in a pot with cold water to cover by 2 inches. Salt the water. Gradually bring the water to a simmer over medium heat. Cover and simmer until the potatoes are easily pierced with a fork, 10-12 minutes. Drain and return them to the pan over low heat until no more steam rises from them. While still hot, purée the potatoes in a heated bowl. Add the butter and whip by hand or with an electric mixer until just incorporated. Add the warm buttermilk and stir to combine. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Whip the potatoes on medium speed until smooth and light. Serve at once.

Parsnip Soup with Curry Spices

From "The Greens Cookbook" by Deborah Madison

4 to 5 parsnips
4 tbsp butter or olive oil
1 tbsp ginger root, minced
2 medium onion, cut into 1/2 inch squares (or 1 onion and 2 leeks, if you have them)
1 tbsp curry powder
2 carrots, peeled and diced
2 celery stalks, diced or 1 cup of diced celeriac
1 tsp salt
5 to 6 cups vegetable stock
1 cup light cream



Scrub parsnips, trim tops and peel. Quarter them lengthwise and cut out most of the fibrous inner core (great to use later to make stock!). Chop the parsnip roughly into pieces.

Heat butter in a soup pot and add the ginger and onion. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until onions turn a rich golden colour, about 15 minutes. Stir in the curry powder and cook for 1 minute; then add the parsnip, carrots, celery, salt and stock. Bring to a boil, lower the heat, cover and cook until the vegetables are soft.

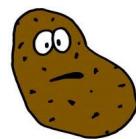
Cool the soup briefly, then purée in a blender or with a hand blender. Stir in the cream and taste for salt.

If you have it, garnish with chopped cilantro or parsley and serve!

Honey Dijon Roasted Potatoes

Makes 4 to 6 servings

6 potatoes (about 2 pounds)
1/4 cup Dijon mustard
2 tablespoons honey (local if possible!)
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
Kosher salt and fresh ground pepper
Olive oil



1. Preheat the oven to 400°F.
2. Chop the potatoes into 1-inch chunks. Place in a large bowl, drizzle with about 3 tablespoons of olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper and toss to coat. Spread potatoes on a baking sheet.
3. Place the baking sheet in the oven and bake for 40 to 45 minutes, until lightly browned and crisp. Stir the potatoes a few times throughout the roasting to prevent them from sticking.
4. Meanwhile, combine 1/4 cup Dijon mustard, 2 tablespoons honey, and 1/2 teaspoon thyme in a small bowl.
5. When the potatoes are done, remove them from the oven and allow to cool slightly. Serve with honey mustard – lightly mixed with the potatoes, or on the side for dipping.