



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

June 12 - 13, 2020

What's In The Box?

SALAD MIX: We only grow salad mix in the spring and fall, which are the times of year when the lettuce varieties fare the best. This is a quick, convenient mix that will allow you to put a salad on the table in just minutes. For the longest storage potential, make sure you keep it cold and store it in the refrigerator!

POTATO ONIONS: This is one of our overwintered onion varieties. Use them as you would use any green onion or scallion. We'll likely be ready to start harvesting our spring planted scallions next week! PS: No, they don't taste like potatoes.

GARLIC SCAPES: Not sure what a garlic scape is? It's the curly, crazy, green bunched item in this week's box! Scapes grow from the center of hard-neck garlic varieties and are nature's way of reproducing the plant. Since we don't need the garlic plant to replant itself, we cut the scapes off so the plant can put energy into producing a bulb of garlic. Nearly all of the scape is edible, less the tapered portion at the very end. Use scapes anywhere you would use garlic cloves, but don't be afraid to use them more like a vegetable instead of a condiment. Cut them into bite-sized pieces and sauté them like green beans with a little oil, salt and pepper!

ASPARAGUS: This is our final week of asparagus. We hope you've enjoyed the season. Pick your favorite way to prepare asparagus and savor it one more time!

RED OAK AND/OR LITTLE GEM HEAD LETTUCE: Both of these are small to mid-sized lettuce varieties. The leaves are tender and the ribs are juicy and crunchy. Use this lettuce as the base for a salad, layer leaves on a sandwich, or use them to make lettuce wraps.

CILANTRO: Our cilantro crops are producing really well right now! Check out this week's **Cooking With the Box** article where you'll find links to a recipe for **Curried Lentils with Rhubarb Chutney** that is garnished with fresh cilantro. You'll also find a recipe for **Garlic Scape & Cilantro Pesto** that's delicious and easy to make!

DILL: Dill is such a refreshing herb we thought it would be a nice addition to some of this week's box contents. Turn it into a lovely light vinaigrette to use with salad mix or head lettuce. If you don't think you'll use it all this week, simply wash the remaining portion, shake off any excess water and hang it up somewhere in your kitchen where it will get good airflow. It will naturally dry on its own. Store dried dill in a jar with a lid.

PEA VINE: This is our second and final crop of pea vine. The leaves and tendrils have a delicate pea flavor that is delicious when used in salads, sauces, soups and more. The stems are packed with flavor too, so don't discard them! If the stems are tender, chop them up and use them. If they are a little tough near the lower portion of the bunch, use them to infuse flavor into soups or broth and then discard them.

RHUBARB: This week's rhubarb comes from our friend, John Zeher, who has been farming as long as Richard has been! Our rhubarb field is not producing very much this year and our newly planted crop needs a few more years to be fully established. Check out this week's **Cooking With the Box** article where you'll find links to recipes for both savory and sweet ways to use rhubarb. You can also freeze rhubarb. Just wash it, cut it into bite-sized pieces and pop it in a freezer bag.

PURPLE OR GREEN KOHLRABI: Read more about this unique, delicious vegetable in this week's **vegetable feature** article!

BABY SWISS CHARD: Our first planting of chard germinated so well that it's a bit of a thick stand. So, we decided to harvest these tender little plants and at the same time, we facilitated thinning the crop! These leaves are tender enough to use raw in a salad, or you can use it as a cooking green as well.

STRAWBERRIES: The berries are just starting to ripen, so here's the first taste!

BROCCOLI: Our first crop of broccoli is just starting to come in, so the portion this week is small but enough to get you started! Don't forget to eat the stems and any tender leaves remaining along with the florets!

Vegetable Feature: Kohlrabi

By Chef Andrea

There are many words you may hear in reference to kohlrabi. It's often likened to an object from space, sent to us by aliens, bearing resemblance to Sputnik. *Bon Appetit* magazine referred to it as "the poster child for local, seasonally-focused means of sourcing produce," which is not far from the truth! The adjectives I favor myself are simply that kohlrabi is a unique, whimsical vegetable that is fantastically versatile! It's a member of the Brassica family, and the name is derived from "khol" meaning stem or cabbage and "rabi" meaning turnip. But it doesn't resemble cabbage or turnip in appearance, rather it has its own unique identity. While many people think kohlrabi is a root vegetable, it is actually a swollen stem that develops above ground! The stems and leaves shoot up from the bulbous lower portion. As with other vegetables in this family, kohlrabi is rich in vitamin C, potassium, fiber and B vitamins along with antioxidants and other valuable nutrients.

So let's go back to that poster child comment. It's true, kohlrabi holds an important place in our local growing season. It matures more quickly than cabbage, beets and carrots, thus giving us some variety to offer aside from more greens in late spring and early summer! While you may find kohlrabi in your local food co-op or in a conventional grocery store from time to time, it really hasn't become a mainstream vegetable. So, the way most people will source kohlrabi is obtaining it directly from the farmer who grew it, thus at farmers' market or in a CSA box!

One of the characteristics I appreciate about kohlrabi is that most of the plant is edible. The bulb is the part of the plant most commonly eaten, but the leaves are also edible and should not be overlooked. The leaves have a thicker texture more similar to kale or collard greens. They are best eaten cooked and can be substituted for collard greens or kale in many recipes. I usually strip the leaves off the main stems before using. The bulb does need to be peeled before eating as the outer skin is fairly tough. I find it easiest to cut the bulb in half or quarters and then peel the skin away using a vegetable peeler or paring knife as if you're peeling an apple. Once the skin is peeled away you'll find a solid, crispy, juicy, tender flesh inside with a sweet, mild cabbage flavor. **The Kitchen** has a nice resource to show you how to easily cut kohlrabi. To store kohlrabi, separate the stems and leaves from the bulb. Store both leaves and the bulbs in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. The leaves will keep for about 1 week, and the bulbs will last up to several weeks if stored properly.

Kohlrabi is delicious eaten both raw and cooked. The simplest way to eat it is to peel the bulb and munch on slices plain or with just a touch of salt, a little lime juice and some chili powder. It can also be shredded and used in slaws with a variety of dressings or sliced and added to sandwiches or salads. Don't limit yourself to only eating this as a raw vegetable though. It is also delicious when lightly sautéed, stir-fried, braised, roasted, grilled and baked. Over the years we've featured a variety of kohlrabi recipes in our newsletters, which are archived on our website. If you ask Farmer Richard what his favorite way to eat kohlrabi is, I guarantee he'll always say "Creamy Kohlrabi Slaw!"

Kohlrabi is quite delicious when cooked. You can use both the leaves and bulb in stir-fry or just simply sauté them in butter. The bulb is also excellent roasted. Just toss it with oil, salt and pepper and roast it in the oven until the pieces start to get golden brown on the outside. Because it is higher in moisture it will never get as dry as potatoes do when you roast them. Rather, roasted kohlrabi is tender and succulent. Kohlrabi may also be used in a variety of other preparations including soup, puree, "fries," curries and so much more!

I hope you have fun using this unique vegetable and hopefully you too will find it's beauty, flavor and uses to be "out of this world!"

Kohlrabi Custard

Serves 5-6 as a side dish

2-3 medium to large kohlrabi, trimmed, peeled and quartered	4 oz Neufchatel (or cream) cheese, softened	1 tsp hot sauce (optional)	Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
2 large eggs	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk	1 tsp salt	
	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup cornstarch	Freshly grated nutmeg, about $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese

1. Add the kohlrabi quarters to a large pot of boiling water and cook till slightly softened, about 5 minutes. Drain, cool slightly, then place in a food processor. Purée until the kohlrabi is finely chopped. Pour into a quart measure. You should have around 3 cups of puréed vegetable.* (see note below)
2. Preheat the oven to 375°F. Butter a 9-inch square baking dish or 5-6 individual-sized ramekins. You will need to put the baking dish or ramekins in a larger baking dish and fill the outer dish with enough water to come about half way up the dish or ramekins that will hold the custard. This will create a more gentle heat distribution to bake the custard.
3. In the food processor, blend the eggs, milk, Neufchatel cheese, cornstarch, salt, nutmeg and pepper. When blended, add the kohlrabi purée and a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of Parmesan cheese. Stir well to combine. Taste for seasoning and adjust with additional salt and pepper as needed. Pour the custard mixture into the prepared baking dish or ramekins. Place the dish(es) into the larger pan and fill halfway with hot water.
4. Place into the center of the preheated oven. Bake for about 20 minutes if you're using ramekins or 30 minutes if you're using a baking dish. After 20-30 minutes, sprinkle the rest of the Parmesan cheese on top of the custard. Return the custard to the oven and bake another 20-30 minutes, or until the custard is set firmly and lightly browned.

Marilyn Chohaney, one of our longtime Madison CSA members, shared this recipe with me last year. Her note that came with the recipe says that it is "Really good!" Marilyn is right! This custard is best served warm or slightly warmer than room temperature. It also reheats well, so don't be afraid to eat leftovers for breakfast!

***Note from Chef Andrea:** I used 2 medium sized kohlrabi which yielded 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups puréed kohlrabi. This is only about half of what Marilyn recommends using. However, I followed the recipe without adjusting any other ingredient quantities and the custard turned out just fine even with less kohlrabi. You'll still get good kohlrabi flavor, the overall recipe will just yield a little less. Use what you have!

Kohlrabi Salad with Sesame Oil

Yield: 6-8 appetizer servings

1 kohlrabi (about 14 oz or 2 medium)	For the sauce:	1 tsp Chinkiang vinegar (may substitute brown rice vinegar)
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt	1 tsp light soy sauce	
2 Tbsp finely sliced spring onion greens	1 tsp finely chopped garlic (may substitute garlic scapes)	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp sugar
		1 tsp toasted sesame oil

1. Peel the kohlrabi and cut it into very thin slices. Cut the slices into very thin slivers. Place in a bowl, add the salt and mix well, scrunching with your hand to squeeze the salt into the kohlrabi shreds. Set aside for at least 10 minutes.
2. Drain off the water that will have emerged from the kohlrabi and squeeze the slivers as dry as possible. Add all the sauce ingredients, mix well, then serve with the spring onion greens scattered on top.

For a Sour-And-Hot Variation: Add 2 tsp more vinegar than the recipe above, as well as 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp chili oil to the sauce.

This recipe comes from Fuchsia Dunlop's latest cookbook, *Every Grain of Rice*. Here's an excerpt from the introduction to this recipe: "Kohlrabi is known in some parts of China, rather poetically, as a 'jade turnip,' on account of its luminous green flesh. It is an underrated vegetable that sparkles in this simple Sichuanese appetizer. I like to serve it alongside richer dishes at the start of a meal, or as a fresh, zesty complement to a bowlful of noodles if I'm rustling up to a quick lunch for one or two. The recipe and its variations were taught to me by Chef Zhang Xia ozhong of Barshu restaurant."