



**A Place on Earth CSA Notes
May 27-30, 2020**

In your share this week:

Green Garlic; Asparagus or Rhubarb; Mixed Greens; Turnips (all white) or Radishes; Kale; Butternut Squash

Welcome to A Place on Earth CSA's 2020 season. If you're an old timer, you know that I try to come up with some recipes and techniques most weeks that will help you be successful in using all your healthy, organic food. If you're new at CSA, you may need these suggestions for making the most of your CSA share even more than the old timers. (Also know that most boxes will be much larger, but this first one had the result of much recent rain and a freeze.)

At times we all get busy or lazy or tired, and the temptation to just pop everything into a large plastic bag after we pick it up and chuck it in the fridge if way too large. If you do, there's a chance you will discover it in a few days—maybe in time for your next delivery—as a big, slimy bag of compost. Trust me; most of us have been guilty of that at least once. Here are some “suggestions” you might want to follow to make sure you eat all of this delicious food that Carden & Courtney—and, of course, Clark & Campbell—have worked so hard to grow for us. And if you don't have the opportunity to eat it all, you will freeze it for later.

1. As soon as you bring your veggies home, get the family busy washing and packaging everything in meal-sized bags. You've heard the old saw: “A stitch, in time, saves nine.” Then it will be easy to use. You can use plastic bags or the green or pink cellulose bags to keep food clean and crisp in the fridge—which really does make the food last longer. You can re-use them several times.
2. If you don't have a salad spinner, you might want to get one. Once the veggies have been washed, you can spin them dry before packaging, which means they won't turn to slime as quickly. If you're pressed for time, you can delay removing stems and slicing until later. At least they will be clean & ready to cook.
3. Many organic greens harbor a few little creepy crawlies, which are harmless, but not appetizing. It's a good idea to put 2-3 tablespoons of salt in the first big bowl of wash water. Let it soak for about 5-10 minutes, and the little worms/slugs/bugs will float to the top for a front row seat, and you can pour them off, rinse a couple of times, and it's ready to dry and pack up until ready to use. If you're making a salad, you're almost done, especially if you have the salad dressing and add-ons already to go on top. And don't forget that diced apples, berries, oranges, nuts, and raisins help make a lovely salad that everyone likes.
4. If you are washing cooking greens, it's a good idea to remove the center stem, which is usually sort of tough. Then it's ready to cook, and most greens only need to be cooked until wilted to be delicious. (More about this below)

5. If you have several different kinds of greens, you may wish to separate them by type, or by which are more tender (spinach, chard, beet being the tenderest), which are medium tender (kale, mustard, bok choy, tatsoi, radish, turnip, and the tougher greens (collards, and leaves from broccoli, Kohlrabi, cauliflower, and oversized leaves, etc.) Know that all greens that you will receive in this CSA are edible (except rhubarb and potato leaves, should we ever receive rhubarb), so it's fine to mix leaves from various kinds of greens. Know also that young greens are mostly tender. (And if you don't like rhubarb, please give to me!)
6. If you are cooking greens and a white worm floats to the top, simply remove it and make it your secret. They are harmless, and there's no reason to alarm family members who might get spooked by a white worm. (All the more organic, my dear!)
7. If you remove some stems/leaves that are unpalatable, you need a compost container. You can buy one or use a circle made of chicken wire or other wire, layering with leaves. You can also mix these leaves with non-meat table scraps. Google "making compost" for more specific directions. I have a compost tumbler, 2 bins for use when that is full, and a place by my back door where I can dump stems from greens.
8. Once your produce is washed and ready to go, plan your meals. If you have leftovers, pack them up for the next day's lunch; they're "money in the bank." I'll offer lots of recipes & cooking/preparation ideas, and I hope you will share your recipes and ideas.
9. If you can't use everything and can't give it to friends, consider one of these options:
 - a. Most vegetables may be frozen if you blanch the cut-up pieces for 3 minutes in boiling water, chill in cold water, drain and dry, and package in a zippered freezer bag. Of course, there are some veggies that will last many days in the fridge: carrots, turnips, radishes, celery, to name a few. Potatoes, sweet potatoes, and winter squash often keep for weeks at room temperature.
 - b. If you can't use all the lettuce/salad greens, put them in a blender/food processor and grind until fine. Pour into an ice cube tray and freeze. Use these nutrition powerhouse cubes in smoothies or in soups or sauces.
10. Every day your food stays in the fridge—even wrapped properly—it loses some of its nutritional value, so use it or freeze it as soon as possible during the first week. If you freeze anything, use plastic bags designated for freezing; my favorite brand is Ziplock.

Here's an offer you may need occasionally IF you pick up on Woodbine: I go every week—or John Bruggman brings shares to a large group of my neighbors in the Highlands--and will happily bring your box home with me (1709 Gresham Road, off Trevilian) and you may pick it up when you can that day. Text/call me at 502-533-4803, or e-mail phyllisfitzgerald@yahoo.com, but also let Carden and/or John Bruggman to let them know.

OK, now on to how to cook/prepare/deal with foods that may be new to you—or perhaps gain new insights into ways to prepare, so let's start there.

The best new salad I've discovered in years if you have "sturdy" greens: It lasts 2-3 days, and you may vary ingredients to suit you, based on season, eliminating some, adding others. (Don't over-dress with dressing; use barely enough to coat.)

"Keeper" Salad

- 2 carrots, washed and grated
- 1 watermelon, daikon, or another radish, peeled and grated
- 2 ribs celery, washed and grated

1 turnip, peeled and grated
2 apples, cubed or grated
1 red bell pepper, washed, seeded, and grated
2-4 cups “sturdy” mixed salad greens, washed, dried, and thinly sliced (mixed greens from your box; not bibb or leaf lettuce)
2-3 tablespoons each, raisins, craisins and nuts/seeds of choice, optional

Dressing*

2.3 cup olive oil
1/3 cup vinegar (I like red wine vinegar)
1 teaspoon dry mustard
2 teaspoons sugar
1 teaspoon dried dillweed
Salt and pepper to taste

Using a food processor, grate carrots, radish, celery, turnip, apples, and red pepper. Slice salad greens into narrow ribbons, then slice again to make short ribbons. Mix all ingredients well, adding nuts and raisins if you like. Make dressing and place in a “shaker” jar, shaking 3-4 tablespoons of dressing onto the greens. Mix salad with dressing well, adding only as much dressing as you absolutely must to barely coat the vegetables. Taste for seasoning, adding salt, pepper, and more dressing if needed. Serves 4. Refrigerate leftovers, as they are delicious the next day.

*Dressing will keep for a couple of weeks in the fridge.

Kale and Bacon Hash Brown Casserole (Julia Moskin, NYT)

1 tablespoon unsalted butter, at room temperature
6 slices bacon
½ medium yellow onion, finely diced
4 cups lightly packed chopped kale or mixed greens (about 3 ounces)
1 garlic clove, minced
12 large eggs
1 cup whole milk
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
6 ounces shredded mozzarella (about 1 1/2 cups)
6 ounces shredded Gruyère (about 1 1/2 cups) –I used cheddar
1 (20-ounce) bag frozen hash browns*, thawed and patted dry
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9-by-13-inch baking dish with the butter. In a large skillet, cook the bacon over medium-low until crispy, 8 to 10 minutes. Transfer the bacon to a plate lined with paper towels and set aside. When cool enough to handle, roughly chop bacon.

Pour off all but 2 tablespoons of the bacon grease from the pan. Heat the skillet over medium, add the onion, and sauté until soft and lightly browned, 2 to 4 minutes. Add the kale and garlic and sauté until the garlic is tender and fragrant, another minute. Remove from the heat and stir in the chopped bacon.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, milk, and mustard. Add 1/2 cup mozzarella, 1/2 cup Gruyère, the hash browns, 1 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper; stir to combine. Stir the kale mixture into the eggs, then pour into the buttered dish. Top evenly with the remaining mozzarella and Gruyère. Cover with foil.

Bake for 45 minutes. Remove the foil and bake, uncovered, until the top is lightly browned and bubbly, another 15 minutes. Serve hot. (Cooled casserole will keep, covered, in the refrigerator for 3 to 5 days.)

*You may substitute 2-3 barely cooked potatoes, diced, for the frozen hash browns.

Green Garlic: This is the garlic stalk that did not have room to grow and had to be thinned out so the bulb would have enough room to grow. Some folks make pesto out of it, but I'll warn you: it is very strong! Remove dark green loose leaves and compost but retain the solid cores. Wash, dry and cut the rest of the stalk into 4" pieces.

My favorite way to use the stalks is to cut into 4" pieces, and add to stock when making soup; then discard the stalks to make your soup; they will have given their life for the flavor of the soup. At any rate, freeze the green garlic; I'll print another recipe soon. To use the white part of the stalk, cut into 1/4" rounds, to saute with onions when making a casserole, chili, or soup.

Asparagus: Sorry if I insult old timers, but if you are a newbie who has not cooked asparagus, let's do it right: hold each stalk at the flower end with one hand, and the other end with the opposite end. Snap the stalk in the place that wants to break—not bend. The tender end is near the stalk, and you want to steam or barely cook that end, seasoning only with butter, salt, and pepper. The other end may be peeled with a potato peeler or sharp knife, removing the outer skin. You may either cook the inside of the stalk with the rest of the tender stalk, cut into 1/2" rounds and put into salads, eat raw like celery, or add to soup.

Rhubarb: You love it or hate it, and I love it! Wash the stalks and cut into 1/2" pieces. Place in a saucepan and add 2-3 tablespoons water and sugar for every cup of rhubarb. Bring to a boil, stirring to keep from burning, until the rhubarb dissolves. Carefully taste, adding more sugar if needed. Chill and eat. I freeze it and use it on toast instead of jam. I'll add a fabulous pie recipe if we get more next week. Or contact me and I'll send it to you.

Butternut Squash: This winter squash has wintered over from last fall and will be incredibly sweet. Cut in half, lengthwise with a very sharp knife and remove/discard the seeds. Then turn upside down on a cookie sheet and bake in a 400-degree oven for 40-45 minutes, until you can prick the skin all the way through with a long-handle fork. Turn right-side-up, add a dollop of butter, and enjoy!

Radishes/Turnips: You might have received either of these in your box. Remove the greens from stems, and add to the kale/cooking greens, and they will cook nicely with the kale. Yes, I know they feel "fuzzy," but trust me on this: once cooked, you will not be able to distinguish them from other

greens, and they will taste like the other greens. If you received turnip greens, they would also mix nicely with kale—or on their own.

A word about radishes: did you know they make a wonderful sandwich? Slice paper thin, use thin slices of a white baguette, slather with cold butter, salt and pepper, and layer the radish slices. That's it. Somehow the butter takes the "bite" out of the radishes, and it's a combination that the French like a lot. Radishes may also be roasted with potatoes, carrots, sweet potatoes, etc., which sweetens them a lot, when drizzled with butter or oil in the oven.

And about turnips: Larger turnips need peeling, but very small, tender ones often don't need peeling. Small turnips—these are "salad turnips"—are fabulous in salads, sliced just as you would slice radishes, so don't hesitate to try them in your salads. They are one of my favorite snacks to eat out of hand, and no peeling is necessary!

Please share your recipes! We know that your favorite recipes will also be favorites of others, so please share your favorites so others may try them. Just e-mail them to me and I'll share. Everyone needs their 15 minutes of fame, and we promise to shower you with that! If you would like to contact me with questions or comments, e-mail me at phyllisfitzgerald@yahoo.com. *If you want to unsubscribe, just return this e-mail, and say so, no hard feelings.*