



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

December 20 - 21, 2019

VEGETABLE FEATURE: Horseradish Whips

by Andrea Yoder

While horseradish is not a radish, it is in the Brassica family along with radishes. The vegetables in the Brassica family are known for their strong, pungent flavors and they are powerhouses for valuable plant compounds that are beneficial for human health. While many sources say that horseradish can't be or isn't consumed in quantities large enough to get much nutritive gain, I'd counter with the consideration that it isn't always the amount of a food you are eating. Rather, including small amounts of powerful foods periodically over time will result in a cumulative positive effect on your health. With that in mind, let's explore horseradish a little further.

Horseradish is a bold, pungent vegetable that has the power to make you cry, take your breath away and open every nasal passage you have—that is if you work with it and/or eat it in large quantities. However, the same plant compounds in horseradish that make you do all those things are also the compounds that give horseradish its peppery flavor that wakes up our taste buds. These compounds also have the ability to attack cancer cells and boost our immune systems. Horseradish is intended to be used in small quantities, as a condiment or an accompaniment to enhance foods. It goes well with rich and fattier foods such as salmon, beef, sausage and ham. It also goes well with more acidic foods such as tomatoes, apples, lemons and other citrus. It's also a good accompaniment to bland foods that give it a base, but make horseradish look and taste good—foods such as sour cream, cream, butter, seafood, potatoes and root vegetables. Prime rib and/or roast beef is often served with a creamy horseradish sauce. Horseradish is a key ingredient in the classic ketchup based cocktail sauce served with poached shrimp. If you're into Bloody Marys, you'll know horseradish is part of this drink recipe as well. These are just a few examples of how and where you might use horseradish. On the recipe website, *Food52.com*, they have an "Editor's Picks" list for horseradish that contains over twenty recipes using this vegetable. A few of my favorites from this list include **Pepper Crusted Salmon Cakes with Horseradish Sauce**, **Sour Cream Biscuits with Horseradish**, **Chives & Bacon**, **Horseradish and Crab Appetizer** and **Horseradish Parsnip Apple Slaw**.

This week your box contains a bag with 4-5 ounces of horseradish whips. While the root and leaves are both edible, we only harvest and eat the roots. Horseradish is a perennial plant that is typically planted in the fall from seed pieces that are taken from cuttings when the previous crop is harvested. A nice seed piece is a straight piece usually about 8-10 inches long with the

What's In The Box?

RED AND/OR YELLOW OR CIPOLLINI ONIONS: This week's onions are packed in a mesh bag that can be hung in a cool, dark location for extended storage. The mesh will allow adequate airflow for longer storage. If your onions start to sprout, they are still usable. Just cut the onion in half and remove the sprout from the middle.

PORCELAIN GARLIC: Porcelain garlic has all white skin. This type of garlic has fewer cloves per bulb but they are larger.

ORANGE CARROTS: Carrots are a staple winter item and there are many things you can do with them! Check out this week's **Cooking With the Box** article for recipe ideas including **Vegan Carrot Waffles** and **Indian Carrot Dessert!**

SWEET POTATOES: You can keep sweet potatoes well into the new year if stored properly. Their ideal storage temperature is 55-60°F. We recommend storing them in a cool location and out of direct sunlight.

FESTIVAL SQUASH: This squash is recognizable by its orange, yellow and green patterns on the exterior. It has a mild flavored with a light texture. You can eat them simply baked with butter, salt and pepper or stuff them with a flavorful filling of meat, grains and/or fruit and vegetables.

TETSUKABUTO OR BUTTERNUT SQUASH OR GREEN SAVOY CABBAGE: Tetsukabuto, a new variety this year, was described in the seed catalog as "The squash of choice for the apocalypse" due to its potential for long storage. This is a unique variety that is a cross between butternut and kabocha. It is round in shape with slight ridges and has dark green skin. We suspect this squash will only get better and more sweet with time, so set it aside and make it the last one you eat. Butternut squash is one of the most versatile varieties. It's good in baked goods, curries, soup and simply baked or roasted. There are two links to cabbage slaw recipes for **Caribbean and Pina Colada Cole Slaws** in this week's **Cooking with the Box**.

BEAUTY HEART RADISHES: You can recognize this root by its cream colored skin that sometimes has a rosy blush and green shoulders with a bright pink interior. Much of the radish bite is in the skin. While they don't need to be peeled, you may wish to do so if you prefer less bite. These may be eaten raw, roasted or stir-fried.

GOLDEN TURNIPS: Be careful not to confuse these with beauty heart radishes. Golden turnips have buttercream yellow skin and flesh. They have a mild turnip flavor and are a nice addition to winter stews and root vegetable blends.

SUNCHOKES: These tubers have brown skin and a crisp, white interior. They are also referred to as Jerusalem Artichokes. Sunchoke have a mild, nutty flavor and are delicious roasted, eaten raw, stir-fried, steamed or used in soups. They contain a non-digestible fiber called inulin which is beneficial for gut health. Some individuals are more sensitive to this fiber than others and may experience abdominal discomfort if they eat too many sunchoke at one time. If this is your first time eating them, start with a small portion.

HORSERADISH WHIPS: These are packed in a small Ziploc bag and are the long, skinny, pale colored root vegetable. You can read more about horseradish in this week's **Vegetable Feature** article.

PETER WILCOX POTATOES: These are the last of this year's potatoes. This variety has gold, waxy flesh and was bred for having excellent flavor. This is a good variety to use for roasting, soups, gratin and making chips.

diameter of a fat pencil or a thin marker. Seed pieces grow off the main horseradish root which is the most saleable portion of the plant on the wholesale market. Any pieces that are smaller than is needed for wholesale or seed are called whips. Whips are usually thrown away, but this is actually the part of the root I prefer to work with for several reasons. First of all, I think the skin is thin and tender enough on these pieces that you don't need to peel it. The less you have to handle horseradish, the better! I also think the whips are a more manageable size to deal with instead of a big root. On the internet you'll see references that say horseradish should be eaten within 1-2 weeks.....my friends, I think that's wrong. Your horseradish whips will store much, much longer than 1-2 weeks if you keep them in the bag in the refrigerator. To give you a frame of reference, we harvest horseradish the latter part of October. In many years, we've held horseradish in cold storage for months and sell it all throughout the winter! Don't be afraid of a little fuzzy white mold on the surface either. It's not uncommon to see this after extended time in the refrigerator. If you see that happening, but the integrity of the root is still good, just wash it off. If you do decide to discard some/all of your horseradish, do heed caution that you may not want to put it in your own compost pile or the like. Any chunks of horseradish that don't fully degrade may grow under the right conditions. If you're not careful you just might plant horseradish in your own back yard and if you do so unintentionally, it will be with you for years to come!

Back to the whips. Once you start cutting, grating or chopping horseradish you'll release the volatile oils that give horseradish its bite. This is when you need to make sure you have adequate ventilation to decrease the chances of your eyes tearing up. Also, make sure you wash your hands after handling horseradish so you don't accidentally get these peppery oils in your eyes. Some recipes might tell you to grate the horseradish on a box grater. This is kind of hard to do with whips because they're so skinny. My recommendation is to just cut the whips into 1-2 inch pieces and chop them finely in a food processor. You could also use a blender. Little blenders like The Bullet or Ninja can be useful for smaller quantities, or just use a hand chopper. Last but not least, you could chop the whips finely with a chef's knife. As soon as you start chopping horseradish the pungent oils will start to volatilize. If you are going to serve a dish with freshly grated horseradish, you'll want to chop it just before serving. If you chop horseradish in advance and don't do anything to stabilize the oils, the majority of the flavor will dissipate and the horseradish won't be very spicy or flavorful. Often times you'll see a recipe that calls for "Prepared Horseradish." This refers to horseradish that is pre-chopped/grated and stabilized in a vinegar solution which sets the flavor and prevents it from dissipating. This week I've included a recipe for prepared horseradish. You can keep prepared horseradish in the refrigerator for several weeks like this before it will start to lose its pungency. This can be super handy to have as you can just take a teaspoon or two as needed for different recipes without having to chop it fresh every time.

Lastly, if you don't like spicy things or don't think you'll like horseradish, just start small. Stir a little bit of freshly chopped horseradish into mayonnaise and spread it on a sandwich or make horseradish cream and drizzle it lightly over roasted root vegetables. You just might find you like that little bit of kick and flavor it adds!

Lemon Horseradish Butter

Yield: 1 ½ cups (One 8-inch log)

1 or 2 horseradish whips, cut into small chunks	1 tsp fine sea salt	2 Tbsp minced fresh flat-leaf parsley
Freshly grated zest of 1 lemon	1 cup unsalted butter, at room temperature	

1. In a food processor fitted with the metal blade, process the horseradish until finely grated. You will need about 1 - 1½ Tbsp grated horseradish, depending on how strong you want the butter. Scatter the lemon zest and salt over the top and pulse once or twice until evenly distributed. Add the butter and process until smooth, creamy and well combined. Add the parsley and pulse just until evenly distributed.
2. Lay a long sheet of parchment paper or plastic wrap on a work surface. Using a rubber spatula, spread the butter into a long, rough log about 1 ½ inches in diameter. Wrap the parchment snugly around the log and, using your palms, roll the log back and forth to shape it into a smooth, uniform cylinder. Twist both ends like a candy wrapper to seal them closed. Refrigerate for up to 3 days or store in the freezer for up to 3 months.

This recipe was borrowed from Diane Morgan's book, *Roots*. Here are some of her suggestions for how to use this butter: "Grill a steak or a piece of fish and finish it with a slice of this horseradish butter. Roast some fingerling potatoes and dab them with the butter. Put it on a humble baked potato to dress up. Soften the butter, spread it on crostini, and top it with a slice of smoked salmon for an instant appetizer. Having this kind of homemade food on hand takes cooking from good to great."

Note from Chef Andrea: When I make flavored butter like this, I like to roll it into smaller logs that are 2-3 inches long. This is just the right amount for our household to thaw and use within a few days. If you don't want to take the time to roll logs, you can also just freeze 2-3 oz portions in small storage containers. You can't slice the butter as nicely as you can with a log, but once it's thawed it's easy to spread on bread, vegetables, etc.

Prepared Horseradish

Yield: 1—half pint jar

3 oz fresh horseradish whips	¼ tsp salt
4 Tbsp distilled white vinegar	Sugar, pinch

1. Have a clean and sterilized jar with a lid and canning ring available nearby.
2. Cut the horseradish whips into chunks and place them in the food processor. Pulse to grind. It will be a bit dry, something like coconut.
3. Add the vinegar, salt and sugar. Blend to combine well.
4. Pack the horseradish into the jar and refrigerate.

Recipe adapted from *The Kitchen Ecosystem* by Eugenia Bone.