



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

December 1 - 2, 2017

Follow-Up Report From Our Recent Letter to Members By Farmer Richard

Several weeks ago I wrote a letter to you, our members, asking for your feedback on the future of our CSA and the direction we might take our program as we are coming up on a new year. We have particular concern for the CSA portion of our business as our membership numbers have been declining since about 2010. We had over 120 responses from members with many lengthy, well thought out responses and suggestions. We also held two webinars that were very helpful. What did we learn that could be helpful in reversing our downward sliding numbers? Well, a lot! Before I share some of the suggestions and thoughts we received, I want to clarify something from the letter that may have been misunderstood. We are not in financial trouble and are not considering quitting CSA. We have had some challenging weather events with crop losses, but we've worked hard to make up for some of the losses with this year's fall crops and did have reserves to rely on. We would like to build our CSA back to full capacity and are encouraged to do what we can to make that happen. We have 100 acres of mineral-rich land, plus the experienced crew, the knowledge and the passion for producing nutrient dense, delicious, clean, safe food. We have been able to keep the farm going by increasing wholesale sales when our CSA membership declined, but that market is not our first choice! Yes, we get an occasional call or email from an appreciative burdock customer in Pennsylvania or Chicago, but what we have come to value greatly is the much more personal connection and interaction with our CSA members! The many thank you notes, the pictures of a child eating vegetables as their first solid food, the Thank You notes and drawings from young and old ones that have visited the farm—this is your farm too and you are our best supporters. You are what keeps us going when times are tough. You are our community and you are what

What's In The Box?

RED & YELLOW ONIONS: Store onions in a cool, dry place and away from direct sunlight. If stored this way they should keep well into the winter.

PORCELAIN GARLIC: Garlic should be stored in a similar manner as is recommended for onions. If you have some start to develop a sprout, just cut the clove in half and remove the sprout. You can still use the remainder.

SWEET POTATOES: This week's variety is Covington. The optimal storage temperature for sweet potatoes is 55-65°F. If you aren't going to use your sweet potatoes soon, try to find a cool location in your home that is closest to their ideal storage temperature.

YELLOW/PURPLE & ORANGE CARROTS: See this week's [Cooking with the Box](#) article for several ways to use carrots including egg rolls and carrot cookies. If you missed the last newsletter article about carrots, visit our blog.

FESTIVAL SQUASH: This is historically our best variety for long term storage, so if you have other squash remaining from earlier deliveries, eat those first and save this one to cook later.

BEAUTY HEART RADISH: This radish has a light colored skin with green shoulders. When you cut them open you'll find bright pink flesh inside. They are also known as *Watermelon Radishes*, so if searching for recipes, try using that term for more results.

RED SAVOY CABBAGE: This is one of our favorite fall storage cabbage varieties, but, sadly, we can no longer get seed for this vegetable. It may be used as you would use any other cabbage, either cooked or raw.

SUNCHOKES: Also known as *Jerusalem Artichokes*, they contain inulin which is a nondigestible fiber that acts as a beneficial prebiotic in our bodies. Some people experience abdominal discomfort if they eat too many sunchokes at one time, however others tolerate any quantity of sunchokes just fine. If this is your first time eating them, try a small amount first so you can enjoy their delicious nutty flavor without any ill effects!

GOLD TURNIPS: See this week's blog post for a vegetable feature about storage turnips including these golden turnips.

BABY RED BEETS: Turn these into homemade beet chips or make beet patties using the recipe link in this week's [Cooking with the Box](#) article.

CELERIAC: This is the gnarly, round vegetable with a green and cream colored exterior. It is also known as *Celery Root*, so use this term in addition to celeriac when searching for recipes on the internet and you'll turn up more hits.

BRUSSELS SPROUT: These frost-kissed sprouts have been storing well and we're happy to include them in this box. Trim the bottom of the sprout and let any outer leaves that may have spots on them fall off.

"Community Supported Agriculture" (CSA) is all about. That is what we work for and we sincerely thank you for being a part of our farm. While we are not able to respond personally to all of the great emails we received, be sure that we read each one and have noted your suggestions.

(See our [blog](#) for the rest of Richard's article including a summary of our feedback)

Featured Vegetable: Storage Turnips

Nature has a way of giving us what we need in its appropriate season. As we move into the winter months here in the Midwest we no longer have the luxury of eating vegetables freshly harvested from the field. Rather, for those who choose to embrace a seasonal, local way of eating, we turn to root crops and other vegetables that will store well through the winter months. Feel free to take your time eating through the last two boxes of the season. There's no rush....most items will store well for several weeks if not months. This week we're going to turn our attention to the humble storage turnip.

Storage turnips are much different from the tender, mild baby white salad turnips we grow in the spring and early fall. Storage turnips are denser, have a stronger flavor and will keep for months in cold storage. We grow three different colors of storage turnips including the classic and familiar purple top turnips, golden turnips (in your box this week), and sweet scarlet turnips. Purple top turnips have the strongest turnip flavor while golden and sweet scarlet turnips are more mild. Golden & sweet scarlet turnips are our two preferred varieties, which is why we've chosen them for your last two boxes of the season!

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

Cooking With This Week's Box!

We are coming up on the end of our delivery season, just two more boxes (including this week's box) before our winter break. These last two boxes are packed full of wonderful winter vegetables, most of which will store just fine, so don't feel pressured to eat through your box within the next two weeks.

This week's featured newsletter recipe, **Apple & Turnip Quiche** (see below), comes to us from The Birchwood Café in Minneapolis. After discovering this recipe a year ago, it quickly became a winter favorite and I've made it multiple times. It's a great item to serve for breakfast, brunch or dinner. It reheats very well. It makes a great appetizer or light dinner option for holiday gatherings. If you like quiche, you'll like this recipe and it's a great way to use turnips.

We're pleased to have enough Brussels sprouts to include them in this week's box. Just before Thanksgiving Andrea Bemis posted this recipe for **Charred Brussels Sprouts with Bacon & Dates**. Make this one while dates are readily available and enjoy the sweet, salty, smoky combo of this dish. This would be a good side dish to serve with the **Apple & Turnip Quiche**.

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

Apple Turnip Quiche

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

"Sweet, tart apple makes a nice foil to turnip's sharper edge in this wintery quiche. Sometimes we use celery root instead of turnip, and rutabaga works nicely as well."

Basic Pastry Crust

1 ½ cups unbleached all-purpose flour
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp sugar
½ cup cold unsalted butter, cut into pieces

3 oz cold cream cheese, cut into pieces
2 to 3 Tbsp ice water

Quiche Filling

1 ½ cups small diced apple (peeled & cored)
2 cups small diced turnip
1 Tbsp vegetable oil
5 large eggs
½ cup heavy cream

1 ½ cups whole milk
¼ tsp salt
⅛ tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 tsp fresh thyme or 1 tsp dried thyme
1 cup shredded Gruyere cheese

1. First, prepare the pastry crust. In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, salt and sugar. Cut the butter and cream cheese into the flour mixture to make coarse crumbs. Stir in just enough ice water to bring the mixture together. Gather the dough into a ball, wrap it in parchment paper, and chill it in the refrigerator for at least 20 minutes before rolling it out. (Note: This step may be done a day or two in advance.)
2. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Roll out the pastry dough and fit it into a deep 9-inch pie pan. Line the crust with parchment paper, and weight it with pie weights or dried beans to keep the crust from forming an air bubble. Parbake the crust for about 12 minutes. Remove from the oven and set the crust aside.
3. In a medium bowl, toss the apples and turnips with the oil and spread them out on a baking sheet. Roast, shaking the pan occasionally, until the apples are soften and the turnips just begin to brown, about 10 to 15 minutes. Set the apples and turnips aside.
4. Reduce the oven temperature to 350°F. In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, cream, milk, salt, pepper, and thyme, and stir in ½ cup of the cheese. Stir in the apples and turnips. Place the prebaked crust on a baking sheet and carefully pour the filling into the crust. Top with the remaining ½ cup of cheese. Carefully transfer the baking sheet to the oven. Bake the quiche until the filling is just set but still moist, about 40 minutes. The quiche should jiggle a little in the middle. Let the quiche cool on a rack before cutting it. Serve at room temperature.

Chef Andrea's Notes: This is my favorite recipe in *The Birchwood Café Cookbook* by Tracy Singleton and Marshall Paulsen. This recipe represents what The Birchwood Café in Minneapolis, MN does best---cook seasonally with what's available at that time in the Midwest. In the intro to this recipe they also recommend making this recipe with celeriac or rutabaga in place of turnip.

This has become one of my staple winter recipes. Sometimes I make it as written, but I've also prepared it with a few of my own adaptations.

- Add crumbled cooked bacon to the egg and milk mixture.
- Layer 8 ounces of browned ground pork in the bottom of the pastry crust before pouring the filling on top.
- In place of Gruyere cheese I've used Gouda, cheddar, or a combination of one of these mixed with some smoked cheddar.