



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

April 29, 2017

Sorrel Is Salad Gold!

Eating with the seasons can be an exciting, yet sometimes challenging adventure. After a long winter, we're anxious for the return of fresh food and are grateful for any green thing we can find! While we are able to start planting vegetables in April, the days and nights are still cool and it takes awhile for the soil to warm up. Thus, things often grow slowly and we have to wait patiently until the end of May and into June before we can start harvesting peas, beets, carrots, etc. In the meantime, nature takes care of us by providing us with some delicious spring vegetables to enjoy. Most of the vegetables we harvest this time of year are perennial plants that are either wild harvested, such as ramps and sometimes nettles, or are crops we planted in a previous year that start poking through on their own early in the spring. Some of these vegetables include sorrel, chives, nettles, rhubarb and asparagus. These are important vegetables for us to eat in the spring and all have different nutritive properties that help our bodies transition from winter into a new season. If you are not familiar with these vegetables, they might be a little intimidating at first. However, don't let a vegetable intimidate you, just dive in and start learning how to enjoy something new! Don't worry, we'll help guide you along the way!

Sorrel is a unique perennial plant we look forward to every spring and is amongst the first greens of the season. It is actually in the same family of vegetables as rhubarb! Sorrel leaves have a pointy, arrow shape and are thick in texture and bright green in color. You'll recognize sorrel by its tart and citrus-like flavor if you nibble on a raw leaf. It has a bright flavor that

Next week will be the first week of CSA deliveries!

will call your taste buds to attention. Sorrel is a very nutritious green that contains antioxidants as well as vitamin C, fiber, iron, magnesium and zinc.

Sorrel may be used in a wide variety of preparations and may be eaten either raw or cooked. Raw sorrel can brighten any salad and is excellent when blended into cold sauces, vinaigrettes, dressings or dips. Because of its bold, tart flavor, it is often treated more like an herb when used raw and will give the end product a bright, cheery green color. When cooked, sorrel behaves in a very interesting way. First, its color changes from bright green to a drab olive green almost immediately. Don't worry, this happens to everyone and it's just the way it is with sorrel! The other unusual thing about sorrel is how it "melts" when added to hot liquids. The leaves will almost immediately change color and then start to soften. The longer it's cooked, the more the leaves break apart and you can stir it into a coarse sauce. This is one of the reasons it's often used in soups and sauces.

The acidity of sorrel makes it a natural companion to more rich foods such as cream, butter, sour cream, yogurt, duck, and fatty fish (salmon & mackerel). Additionally, it pairs well with more "earthy" foods such as lentils, rice, buckwheat, mushrooms and potatoes. As with many other spring vegetables, sorrel pairs well with eggs and is often used in quiche, scrambled eggs, custard etc. Don't be afraid to think "outside of the box" and incorporate this green into beverages too! In this week's newsletter I have provided a tasty

recipe for a Frosty Sorrel & Banana smoothie and in a past newsletter we published a recipe for a Sorrel-Lime Cooler (May 10, 2013). The raw sorrel in both of these recipes lends a bright, fresh flavor to the beverage that is invigorating!

We have featured a wide variety of sorrel recipes in past newsletters. These recipes may be found in the searchable recipe database on our website. Here are a few of our favorites that might interest you:

- Sorrel-Lime Cooler
- Sorrel Hummus
- Spiced Lentils with Nettles & Sorrel Yogurt Sauce
- Sorrel-Honey Vinaigrette
- Sorrel Pesto
- Sorrel & White Bean Soup

If you are interested in preserving sorrel to use during the winter, here's an interesting idea from Deborah Madison's book, *Vegetable Literacy*. She recommends making a sorrel puree to freeze. "Drop stemmed leaves into a skillet with a little butter and cook until the leaves dissolve into a rough puree, which takes only a few minutes. Cool, then freeze flat in a ziplock bag....Just a dab will add spirit to the quiet flavors of winter foods: break off chunks to stir into lentil soups, mushroom sauces or ragouts, or an omelet filling."

We hope your spring is off to a good start and encourage you to incorporate some of these special spring vegetables into your meals. In next week's newsletter we will be featuring nettles, another unique spring green that is packed with flavor and nutrients!

Frosty Sorrel & Banana Smoothie

Yield: 2 servings, 14-16 oz each

¾ cup plain yogurt
1 cup milk
1 frozen banana, peeled and cut into chunks
3 Tbsp maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice
7-8 ice cubes
½ bunch sorrel

1. Put all ingredients in a blender in the order listed above. Put the cover on the blender and, with the blender on low speed, turn it on. Gradually increase the speed of the blender and blend until the mixture is smooth and bright green.
2. Serve immediately in a chilled glass.

*Note: While this smoothie is best served immediately while it's frosty, you can store it in the refrigerator for a day or so and it will still be delicious. It may separate a little bit, but it will come together again if you just give it a good shake before you drink it.

Recipe by: Chef Andrea Yoder, Harmony Valley Farm

Armenian Cold Yogurt & Sorrel Soup

Yield: 4 servings

1 ⅔ cups plain yogurt
1 quart water
1 egg, lightly beaten
Sea salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste
½ cup long-grain white rice
4 oz spinach, chopped
2 oz sorrel, chopped (1/2 bunch)
½ bunch cilantro, chopped*
½ bunch dill, chopped*

*Note: Since we do not have cilantro or dill available yet, I (Andrea) substituted 1 cup of chopped chives for the cilantro and dill. It was delicious!

1. Mix the yogurt, water, and egg together in a bowl. Season this well with salt and pepper and give it a good whisk to incorporate the egg thoroughly.
2. Place the rice in a large saucepan, cover with the yogurt mixture, and bring to a boil, stirring frequently to prevent the egg and yogurt from curdling.
3. Cook over low heat, stirring frequently, until the rice is cooked, about 10 minutes.
4. Add the spinach, sorrel, and the herbs and cook for another minute. Remove from the heat and let cool in the refrigerator, then serve cold.

Recipe borrowed from: Olia Hercules' cookbook entitled, *Mamushka: A Cookbook*. Olia is from Ukraine and the recipes she shares in her book highlight the many other cultural influences she experienced growing up in this region. This recipe is one she learned to make from her half-Armenian Aunt Nina. It's an interesting spring soup that you can actually enjoy for breakfast, lunch or dinner! Since it is served cold, you can make it the night before and it will be ready to enjoy for breakfast with a piece of toast and a hard-boiled egg. You can also take it along with you to work for a simple lunch with a few crackers or take it on a picnic!