



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

July 6-7, 2018

Maintaining Organic Integrity

By Farmer Richard

Last week we had our annual organic inspection. We've had this annual inspection every year for over forty years and have been inspected by three different certifying agencies. Despite our history, we go through this inspection and our practices are reviewed every year in order for us to continue to be certified organic producers. I've always been an advocate for organic certification and have encouraged many farmers to do the same over the years. In fact I was part of some of the earliest efforts to form and support organic certification and was one of the first farms to be certified in the Midwest. In order to understand today's organic marketplace, I think it's important to understand a little history.

The OGBA (Organic Growers and Buyers Association) of Minnesota was one of the first independent certifiers and was the certifier I worked with to get my organic certificate and be recognized as a "Certified Organic" grower when I was farming in Eagan, Minnesota back in the 70's and early 80's. After moving to our present farm in Wisconsin I helped start the **OCIA** Chapter#1 (Organic Crop Improvement Association), which is still in existence and continues to certify worldwide. From OCIA Wisconsin Chapter #1 was born **MOSA** (Midwest Organic Services Association) which is headquartered out of Viroqua, Wisconsin and is our current certifying agency. They are a good, trustworthy organization!

In 1990 Congress passed *The Organic Foods Production Act* which mandated that the USDA would develop and write regulations to establish national standards for organic producers. The purpose of this legislation was to bring clarity to the organic market place and establish a set of national standards. Organic inspections are done by dozens of independent inspection agencies. The USDA audits those agencies for compliance with the **NOP** (National Organic Program) standards.

See our [blog](#) for the rest of this article!

What's In The Box?

PURPLE CIPOLLINI ONIONS: This week's onion is known for its flat, disc-like shape and its natural sugars that make it more sweet and mild. This onion may be eaten raw or cooked and the tops are usable as well.

FRESH ITALIAN GARLIC: The layers of skin around the cloves of fresh garlic will need to be peeled away with a little more care than when it is fully dried. You'll find the cloves are juicy and mild. The flavor will intensify more as it dries. Store fresh garlic at room temperature.

ITALIAN AND/OR GREEN ZUCCHINI: This is likely the peak week for this crop, so there's a nice pile of zucchini in this week's box. Don't let it go to waste...get creative! Use it in baked goods, soups, casseroles, make zoodles, toss it on the grill....or shred it, freeze it and save it for winter!

GREEN AND/OR SILVER SLICER CUCUMBERS: The cucumbers are peaking this week too which means it's time to get creative with this vegetable as well! Check out this week's *Cooking With the Box* article for links to a lot of great ideas!

GREEN TOP CARROTS: They're still a little small, but we couldn't resist harvesting these tender, sweet carrots for you this week. The green tops are edible too, so put them to use and make some **Carrot Top Pesto** with a handful of basil from the choice box this week!

STRAWBERRIES: Yes, this is our last week of strawberries. Savor each berry and enjoy these last fresh berries of the season.

BROCCOLI: All parts of the broccoli plant are edible—stem, leaves and florets. Use it in stir fry, salads, breakfast casseroles or just lightly steam it!

LACINATO KALE: This is the dark, emerald green bunched vegetable in the box. It's also sometimes referred to as Tuscan Kale. Use it to make kale chips, add it to summer minestrone, or marinate it with a vinaigrette and enjoy it as a fresh salad.

SNOW PEAS: Snow peas are flat with an edible pod and are excellent when stir-fried. The key to keeping them sweet is to keep them refrigerated and eat them within a few days.

PURPLE AND/OR GREEN KOHLRABI: Check out this week's *vegetable feature* for more information and recipes. Yes, the greens are edible too!

FENNEL: If you missed last week's newsletter, check out our *blog* where you'll find more information about this vegetable as well as recipes!

BABY BOK CHOI: This vegetable is one of nature's fast foods. Separate each leaf from the base and wash well. It's tender enough to eat raw or just stir-fry it quickly over high heat.

CHOICE: ITALIAN BASIL—We've sent enough for a handful or so for every vegetable share. Add it to your morning eggs, make a basil-bacon sandwich, or turn it into pesto with your carrot tops!

Featured Vegetable: Kohlrabi

By Chef Andrea

The name for kohlrabi is derived from “khol” meaning stem or cabbage and “rabi” meaning turnip. While it is in the cabbage family and resembles a turnip, it grows differently than both. Many people mistake kohlrabi for being a root vegetable that grows under the ground, but it is actually an enlarged stem that grows above the soil level. Its stems and leaves shoot up from the bulbous part to give it a unique appearance unlike any other vegetable.

Kohlrabi is seeded in the greenhouse in early March and transplanted to the field as early as possible in April, along with other vegetables in the same family of cole crops including broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage. Kohlrabi is reliably the first of this family of vegetables to be ready, so it has earned its “niche” in seasonal eating while we wait for broccoli and cauliflower to make heads.

(See our **blog** for the rest of this vegetable feature article!)

Cooking With This Week's Box!

Welcome to July! This week we are cooking out of our 10th CSA box of the season. Don't worry or fret yet, we still have twenty more delicious boxes to enjoy before winter closes in on us again. Green beans, tomatoes, potatoes, corn and more will be here before we know it...with some of those coming as early as next week! (A little birdie told me beans and potatoes will likely be in next week's box). This week we are wrapping up strawberry season with our last pint of berries. Thank goodness for our late variety that has performed very reliably this year, AC Valley Sunset. As the sun sets on our valley this week, we hope you enjoy and savor these last few tastes of fresh, sweet strawberries. You can do something fancy with them if you'd like, but I really think just eating them as they are will imprint the best memory to hang on to until next summer.

This week's featured vegetable is kohlrabi. This is another unique vegetable, like fennel, that really is in a class all its own. In this week's newsletter, we're featuring another tasty recipe from *Dishing Up the Dirt* by Andrea Bemis, **Kohlrabi Fritters with Garlic Herb Cashew Cream Sauce** (See below). This farmer girl knows her vegetables and has even more recipes featuring kohlrabi on her website: dishingupthedirt.com. My other recipe suggestion for kohlrabi this week is the **Shanghai-Inspired Stir-Fried Pork with Kohlrabi & Bok Choi**.

(See our **blog** for the rest of Chef Andrea's suggestions for utilizing every item in your box including recipe links!)

Kohlrabi Fritters with Garlic Herb Cashew Cream Sauce

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

1 large or 2 medium kohlrabies, peeled (about 1 pound)	1 ½ Tbsp minced fresh dill	2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 medium-sized russet potato, peeled (about ½ pound)	1 ½ Tbsp minced fresh parsley	½ cup grapeseed oil (or other oil for high heat cooking)
1 small onion, diced	1 tsp fine sea salt	Garlic Cashew Herb Sauce (recipe below)
	½ cup all-purpose flour	

1. Preheat the oven to 250°F. Using the large holes on a box grater, grate the kohlrabies and potato. Alternatively, you can use the grating attachment on a food processor to do the same thing. Transfer the grated vegetables to a dish towel, wring out any moisture, then put them into a bowl.
2. Add the onion, dill, parsley, salt, and flour to the grated kohlrabi mixture. Stir in the eggs and mix until everything is well incorporated.
3. Heat the grapeseed oil in a large skillet over medium-high. Spoon ¼ cup of the mixture into the skillet and flatten it gently with a spatula. Add 2 or 3 more fritters to the pan. Cook this batch of fritters until they're golden brown and crisp, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Drain them on a paper-towel-lined plate before transferring them to a baking sheet to keep them warm in the oven while you finish making all the fritters.
4. Serve the fritters with the sauce and enjoy.

Garlic Herb Cashew Cream Sauce

Yield: 1 to 1 ½ cups

1 cup raw cashews, soaked in warm water for 30 minutes	2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil	2 ½ Tbsp minced parley
2 ½ Tbsp fresh lemon juice	2 cloves garlic, minced	Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
	2 ½ Tbsp minced dill	

1. Drain the soaked cashews and rinse them under cold water. Place the drained cashews with ½ cup water, lemon juice, oil, garlic, dill and parsley into a high-speed blender. Whirl away on high until smooth and creamy; this will take about 2 minutes, so be patient!
2. Scrape down the sides and add extra water, a little at a time, until you reach a smooth and creamy consistency. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Add more water to thin if necessary.

These recipes are from Andrea Bemis' book, *Dishing Up the Dirt* and were recommended by a couple of CSA members who tried the fritters and really liked them! She has more great kohlrabi recipes on her website as well, dishingupthedirt.com.