



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

November 20-21, 2015

Thanksgiving Dinner... Time to Plan the Menu!

by Andrea Yoder

I've always enjoyed Thanksgiving, even going back to my childhood. We used to spend Thanksgiving day at home and then celebrated with my mother's family the weekend after Thanksgiving. I liked this arrangement as it meant we got to enjoy not one but two Thanksgiving dinners! As soon as I was able to start cooking on my own, I wanted to contribute to the meal. By the time I reached junior high I was making the whole meal by myself. I'd line up my recipes a week in advance in anticipation of the big day. We enjoyed some traditional favorites—turkey, mashed potatoes & gravy, molded cranberry jelly, etc. Like many families, we had a few specialty dishes that our family always had on the table. My mother was known for her delicious yeast rolls as well as her runny blueberry pie and Grandma B always had to have at least one Jello salad and prune dressing (trust me...it's actually really good). Grandma Yoder always made her famous squash pie and turkey & noodles. There were some formative years as I was learning to cook when I decided to experiment with my skills a bit....and not every dish turned out to be what I imagined it might be. There was the year I decided I would try a new recipe for a pumpkin pie...all by myself. Needless to say I hadn't yet mastered the art of pie crust. I made a pie crust that was so hard we had to cut it with a chisel....literally! The filling was delicious, so the pie wasn't a total loss and we all got a good laugh.

As I grew up and left home, the holidays changed and there were years when I had to work on Thanksgiving or was too far from home. I often spent the holiday celebrating with friends and was exposed to others' traditions, family dishes, etc. This was a whole new perspective for me and reminded me that it's not so much the dishes on the table, but the people you spend it with and the memories you make. One memorable Thanksgiving I spent the day with a group of college students. Our mentor, Theresa, invited us to her home for Thanksgiving dinner and we all brought something to contribute. I'll be honest with you, I can't remember what we ate because the lasting memory from that meal is that we laughed so hard our stomachs were sore and we accidentally set the table decorations on fire while passing the dishes family style!

While I continue to hold onto some of those lasting traditions, new ideas have crept into the mix from time to time. Inspired by vegetables or ideas from other people, I've learned that Thanksgiving is a celebration of a bountiful harvest and the possibilities for

This Week's Box

ORANGE CARROTS: Consider adding carrots to your Thanksgiving table. Check out Food & Wine's recipe for Glazed Carrots with Cardamom & Ginger.

YELLOW ONIONS: Yellow onions are a great all-purpose onion which becomes milder in flavor & sweeter with cooking. Caramelized onions mixed with sour cream make a tasty vegetable dip!

GARLIC: Roast garlic cloves until golden & soft. Include them in your mashed potatoes this Thanksgiving!

SWEET POTATOES: See this week's vegetable feature for more information.

FESTIVAL SQUASH: This squash has a sweet, mellow flavor and can be used in a variety of preparations. Try Mollie Katzen's recipe for Arabian Squash Casserole for something different.

GREEN SAVOY OR RED SAVOY CABBAGE: Make cabbage rolls for a simple and warming winter dinner. Wrap cabbage leaves around a mixture of beef, rice and seasonings and top with tomato sauce. It's easy to add your favorite ingredients to customize it to your tastes.

FRESH BABY GINGER: Use your fresh ginger or freeze it within a week or so. Add it to baked goods like gingerbread or molasses cookies, add it to salad dressings or make ginger tea. You could also try pickling your ginger using the recipe featured in our 11/1/13 newsletter.

CELERIAC: Celeriac may be a bit intimidating, but is actually surprisingly easy to cook. To prepare the celeriac for use, cut it into quarters and peel away the outer skin with a paring knife. Now this root is ready to be added to root mashes, soups, raw slaws and more!

BEAUTY HEART RADISH: These radishes have a greenish white exterior, but a bright pink flesh on the inside. Beauty Heart Radishes are a winter storage radish and will store very well for months. Its mild flavor and bright color can be enjoyed raw in slaws and salads and as a topping for tacos and sandwiches. They can also be cooked by roasting or added to a stir-fry.

CHIOGGIA OR RED BEETS: Roasting your beets will bring out their natural sweetness. Scrub them thoroughly, and then loosely wrap them in aluminum foil. Place the wrapped beets on a baking sheet and roast about an hour at 400°. The skin will peel off easily once they are roasted.

GREEN CURLY KALE: Add Green Curly Kale to your next soup or pasta dish for a nice touch of green. When added to pasta, simply reserve some of your pasta cooking water and toss with the greens and pasta to lightly wilt them.

PETER WILCOX POTATOES: This variety has purple skin with golden, waxy flesh. It is best for roasting, using in soups or potato salad, or pan-frying. Thinly slice these potatoes along with parsnips, carrots, sweet potatoes or other root vegetables to make a tasty root vegetable gratin.

PARSNIPS: Parsnips are excellent when roasted, added to soup or used in recipes as an alternative to carrots. They'll store well in your refrigerator in the plastic bag they're packed in.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS: Brussels sprouts are at their sweetest after they've been kissed by the frost. They are wonderful when simply roasted or check out The Kitchn's recipe for Stovetop Brussels Sprouts Hash with Crispy Sage and Walnuts.

your menu are endless! Whether you decide to stick to the old traditions, alter them with some updates, or go totally off the deep end and change things up completely, I'd encourage you to have fun along the way. Embrace the bounty we have to enjoy....14 vegetables in this week's box alone! There are so many different things you can make.... and that's what makes the meal interesting and fun to cook in the company of friends and family.

With less than a week remaining to plan your culinary creations for the holiday, we thought it might be fun to highlight a few of our favorite recipes from our own archives

utilizing the vegetables and fruits in your shares this week. Maybe you'll find some inspiration from these recipes or will give one of them a try this year. I've cited the newsletter where the recipe was originally printed (all were from vegetable newsletters unless otherwise noted). They can all be found on our website in our newsletter archives or in our searchable recipe database. We'd love to see what you decide to cook for your Thanksgiving dinner. If you have a minute to send us your menu, recipes or a picture of your creation, we'd love to have a glimpse into your holiday.

Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at HVF!

Creamy Gratin of Celeriac, Parsnip & Potato (December 20, 2008)
Parsnips with Brown Butter, Pecans & Maple Syrup (April 24, 2015)
Cranberry Maple Butter (November 22, 2014—fruit newsletter)
Cranberry Sauce with Dates & Orange (December 20, 2014—fruit newsletter)
Beauty Heart Radishes with Sour Cream Dressing & Poppy Seeds (January 12, 2013)

Grandma Yoder's Squash Pie (September 29, 2007)
Ginger-Coconut Sweet Potatoes (November 9, 2013)
Brussels Sprouts with Ginger & Cranberries (October 31, 2014)
Crushed Potatoes with Cream & Garlic (July 18, 2015)
Creamy Horseradish Beets (November 17, 2007)
Celeriac & Apple Salad (September 1, 2007)

Vegetable Feature: Sweet Potatoes

by Lisa Garvalia

Sweet potatoes, the sweet vegetable that you don't have to feel guilty eating! Sweet potatoes are a great source for our daily nutritional needs. They are packed full of beta-carotene, calcium, potassium, iron, Vitamin A and Vitamin C. They are cholesterol free, have no saturated fats and are full of antioxidants. Oh, and did I mention they are sweet and delicious as well?

So, how does the sweet potato get that delicious sweet flavor? Choosing the right variety of sweet potato, good soil, adequate watering and close monitoring during the growing season are all necessary to get the best tasting sweet potato. After the sweet potatoes are dug and brought in from the field, they are immediately put in the greenhouse and left to cure. The curing process is what changes the starch in the sweet potato to sugar and also 'toughens' up the skin so they can be easily handled and have a longer storage potential. The greenhouse is kept at a constant temperature of 85-90 degrees with the humidity level being the same and the process takes up to 7-10 days.

Sweet potatoes do store well and they get better with age. The ideal storage for sweet potatoes, because of the high sugar content, is 55-60 degrees. Keep them in a dry, dark, well ventilated area. Sweet potatoes are sensitive to colder temperatures so keeping them at or above the suggested temperatures is best. If you do find spots on your sweet potatoes during storage it is a good idea to cook and freeze them if you are unable to eat them right away.

Sweet potatoes are very versatile when choosing how to cook them. They pair well with a variety of ingredients including apples, oranges, coconut, cranberries and limes. Common spices used with sweet potatoes include cumin, coriander, chilies, thyme, rosemary, chili powder, curry powder and more. If you want to keep it basic you can simply place a sweet potato in the oven and bake until tender. Cut it open and add butter, salt and pepper, or keep it in the fridge for a simple left-over, just warm and serve.

Best Whipped Sweet Potatoes with Caramelized Apples

Yield: 6 servings
3 pounds sweet potatoes
3 Tbsp unsalted butter, divided
2 Tbsp heavy cream
½ cup applesauce
2 tsp grated fresh ginger
Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper
2 apples, peeled & cored
3 Tbsp sugar

Recipe sourced from [Martha Stewart Living Annual Recipes 2003](#).

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Place sweet potatoes on a parchment-lined baking sheet; pierce each several times with a fork. Bake until very tender when pierced with a knife, about 50 minutes. Remove from oven; let cool slightly.
2. Cut open potatoes; scoop flesh into the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment (may also use a food processor). Add 2 Tbsp butter and the cream, and beat until smooth. Add applesauce and ginger; beat to combine. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Transfer sweet potato mixture to an ovenproof serving dish. Place in oven until heated through, 10 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, cut the apples into 1-inch pieces. Melt remaining butter in a non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Add apples and sugar; saute until golden and nicely caramelized, about 8 minutes. Remove from the heat.
5. Remove serving dish from oven and top with caramelized apples. Serve immediately.

Sweet Potato Rolls

Yield: 20 rolls
¼ cup warm water
1 envelope active dry yeast (1 scant Tbsp)
1 cup milk
½ cup unsalted butter
½ cup sugar
1 ½ Tbsp coarse salt

1 tsp ground cardamom
2 cups cooked sweet potatoes (about 2 medium)
1 tsp freshly squeezed lemon juice
1 large egg, lightly beaten
7 cups sifted all-purpose flour
Vegetable oil, for bowl
Melted butter, for brushing

1. Place the warm water in a small bowl and sprinkle with yeast. Let stand until yeast is dissolved and mixture is foamy.
2. In a small saucepan, heat milk over medium heat just until it begins to steam and bubble around the sides. Remove from heat; add the butter, and stir until melted and combined. Stir in sugar, salt and cardamom. Let cool slightly.
3. Combine sweet potatoes and lemon juice in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment; beat until smooth, 2 to 3 minutes. Beat in egg, and the milk and yeast mixtures until smooth.
4. Switch to the dough-hook attachment. Add flour, 1 cup at a time, beating until dough forms. Continue kneading dough on medium speed until smooth, about 8 minutes. The dough will be slightly sticky.
5. Transfer dough to large oiled bowl. Cover with a clean kitchen towel, and let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk, about 1 hour.
6. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper; set aside. Punch down dough and turn onto a clean work surface. Knead again with your hands, just until smooth. Using a bench scraper or sharp knife, cut dough into 20 equal pieces, and shape into round rolls.
7. Place rolls on prepared baking sheet, about 2 inches apart; cover with a clean kitchen towel, and let rise again in a warm place until double in bulk, about 40 minutes.
8. Using kitchen scissors or a sharp paring knife, snip an X in the top of each roll. Brush tops with melted butter. Bake until tops of rolls are golden, about 20 minutes, rotating pan halfway through. Transfer to a wire rack to cool slightly.

Note: Excellent served with the Cranberry Maple Butter recipe featured in our fruit newsletter on November 22, 2014.

Recipe sourced from [Martha Stewart Living Annual Recipes 2003](#).