



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

January 10-11, 2014

An Extended “What’s In the Box” for an Extended Season

This week’s box contains many familiar items you received in some of the December boxes during our regular season, as well as a few small surprises to keep you on your toes this winter. We plan and pack these boxes with “STORAGE” in mind. We “hedge our bets”, never knowing for certain how well vegetables will store from the time of harvest in the fall until delivery time in January or how many boxes we’ll be packing. Thankfully everything stored well this year and we are actually able to pack more value in these boxes than you paid for!

As you unpack your box, you’ll find you have quite a pile of food! To help you make the most of your purchase, it’s important to plan your storage strategy. Use this newsletter as a reference as you maneuver through your share. Many of the root vegetables can be stored similarly. The biggest problem with longterm storage of roots and other vegetables is often dehydration making them limp and floppy. If you notice some of your roots starting to look this way, soak them in a bowl of water in the refrigerator to rehydrate them, or cut them up and put them in a soup where you’ll never know they were floppy! Despite the fact that we don’t have any fresh vegetables coming in from the fields, we still have a lot of colorful vegetables to work with to create beautiful & tasty meals!

Happy cooking this winter!

BEETS: Beets will store well for several months if kept in the refrigerator in a plastic bag. Beets can be boiled or roasted with their skin on and then cooled until you can handle them. The cooking time will vary based on the size of the beets. Rub off the peeling and now you’re ready to choose your own adventure. Beets are excellent in cold salads with onions, citrus or cheese. Or simply warm them with butter or add to soups or stews. If you are into fermenting, you could use your beets to make a batch of beet kvass....it’s great for keeping your immune system strong.

CABBAGE: During the winter, cabbage becomes our staple “green” until the return of fresh greens in the spring and gives us that “salad crunch.” Cabbage will store for months if kept in the refrigerator loosely wrapped in plastic or placed in a sealed container to prevent it from drying out. You’ll be amazed at how many meals you can get from a densely packed head of cabbage. If you aren’t going to use all the cabbage at one time, simply cut off the amount you need and put the remainder back in the fridge. Use a standard creamy cole slaw dressing or your favorite vinaigrette and mix the cabbage with an assortment of other raw veggies to make a colorful salad. Cabbage also pairs very well with beans and pork to make a filling soup, or steam it and top with melted cheese for a super simple side dish. You can also use shredded cabbage in place of lettuce on sandwiches & tacos or incorporate it into a stir-fry.

CELERIAC: Store whole in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator. If you aren’t going to use it for awhile, it may be best to put it in a plastic bag or in a storage container to prevent it from getting soft. Celeriac likes to breathe, so don’t wrap it up too tight. If you don’t use the

entire root at one time, store any unused portion with the outer peeling intact to minimize the cut surface area. Celeriac can shine as a raw salad or slaw ingredient, but it also adds a tasty background flavor to cooked dishes as well. You can include celeriac in a root mash, creamy root gratins, roasted root veggie blends, soups & stews. It pairs well with apples, cranberries, citrus and other root veggies.

CARROTS: Carrots are a staple ingredient that are nice to always have around. Carrots will store for several months if kept in the refrigerator in the plastic bag they are packed in. There are so many things you can do with carrots. Turn them into a shredded salad with a light vinaigrette or make carrot pancakes as a savory side dish. They also add sweetness and moisture to baked goods such as muffins, bread, cakes or even breakfast pancakes and pair well with apples, squash and sweet potatoes in these applications. Carrot soup is always a good standby and can be spiced or seasoned in many ways—creamy carrot soup with shallots or spicy carrot soup are just a few ideas. Don’t forget juice! Carrots make a sweet, nutritious juice that can be blended with other fruits and vegetables or added to smoothies and leave you feeling invigorated!

PARSNIPS: Parsnips are known for their storage capabilities....so much so we have a bunch stored in the field to harvest in the spring! Store parsnips in the same manner as carrots. If you embrace the distinct flavor and sweetness of a parsnip, you might enjoy them simply steamed and glazed with butter or roasted. If the flavor of a parsnip is a little strong for your liking, try incorporating them into root mashes, soups, and stews along with other root veggies. Parsnips are also good

in baked goods, adding sweetness and moisture.

TURNIPS: Turnips fit into the “old-world storage vegetable” category and have amazing storage capabilities. Store turnips in the refrigerator in a plastic bag or storage container and they will keep

White Bean & Beet Dip

by Andrea Yoder

Yields 3-4 cups

6-8 baby beets, cooked
2 cups cooked cannellini beans, excess liquid drained off
4-5 cloves garlic, peeled
2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
2 Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp lemon juice
1½ tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
1½ tsp salt
Freshly ground black pepper

1. Peel cooked beets and cut into quarters. You should have approximately 1 cup of beets.
2. Combine beets, beans and all remaining ingredients in a food processor. Process until you have a very smooth puree. If the mixture is too thick, thin it with a little bit of water.
3. Refrigerate for 1-2 hours or overnight to allow the flavors to develop.
4. Serve cold or at room temperature. This makes a colorful & flavorful dip to serve with winter vegetable crudité (raw veggies) such as kohlrabi, carrots, scarlet turnips, etc. It’s also tasty on toast, incorporated into a veggie wrap, or used as the base for a veggie pizza.

for months. The outer skin of the turnip may not look so pretty after awhile, so you might need to trim the outer peeling away. While most are familiar with the standard purple top turnip, we prefer the scarlet and golden turnip varieties which are mild-flavored, sweet and more widely accepted by those who don't care for turnips. Golden and scarlet turnips can be eaten raw on a veggie platter with dip or used in salads and stir-fries. They are also a great vegetable to add to stews or vegetable soups as they add a nice background flavor. If you are into simple preparations, just dice the turnips and cook them in a little bit of broth until they are tender, add a pat of butter and enjoy.

DRIED BEANS: This week you received Cannellini Beans. Cook them until they are almost ready to fall apart and you'll find they are very smooth and creamy. They are a common ingredient in many Italian vegetable soups, but are also often served as a side dish or warm salad along with fish dishes or roasted meats. Dried beans will store for months and even up to a year if kept in a jar with a lid on it. The beans you'll receive this month are still considered "fresh" in terms of dried beans. The beans you typically buy in the store are usually older and harder. If you cook these soon, you'll find the cooking time may be less than you are accustomed to. When you are ready to use them, spread them out on a cookie sheet and sort out any broken or discolored pieces. Put the beans in a colander and rinse, then put them in a large bowl or pot and cover with several inches of water. As they soak they will double or triple in size, so make sure you have a big enough container and enough water to accommodate this. Soak for a minimum of 4-6 hours or overnight. Before cooking, drain off the soaking water and rinse the beans one more time. Now you are ready to incorporate them into delicious soups, casseroles or cook them and puree them to make dips, spread on quesadillas, tacos sandwiches, etc.

KOHLRABI: This is the first year we've experimented with growing kohlrabi for storage. They are a refreshing ingredient and make excellent slaws and salads or are good just to munch on for something crisp. Store them as you would store a turnip. When you are ready to use them, peel off the outer skin and use the crisp, white flesh inside.

GARLIC, SHALLOTS & ONIONS: These items store best in a cool, dark, dry area with plenty of air circulation. The shallots and onions in your storage shares will come in mesh bags meant for storing them in for optimal air flow. Check them every now and again to make sure you don't have one that's starting to sprout or may be going bad. If you do find a sprouting onion, cut it open, remove the sprout

and use the onion right away. If you find one going bad, remove it so the decay doesn't spread. Shallots are not "just another onion," although they resemble one. They have a more refined flavor and a bit more delicate, thin flesh. They are excellent when used in sauces for meat or vegetables, as a base ingredient in creamy soups, or vinaigrettes. Onions are a staple item and serve as a base ingredient many times. They can also become the star of the show in French Onion Soup or Caramelized Onion Tarts.

WINTER SWEET & FESTIVAL or SWEET DUMPLING SQUASH: You are probably familiar with the festival squash by now, but winter sweet is a new squash we tried this year. It has the shape of a kabocha squash, but the exterior is usually blue-gray and sometimes gets a pink blush. The peeling of this squash is very hard and the flesh is dense and more dry, which is why it stores so well. Because of these qualities, I've found the easiest way to prepare it is to cut it in half and place in a baking dish, cut side down, with water in the bottom of the pan. Bake at 350°F until the flesh is tender. Cool enough so you can handle it, then scoop out the seed cavity and discard. Now you're ready to remove the flesh. Because the flesh is so dry, it's important to remove the flesh while it is still warm and there is still some moisture from the steam of cooking it. Put the flesh in a food processor and blend until smooth. You may find you need to add more liquid to make a nice puree. Now the squash is ready to

be eaten as a puree or added to baked goods, soups, etc. The ones we've cooked thus far have had excellent flavor and keep getting sweeter the longer they're stored. This just might be a winner!

SWEET POTATOES: Sweet potatoes should be stored in a cool, dry, dark location at 55-65°F. Check periodically to make sure there aren't any bad spots starting to form. The longer you store them, the more concentrated their flavor and sweetness becomes. They are a versatile vegetable that can be turned into soup, roasted or made into fries or chips, shredded and used as a hashbrown or pancake, or baked and pureed for use in baked goods and pies. I like to roast a bunch at one time, puree them and freeze the puree so it's easy to use when I'm in a hurry. The puree can be spread on a tortilla with black beans to make a quesadilla or turn it into a sweet potato casserole topped with coconut & chopped nuts.

DRIED GUAJILLO PEPPERS: We harvested and dried the guajillo peppers at the end of the summer so we would have these available for your boxes this month. Guajillo peppers are often soaked to rehydrate them and used in sauces for enchiladas or soups and stews of a southwestern nature. You can also toast them whole in a hot, dry cast iron skillet, then crumble them into a spice grinder and make your own guajillo chile powder. Store in a plastic bag or glass jar with a lid and they'll keep for months.

Cannellini Bean & Sweet Potato Soup

by Andrea Yoder

Serves 4

- 1 cup dried beans
- 2 chicken legs
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 Tbsp fresh rosemary, minced
- 1 cup water
- 3 cups chicken stock or broth
- 1-2 tsp salt
- 1-2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2-3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium yellow onion
- 1 cup celeriac, small dice
- 1½ cups sweet potato, small dice

1. Sort beans and remove any broken or discolored ones. Rinse with water, then put the beans in a medium bowl and cover with water by 2-3 inches. Soak for 4-6 hours or overnight. After soaking, drain and rinse with fresh water.
2. Put soaked beans in a medium stock pot. Add chicken legs, bay leaves, rosemary, water and chicken stock. Heat the pot of ingredients over medium heat until it reaches a gentle simmer. Cover and simmer about 50-60 minutes or until the beans are tender. Remove the chicken legs from the pot and set aside to cool. Remove bay leaves and discard.
3. Heat olive oil in a medium sauté pan over medium-low heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté until the garlic just starts to turn golden. Add the celeriac, and sweet potato to the pan. Sauté for about 5 minutes, then add the vegetable mixture to the cooked beans. Season with a tsp. of salt and pepper.
4. Return the pot to the stove over medium heat and bring the soup to a simmer. Pull the chicken off the cooked chicken legs and add the meat back to the soup. Bring the soup to a gentle simmer, cover and cook another 10-15 minutes or until all the vegetables are tender. Taste the soup and adjust the seasoning by adding more salt or pepper if needed.
5. Serve topped with croutons or accompanied by a good piece of crusty bread.