

Prairieland Community Supported Agriculture
Week 26 – Oct 25, 2006

From the Farm:

Only three weeks remain in the season. So far so good with the poly barns on the Moore farm. Despite the cold weather, even lettuce survived for today's shares.

The fall potatoes made their way into the shares this week along with a new item – ear pop corn! No need to shell the kernels from the ear, simply pop them right on the ear in your microwave. See directions below.

Daikon also is in the shares today. You may ask, why daikon? A) End of year surveys show that some shareholders can't get enough of this root crop. B) The long roots of daikon do an excellent job of loosening the soil. This helps with drainage and enhances the environment for earthworms and other beneficial soil creatures. So, do take yours and try this week's daikon stew recipe. If nothing else, take it and use it as part of your toddler's Darth Vader costume for Halloween.

2007 Shares Update

Only 27 shares remain for the 2007 season. If you or your friends or co-workers haven't already reserved yours online or by phone and want one for next year, please do so at <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/contracts.html> or 217.355.6279, respectively

If you won't be renewing your share, please let us know this as well. Thanks.

In This Week's Share:

Ear popcorn, potatoes, baby beets, lettuce, kohlrabi, daikon, and green peppers.

Recipe and Storage Suggestions

Daikon

If you don't like daikon, it's likely because you've had one that's been stored too long. Daikon takes on an earthy quality with prolonged shipping and storage, leaving it about as palatable as sweat socks. Fresh ones have a mild flavor similar to young turnips or mild radishes. You can use daikon grated in cold salads, or cubed and added to stews like other root vegetables. For cold salads dress with equal parts rice vinegar, water, and sugar.

Tuan's Daikon Stew

This came from my friend Tuan. We would have never guessed that the stew contained daikon. This is not originally a vegetarian recipe. However, as with regular beef stew, you can substitute seitan and brewer's yeast for a close approximation. If you start with barbecue seitan, the flavor will be closer still.

2 lb. stew beef, or equivalent amount of seitan and 1 to 2 T. brewer's yeast
2 T. vegetable oil (meat version)
2 onions, coarsely chopped
5 cloves garlic, minced
2 T. vegetable oil

2 t. paprika

1/2 t. ground cinnamon, a rounded 1/2 t. if you like spice

2 star anise (found @ Walnut St. Tea Company, World Harvest, AMKO)

1 stick cinnamon (can substitute additional ground)

1/4 to 1/2 t. cayenne

1 1/2 qts. water.

1 healthy pinch dried lemon grass or a 3 x 1-inch strip of fresh lemon peel

1 large daikon, peeled and cubed, 1 smaller daikon and equivalent amount of potatoes

5 carrots, peeled and cut into 1 1/4 pieces

fresh ground pepper

1/2 to 1 T. corn starch dissolved in a little water

20 - 30 cilantro leaves or more to taste

Brown meat if using. Remove and set aside. Saute onions and garlic in 2 T. oil. Remove from pan. In remaining oil, add spices (except lemon grass or peel, and pepper) and stir-fry. Let brown, but don't burn. Add 1 1/2 quarts water. Add lemongrass or peel and simmer gently for 1 hour (10 minutes for seitan version). Add vegetables. Simmer 15 minutes more. Add pepper, taste, and adjust seasonings. Skim if necessary. Raise heat to medium. Add starch-water and cook for another 15 to 20 minutes. Add seitan in last five to ten minutes of cooking. Stir in cilantro. Serve warm with rice or with hunks of crusty French bread.

Ear Popcorn

Some 5,600 year ago, long before Orville Redenbacher walked the earth, native Americans were popping ear popcorn on sticks over fires. While you can brush your popcorn ear with oil and roast it this way, it may be easier to simply put it unholed into a paper lunch bag and microwave it for 2 to 2 1/2 minutes (times will vary by microwave power) Add salt and melted butter as desired, or go all out and break out the truffle oil. If you don't mind a contained mess and are looking for a way to entertain the kids, pop it without the bag.

Baby Beets, lettuce

Few things are more pretty in fall than a salad of roasted beets and greens dressed with an orange-cumin vinaigrette. Roast the beets like potatoes. No time to roast? To microwave four medium-sized fresh beets (smaller beets will take less time), arrange them unpeeled in a dish with a lid (or damp heavyweight paper towels). Microwave on high for about 8 minutes, let rest without removing the lid for 5 minutes. Turn the beets over and cover again; microwave another 3 minutes. Let sit with the lid still on for 10 more minutes. Pierce them with a thin knife to test for tenderness. If they need it, cover and cook for 3-4 minutes more. Let cool and peel. Note: Microwaves vary in power. It may take more or less cooking time.

For the dressing, toast 1 t of cumin seeds until fragrant. Grind into a fine powder using a spice mill or mortar and pestle. Combine with 1/2 c light olive oil, 1 clove garlic finely chopped, the juice and zest of 1 orange, the juice of 2 large limes, a pinch of cayenne, salt and pepper to taste, and 1 t of paprika.

Kohlrabi

Halve the Basic Gratin recipe on page 25 of Recipes From America's Small Farms. If you want to use the leaves, blanch them first and taste test them prior to using; frost should have mellowed them a fair amount.

Green Peppers

Halve and stuff. Saute with onions, Italian sausage, and soaked sun dried tomatoes and serve over whole wheat pasta spirals.

Potatoes

Supplement the daikon in the stew recipe above. Or boil, slice while warm and toss with pesto. Alternatively, roast your potatoes. Toss with olive oil and chopped fresh or dried herbs of your choice and salt and pepper. Bake in a shallow pan, heavy oven proof skillet, or on heavy baking sheet for 35 minutes at 425 degrees F.

Have a recipe to share? Need help with a recipe? Need info on freezing or preserving produce? Email info@prairielandcsa.org or call 355-6279