



MSU STUDENT ORGANIC FARM NEWSLETTER

February 8, 2007

IN YOUR SHARE THIS WEEK

- Garlic
- Cabbage
- Onions
- Butternut
- Head Lettuce and Bagged Loose Lettuce
- Celeriac
- Hakurei Turnips – SO Delicious!
- Choi (or another cooking green depending on what we can harvest!)

FARM CALENDAR OF EVENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Certificate Students

Your Organic Farming Certificate Students who will be on CSA rotation (running and managing CSA) for the next 4 weeks are Kathy Koch, Teri Vanhall and Rosemary Sheets. They will be introducing themselves and getting to know you. They are quite excited and working hard to learn how CSA operates and to present amazing veggies to you!

Cold, Cold, Cold, Cold, and More Cold

This is some seriously COLD weather!! It is making things quite a challenge to harvest for the past few weeks. The saying “seize the moment” has become our daily mantra. We have to take advantage of the small windows of opportunity to harvest the crops when they are not frozen. It has been quite dicey the past few weeks and this cold snap is likely to continue for another week. We are doing our best to offer you a variety of fresh crops, but we are limited to what we can harvest depending on what thaws enough!

I have to admit, we are starting to sweat a bit (yeah, weird since it is so cold!) thinking about how long and how often our crops are freezing and thawing. These crops are able to handle it--that’s why we grow these specific crops--but freezing water is a major structural change to a plant and, eventually, a plant is going to have enough and just not bounce back the way we want it too. So, we just want you to know what we are facing with this frigid weather. It is not ideal, especially after the abnormally warm December. We are doing our best to manage the warmth that is generated by the sun in our houses and trapping as much of that as we can each day.

I hope that you can appreciate even more eating fresh spinach and greens and turnips in February in Michigan! Let's all send warm thoughts to the hoopouses!

Featured Vegetable of the Week: Celeriac

We will have a sample of the recipe below – Gratin of Celeriac – at CSA this week. Most people do not know what celeriac is and the looks of it, most people are turned off by it. If you like celery, you should LOVE celeriac. And if you are like me and don't really love celery, you should keep an open mind because, besides eating it raw, it really just takes on the flavor of whatever else you are cooking. It is great in soups and potato or rutabaga mash and can really be used the way any root crops are used. So, don't be scared by the alien-looking appearance. We keep the roots on and don't scrub them for storage purposes, but the good 'ole celeriac cleans up real nice. Go for it! Be daring! Try it!!!

The knobbly fragrant root of the celery plant derived from wild celery. Combines the flavours of celery, nuts & parsley. Celeriac is the root of celery, grown not for it's greens but for the larger root. It is a wonderful storage crop and a wonderfully versatile vegetable!

Serving Suggestion: Celeriac has a wonderful ability to absorb flavor and makes a great addition to soup. It can be grated and used in salads (but best blanched in hot water first). Marinade in olive oil and lemon juice. Celariac is excellent mashed with potatoes and garlic, whole or steamed.

Cooking Instructions: To prepare, peel thinly to preserve the goodness just under the skin. Lemon juice will help to stop discoloring. Cube or slice, add to boiling, salted water and cook 10 mins.

Nutritional Information: Contains useful amounts of phosphorus and potassium. It is cholesterol and fat free and is an excellent source of dietary fiber.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, March 3rd, ALL DAY. Michigan Organic Ag Conference at the Kellogg Center. Come learn all about issues in organic production happening right here in Michigan. This conference is geared towards both producers and consumers who are interested in organic. For more information go to www.moffa.org and click on the Michigan Organic Conference link.

Tuesday, March 6th, 4:30 – 8:30ish. SLOW FOOD Red Cedar first ever event! Kellogg Center. Come to this SLOW FOOD extravaganza to celebrate and participate in a local, slow meal prepared by Michigan chefs and food provided by a whole host of Michigan growers and producers. There will be a full course dinner as well as speakers and a "farmer's market" exhibit area. Want to learn more about SLOW FOOD RED CEDAR? Contact Barb Mutch at mutchb@msu.edu.

RECIPES

Please note: you can always substitute any of our cooking greens for one another in any recipe. It is rare that when a recipe calls for KALE, you must use KALE. You can use swiss chard, asian greens, collards, etc.

GRATIN OF CELERIAC

1 large or 2 small celeriac
a little lemon juice
4 tablespoons parmesan cheese, grated
25 g (1 oz) butter
1 tablespoon bread crumbs
3 large cloves garlic, chopped
1 large onion, chopped
125 g (4 oz) of streaky bacon , chopped (optional)
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 large carrot, diced
1 kg (2 lb) tomatoes, skinned, chopped or 1 large can
150 ml (5 fl oz) dry white or red wine
salt and pepper
sugar – just a touch
dried oregano
fresh or dried basil

Preheat oven to 180°C/350°F/gas mark 4. Cut the celeriac into slices and peel. Rub the cut edges with lemon juice to prevent discoloration. Cook the slices in boiling salted water until just tender. Arrange in a buttered gratin dish, sprinkling parmesan cheese and dots of butter on each layer. Add the garlic, onion and bacon to a pan and heat with the oil until they are soft. Add the carrot, tomatoes and wine. Break down the tomatoes with a wooden spoon. If using fresh tomatoes, raise the heat and cook, uncovered for 15 minutes. If using canned tomatoes cook more slowly over a medium heat for 45 minutes. Add salt, pepper and oregano after the first 10 minutes. When the sauce is cooked, add the fresh basil and pour over the celeriac slices. Top with cheese, bread crumbs and dots of butter. Cook in the oven for 15 minutes and brown the surface under the grill. Serve with green vegetables.

MSU Student Organic Farm Contact Information

Farm Phone: 230-7987

Farm Managers: Jeremy Moghtader, Corie Pierce

Assistant Farm Manager: Jay Tomczak

SOF Student Farmers: Tim Heuer, Andy Fles, Trevor Johnson, Luke Tomczak, Amanda Taylor, Aryn Labrake, Sam Cooper

OFCP Students: Rosemary Sheets, Maggie Wright, Tom Stump, Dan Bair, James Garthe, Teri Vanhall, Linda Anderson, Kathy Koch, Anna Kaschner