



The Cedar Post

Cedar Down Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Winter CSA, Week 9, March 3, 2012

This week's share:

Potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic, cabbage or kohlrabi, beets, parsnip, watermelon radish

See you in the spring!

On the farm...

You can definitely feel the cycle of the year when you live and work on a farm. It seems that every year at certain times the same words come to mind when I'm writing the newsletter about what time of the year it is - time for plowing and turning the soil, time for sowing and planting, time for weeding and harvesting and putting away veggies in storage.

This time of the year is the strange time when our brain starts to think, it's spring! But, when you look outside, there is still plenty of snow on the ground and it certainly doesn't feel like spring - the earth is still in winter mode while us humans are gearing up early for the start of a new season. But, we do start to get a taste of spring this time of year when we start up our seedling greenhouse - then we get to smell the smell of soil and water and feel seeds in our hands and slowly start to watch the tiny seedlings sprout. We get to see our first bit of brilliant green poking through soil long before the plants outside are ready. This is never a sight I take for granted, it is one that is reliably met with squeals of delight and not a small amount of wonder.

We start the greenhouse on Friday and I'm very excited to get my hands in some dirt! Though it seems amazing that it is already time to start planting for the coming summer. In the meantime, while the greenhouse is beginning, this week marks the end of the winter in another way. The last winter CSA pickup. It's amazing to go into the root storage room and see the many bins of vegetables, once full, now down to their lasts. We're happy knowing that the summer's hard work has kept us all sustained these cold, winter months and it seems somehow fitting that while the big, heavy roots of last season are dwindling, tiny light seedlings will grow up soon to begin the cycle again. Though, as you might, I often wish that this part of the cycle (the part where it's still cold and grey and there's not much fresh food to eat) would go faster! But, I think that makes me all the more excited when summer comes!

We really hope that you have enjoyed the winter CSA and that you found the vegetables delicious and nourishing. We have been very happy to be able to provide them for you. We'll see many of you in the summer and we'll be sure to send updates on all the goings on here at the farm in the meantime.

We hope the rest of your spring is great and can't wait to bring you more delicious fare soon!

Thanks everyone so much.

Leslie and Jeff



Baked Parsnip Fries with Rosemary

from www.epicurious.com

2 1/2 pounds parsnips or carrots, peeled, cut into about 3 x 1/2" strips
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh rosemary, plus 5 sprigs rosemary
1 large garlic clove, minced
3 tablespoons olive oil
Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper
1/2 teaspoon (or more) ground cumin

Preheat oven to 450°F. Mix parsnips, chopped rosemary, garlic, and oil on a large rimmed baking sheet. Season with salt and pepper and toss to coat. Spread out in a single layer. Scatter rosemary sprigs over.

Roast for 10 minutes; turn parsnips and roast until parsnips are tender and browned in spots, 10-15 minutes longer. Crumble leaves from rosemary sprigs over; discard stems and toss to coat. Sprinkle 1/2 teaspoon cumin over. Season to taste with salt, pepper, and more cumin, if desired.



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Parsnip and Lentil Soup with Cumin and Lemon

From <http://fishchipsandgelato.wordpress.com/2013/02/25/parsnip-and-lentils-soup-with-lemon-and-cumin/>

1 carrot, finely chopped
2 medium onions, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
knob of butter, and a little olive oil
pinch of salt
2 tsp cumin seeds
4 medium/big parsnips, about 550 gr, peeled and chopped
130 gr red split lentils, rinsed in a sieve under plenty of cold water
1.6 lt vegetable stock
juice of 1 lemon
chopped parsley (optional)

In a large pot, add carrot, garlic and onions along with the butter, olive oil and a pinch of salt. Cover and cook over low heat for about 10 minutes. Add the cumin seeds and cook for a couple of minutes more, with the lid off and stirring occasionally to avoid them burning.

Add parsnips to the pot and stir for a minute or so. Then add the lentils and the stock. Stir, put the lid back on and leave on high heat. Bring to a boil and boil for ten minutes, then leave it to simmer on a low heat for about 15 more minutes. The soup should be cooked by then, although this depends on how small you chopped the parsnips. Have a try.

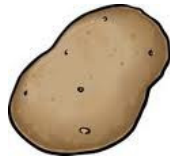
Take off the heat and cream it with a hand blender. If you think the consistency needs a bit more liquid, add a little bit of water. Likewise, if you think it's too runny, put back on the heat until reduced to the desired consistency.

When you're ready to serve, add the lemon juice and parsley, if using. Stir and serve.

Crispy Potato Roast

From www.smittenkitchen.com

3 tablespoons salted or unsalted butter, melted
3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Coarse salt
1/2 to 1 teaspoon red-pepper flakes
4 pounds russet potatoes, peeled
1 large onion
8 sprigs thyme
Garnishes (optional): Bits of goat cheese, crumbles of bacon and/or bits of crisped pancetta



Preheat oven to 375°F. In a small bowl, combine butter and oil. With a sharp knife or manoline, slice potatoes crosswise very thinly.

In a large baking dish, pour a tablespoon or so of the butter/oil mixture in the bottom and spread it evenly. Sprinkle the oil mixture with a few pinches of coarse salt and red pepper flakes, if using; this will allow you to season both the top and underside of the potatoes. Arrange your potato slices vertically in the dish.

Thinly slice onion and slide slivers between potato wedges, distributing them as evenly as possible. Brush with remaining oil/butter mixture. Generously season your dish with salt. Bake 1 1/4 hours, then arrange thyme sprigs on top and bake until potatoes are cooked through with a crisped top, about 35 minutes more. If casserole seems to brown too fast, cover it with foil to slow it down. Add any garnishes, if using, and serve immediately.

Chocolate Beet Cake

For those of you who have never had beets in chocolate cake - you are in for a treat! They make a moist, flavourful cake that is probably very healthy! Or, we'll say that it is!

From <http://www.bakenoir.com/2012/chocolate-beet-cake/>

For Cake:

200g bittersweet chocolate, chopped
60ml hot espresso (or water)
200g butter (at room temperature), cubed
240g cooked beets, pureed
5 large eggs, separated
pinch of salt
200g superfine sugar (castor sugar)
135g flour
3 tablespoons cocoa powder
1 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
some mascarpone cheese, to serve



Butter a 20 cm springform pan and line the bottom with parchment paper. Preheat the oven to 180°C. In a large bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water, melt the chocolate, stirring as little as possible. Turn off the heat but leave the bowl over the warm water. Pour in the hot espresso and stir. Then add the butter pieces and press them into the chocolate gently. Allow the butter to soften without stirring. Sift together the flour, cocoa powder, and baking powder in a separate bowl. Remove the bowl of chocolate from the heat and stir until the butter is melted. Let sit for a few minutes to cool, then stir the egg yolks together and briskly stir them into the melted chocolate mixture. Fold in the pureed beets.

In a stand mixer whip the egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff. Gradually fold the sugar into the whipped egg whites with a spatula, then fold them into the melted chocolate mixture, being careful not to overmix. Fold in the flour and cocoa powder.

Scrape the batter into the prepared cake pan and reduce the heat of the oven to 160°C. Bake the cake for 40 minutes, or until the sides are just set but the center is still a bit wobbly. Do not overbake. Let cake cool completely, then remove it from the pan.

Serve cake with a dollop of whipped cream or mascarpone cheese and a sliver of candied beets!

For the candied beets!:

2 cooked beets, sliced thinly
150ml water
150g sugar

Preheat the oven to 100°C. Line a baking tray with parchment paper.

Bring water and sugar to a boil in a small saucepan, stirring constantly until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat and add beets. Let it soak for 30 minutes. Transfer the beets to a baking sheet and bake until firm, about an hour. Transfer to rack and cool completely. Store in an airtight container.