

A close-up photograph of a woven basket filled with fresh vegetables. In the foreground, a large watermelon with characteristic green and light green stripes sits on the left. To its right are several tomatoes in various stages of ripeness, from red to yellow. A large, dark purple eggplant is visible on the right side. In the lower right, there are several bright red and yellow bell peppers, along with some smaller red chili peppers and green leaves. The basket is made of light-colored woven material and sits on a wooden surface.

What is this...

and what am I supposed to do with it?

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Arugula

Arugula is a spicy, peppery green that pairs well with the sweet and tangy flavors of fruit, as well as the savory flavors of meat and cheese, which makes it a perfect addition to salads and sandwiches. For growing and storage instructions see Leafy Greens. Arugula may be substituted in recipes that call for watercress, spinach, or mache.

Arugula Salad with Strawberry Rhubarb Vinaigrette

Vinaigrette

- 1 cup chopped fresh rhubarb
- 1 ¼ cup chopped fresh strawberries
- 3 large shallots, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- ¾ cup canola oil
- ¼ teaspoon Dijon mustard

Salad

- 1 bunch arugula
- 12 strawberries
- 4 ounces goat cheese

Simmer rhubarb, strawberries, shallots, sugar, and red wine vinegar in small non-reactive saucepan until tender, about 10 minutes. Puree, strain into large bowl, and cool. Whisk in canola oil and Dijon. Serve over tossed salad.



Recipe from WSU Extension of Clark County

Arugula Salad with Pears and Gorgonzola



Dressing

- 2 fresh pears sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon champagne vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste.

Salad

- 3-4 cups baby arugula
- ¼ cup Gorgonzola, crumbled
- ¼ cup sugared pecans

In a large bowl, whisk together all dressing ingredients. Add arugula and toss to coat. Divide dressed arugula among 4 chilled salad plates. Top each salad with pear slices, Gorgonzola, and pecans. Serve immediately. May substitute apple slices or canned pears if fresh pears are not available.

Arugula

Lemon Spaghetti with Arugula

12 ounces spaghetti (uncooked)
juice and zest of 1 lemon
1/2 lemon cut into half moons for garnish
1 tablespoon butter
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan
3 ounces prosciutto
4 cups arugula
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Cook pasta to al dente. Reserve 1 cup water from pasta. Drain pasta and return to pot and add lemon juice and zest, butter, red pepper flakes, Parmesan, and 1/2 cup pasta water. Stir gently to combine. Add additional pasta water and stir until creamy. Add arugula and prosciutto and toss until arugula begins to wilt. Season with salt and pepper. Top with additional Parmesan. Garnish with lemon slices.



Arugula and Apple Sandwich

2 slices good quality sandwich bread
5-6 apple slices
1/2 cup arugula coarsely chopped
Cheddar, enough slices to cover one slice of bread

This sandwich is equally good with many substitutions—any bread or roll; instead of apples try pears or beets, change arugula to cress or mustard greens; and use almost any cheese including brie, gorgonzola, cheddar, or soft goat cheese. For those who think all sandwiches should include meat, add chicken or turkey slices, bacon, or prosciutto.

This sandwich works because it hits so many flavor receptors in our mouth; sweet, tart, salty, savory, bitter, and umami (that hot peppery flavor similar to horseradish).

Veggie Tips

by Pat Moszeter

Asparagus (*Asparagus officinalis*)

Asparagus is a member of the Amarylloid family originating in the eastern Mediterranean region. It has been cultivated for over 2000 years. Grown by the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, asparagus was widely spread by the Roman army throughout most Europe, the Middle East and parts of North Africa. Asparagus was once believed to have medicinal qualities. Today asparagus is prized for its unique flavor.

Asparagus can be planted from the middle of April to late May; after soil has warmed to 50°. Planting in cold, wet soil could make the plant more susceptible to Fusarium crown rot. Asparagus gets 6 feet tall, so plant it where it won't shade other vegetables. Asparagus craves phosphorus. Compost made with manure or kitchen scraps will have abundant phosphorus. To prepare the bed, dig a furrow 6 inches deep and 10 inches wide. Add 2-3 inches weed free compost and work into the soil. If you prefer chemical fertilizer, you may apply 1 pound of a triple superphosphate 0-46-0 fertilizer or 2 pounds of 0-20-0 fertilizer per 50 foot row.

Plant only healthy, disease free crowns. The root system of a year old asparagus plant is a crown. Each crown can produce about a half a pound of spears per year. The all-male hybrid varieties such, as Jersey Giant, Jersey Prince or Jersey Knight, produce spears. Female plants produce berries with seed which can become a seedling problem and usually results in decreased crop production. Place the crowns into furrow on top of fertilizer, spaced 18 inches apart in rows

that are 5 feet apart. Completely fill furrow to original soil level and do not compact. Spears will emerge within one week. Mulch with 3 inches of weed free straw or leaves to discourage weeds.

Asparagus is drought tolerant and seeks moisture deep in soil. Some watering might be necessary for vigorous growth. The first year asparagus should not be harvested. Spears will elongate and reach height of 8 to 9 inches and tips will open. The spear will become woody and form be small branchlets that become ferns. These ferns produce food for the plant and should be allowed grow until hard frost causes them to die back. Remove all dead top growth and debris from around the plants to interrupt the life cycle of asparagus beetles and other pests.

Harvest asparagus the second year when shoots are 8 to 9 inches with tight tips. Do not cut asparagus below the soil with a knife as that may injure the crown. Asparagus can be harvested several times during a 3-4 week period. This will also stimulate more bud production on the crown and greater yields for the future.

Fresh asparagus can be stored up to a week in the refrigerator. Cut off about 1/2 inch from the bottom of the asparagus shoots. Stand them upright in a jar with an inch of water in the bottom. Wrap the top in plastic wrap or cover tightly with a food safe plastic bag to prevent the asparagus from wilting or picking up other food odors. If the water becomes cloudy, cut the ends off the shoots, change the water, and use within 2 days.



Plant crowns in a shallow trench.



Don't harvest shoots the first year.



Shoots grow tall with wispy, fern-like foliage.

Asparagus

When asparagus isn't in season try substituting beans or snow peas.

Absurdly Addictive Asparagus

4 ounces prosciutto, dice into 1/4 inch pieces
1 tablespoon butter
1 pound asparagus, sliced into 2 inch pieces
1 ¼ cup green onion, thinly sliced crosswise
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 teaspoon orange zest
2 tablespoons toasted pine nuts
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped fine
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

In a large non-stick pan, sauté pancetta, stirring frequently, over medium heat, until crisp and lightly golden. Add 1 tablespoon of butter to pan. Add asparagus pieces and onion and sauté until asparagus is tender crisp, about 3-4 minutes. Add garlic, lemon and orange zest, toasted pine nuts, and parsley and sauté for about 1 minute, until fragrant. Season to taste with freshly ground pepper and salt. Serve immediately.

Recipe source: Food 52



Roasted Asparagus

1 bunch fresh asparagus trimmed (about 1 pound)
2 Tablespoon butter (not margarine)
1 Tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon soy sauce
Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
Wash and trim woody ends off asparagus.
Arrange asparagus on a non-stick baking sheet.
Spray lightly with cooking spray.
Bake asparagus 12 minutes or until tender.
Brown butter in saucepan over medium heat.
Remove from heat.
Stir in balsamic vinegar and soy sauce.
Pour over baked asparagus serve immediately.
Serves 4.

Basil

Pesto is a very basic recipe made with herbs and oil. Pesto is most commonly made with basil, but cilantro, parsley, mint, fennel, arugula and spinach are all very common ingredients. Parmesan cheese is usually added, but you can leave the cheese out or substitute other cheeses like; goat cheese, cream cheese. or feta. Same goes for the pine nuts, leave them out or substitute walnuts, almonds, pistachios or even sunflower seeds. This is one herbal recipe that allows for much experimentation and also freezes well. Pesto is often used in pasta, soups, dips and appetizers.

Basic Pesto

2 cups fresh basil leaves, packed
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan
3 garlic cloves, minced
1/3 cup pine nuts, finely chopped
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Put all ingredients except olive oil in food processor. Pulse several times. While processor is running, very slowly add olive oil until emulsified. If you add the oil too quickly it will separate rather than emulsify.



Pesto Bean Soup

5 cloves garlic
Pinch of red pepper flakes
4 cups cooked navy beans
1 cup chicken stock or water
4 tablespoons pesto
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Sauté garlic and red pepper flakes. Add beans, chicken stock, and pesto. Simmer until thick. Top with Parmesan cheese.

Pasta with Pesto and Fresh Tomatoes

For a quick, light dinner, add enough pesto to coat cooked pasta and top with fresh tomatoes and Parmesan cheese. For a heartier main dish top with slices of grilled chicken.



Veggie Tips

by Phyllis Pugnetti

Beans

Beans originated and were domesticated in many places around the world. From the lowland tropical areas of Central America and Southeast Asia to the high elevations of the Andes and Himalayan mountains, beans have been cultivated as food for 10,000 years. Beans are an important legume crop, providing calories, protein, fiber, and complex carbohydrates. Dried beans have almost double the calories of most grains, seeds or vegetables, making them a very important staple crop throughout human history. Dried beans are also a reliable food source for long term storage, helping humans survive during times of famine. Green beans or snap beans did not gain popularity as green vegetable in the United States until well into the 1800s. The word bean is Germanic and came to be used widely to describe the seeds of most podded legumes including soybeans, chickpeas, peas, lentils, and even peanuts. This resulted in many confusing names like black eyed peas and cowpeas which are actually beans not peas. Beans are eaten plain, spicy, sweetened, fermented, and ground into paste or flour. Only three species of beans are widely grown in US home gardens—common beans, runner beans and long beans.

(Phaseolus vulgaris) are common bush, and pole beans. Bush beans grow 1-2 feet tall and usually don't need any staking. They grow better and set more pods in the heat of summer than pole beans. Pole beans grow 6-10 feet long and require staking or trellising. They don't produce many pods in extreme heat, often waiting to produce the majority of their crop in the early fall, after the heat but before cool weather sets in.

(Phaseolus coccineus) are runner beans. They have very aggressive vines that can grow up to 20 feet and need very sturdy support. They grow especially well in cool, foggy, cloudy, wet summers, and will survive very light frost. In North America runner beans are primarily grown as ornamentals. The Scarlet Runner bean has bright red flowers that are attractive to bees and humming birds. Runner beans have large, wide, flat pods that are firm and meaty. They take longer to cook, can be julienned, and also hold up well during processing.

(Vigna unguiculata) are long beans. They can grow 10-15 foot vines with thin, tender pods that grow in pairs and are 1-2 feet long. The pods do not store well so are best eaten within 1-2 days after harvest. They don't hold up well to processing, but can be frozen with some loss of texture. Long beans love the heat and die with the first cold weather.

Beans are one of the easiest vegetables to grow and are as popular as tomatoes and peppers. Beans need a warm, sun-



Scarlet Runner Beans

ny spot in the garden with well drained soil. Beans don't like to be transplanted. When the weather is warm and remains consistently above 55° at night. Direct seed into well drained soil, when soil temperatures are between 60° and 85°. Plant seeds about an inch deep, and keep moist until germination. Pole beans should be planted 4-6 inches apart. Plant bush beans in wide beds or double rows with seeds spaced 8-10 inches apart. You should have bean pods in approximately 60 days. Pick every other day to keep plants producing. To maintain high yields, move beans to a new location in the garden at least every other year.

Unwashed beans placed in a plastic bag or reusable container will store about 5-7 days in the refrigerator.

Beans

When beans aren't in season, try substituting asparagus or snow peas.

Long Beans and Steak

- 1 pound Long Beans
- 8 ounces flank steak
- 1 tablespoon corn starch
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons Chinese style black bean garlic sauce
- ¼ cup chicken stock
- 1 tablespoon Chinese style ground chili paste (optional)
- 1 tablespoon peanut or canola oil

Cut flank steak very thin against the grain then cut in 1 inch pieces. In a bowl, mix thoroughly beef, corn starch and soy sauce, and place in the refrigerator to marinate 30 minutes. While meat is marinating, bring 2 quarts of lightly salted water to a boil. Cut long beans into 1 inch pieces. Add long beans and cook for about 2 minutes. Drain and set aside. In a wok or heavy skillet heat oil on high heat until almost smoking. Add beef and stir fry for 1 minute. Add prepared long beans to beef and stir fry another 2 minutes. Add black bean sauce, chicken stock, and chili paste continue to stir, mix well. Cook an additional minute until sauce thickens. Serve with steamed rice. When long beans are out of season, you may substitute asparagus or regular green beans.

Recipe Source Jerry Baldoz.



Beans and Sweet Peppers



- 1 pound fresh snap beans
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 red pepper
- 1 yellow pepper
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme
- hot red pepper flakes to taste (optional)
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Wash beans and peppers. Trim ends of beans. Remove seeds and membranes of peppers, and julienne. In a large sauté pan, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add peppers, cook for 1 minute. Add beans and 2-3 tablespoons water, cook for 3-5 minutes. Add garlic and continue cooking for another minute or until vegetables are crisp-tender. Remove from heat. Add lemon juice, thyme, and red pepper flakes. Toss before serving.

Veggie Tips

by Phyllis Pugnetti

Beets (*Beta vulgaris*)



Beets are a biennial plant, which means they grow leaves and roots the first year, and must survive through the winter, to send up a flower stalk and develop seeds in July or August of their second year. Where beets grow natively they drop their seeds in July or August. Unfortunately beets are not native of Yakima. They don't grow well in the heat of our summers and our winters are too cold for them to survive. Beets are not demanding, but under-

standing their growing cycle helps you to know when to plant and harvest. Beets are happiest when planted in August and allowed to ripen as the weather cools. They will continue to grow as long as the fall weather remains consistently above 35°. Fall beets are sweeter than spring beets because they convert starches to sugar as the nights cool.

If you want to plant spring beets you need to plan for them to be ready to harvest before the arrival of hot weather. Beets get woody and tough, and have a strong flavor in the heat of summer. Most varieties need about 50-70 days to reach maturity. Surprisingly, beets are one of the few root crops that don't mind being transplanted as long as the seedlings are still small with no more than 4 real leaves on them. In the spring they can be started indoors and transplanted into the garden, or they can be direct seeded once the soil temperatures remain above 50°.

Like most root crops, beets don't do well in heavy clay soil or compacted soil. They need a pH of 6.0-7.0 but will tolerate slightly more alkaline soils if there is high organic matter in the soil. Plant seeds 2 inches apart and ½ inch deep. Beet seeds are actually seed pods with 4-5 seeds in each pod, which is why they need to be thinned no matter how carefully you space the seeds. Seeds should sprout in 7-14 days. The soil should be moist but not water-logged. Beets are modest feeders needing little nitrogen, but do need a good supply of phosphorus. Fertile soil with about an inch of compost works well.

Beets come in several colors, white, gold, orange, deep red, and candy striped that turns pink when cooked. Most beets are round but some are cylindrical or cone shaped. All are sweet with a deep earthy flavor. The leaves are edible and can be used like chard. Beets and chard are botanically the same. Chard originated in Italy and was selected over centuries for edible leaves that were cold hardy. It grew so well in the cold mountains of Switzerland that it eventually became known as Swiss chard. Beet leaves have been eaten since before written history, but beet roots were not widely eaten until the 1800s. Beets have been used to dye fabrics and as cosmetics to stain the cheeks and lips, hence the expression that someone 'turned red as a beet'.

To store beets trim the leafy tops to 2 inches and the taproot to 6 inches. In a plastic bag in the refrigerator they will retain their flavor and texture and store for 3-4 months.

Beets

Roasted Beets

Trim the tops and roots from beets and scrub well. Coat beets lightly with olive oil and wrap in foil. Seal the foil and place on a baking sheet. Bake at 400° for approximately 45-60 minutes, until the beets are tender when pierced with a knife. Check beets after 30 minutes, if they are still hard or dry add a tablespoon of water, re-wrap and continue to cook. Let beets cool and skin will slip off easily. If roasting more than one color of beet make separate foil packets for each, or the colors will bleed together. Roasting beets makes them silky and tender, intensifies flavors, and caramelizes sugars making them very sweet. Roasted beets will store up to a week in the refrigerator. Serve hot or cold.

Golden Beet and Blood Orange Salad



Salad

- 1 1/2 pounds medium sized gold beets
- olive oil
- 3 tablespoons champagne vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 blood oranges
- 1 cup baby arugula
- 3 cups baby spinach
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley or cilantro

Vinaigrette

- 1/4 cup freshly squeezed orange juice
- 1 medium shallot, finely minced
- 1 tablespoons champagne vinegar
- salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup extra olive oil

Salad: Coat beets with olive oil and roast until tender. (See recipe for Roasted Beets above) Peel and cut into narrow wedges. Put in a small bowl, toss with vinegar, salt and pepper, cover and marinate at least 1-2 hours in refrigerator. Using a knife peel the oranges, removing all the pith. Slice into rounds a 1/4 inch thick. Put in a covered container in the refrigerator. Wash the arugula and spinach and drain well. Wrap in a clean kitchen towel and place in a covered container in refrigerator. **Vinaigrette:** Add all ingredients in a jar and shake well. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary. If too tart, add more oil. **To Assemble:** In a bowl add beets and oranges and their juices, toss gently. Place salad greens in serving bowl or plate, top with citrus and beets, and drizzle with vinaigrette. Serve immediately. If you can't find golden beets, substitute red beets and navel oranges.

Beet and Herb Salad

In a jar add:

- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons each chopped basil, tarragon, chives and mint
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon champagne vinegar
- Freshly ground black pepper

Shake well and store in refrigerator.



Roast 1 1/2 pounds of beets. Peel, and slice into wedges. Place in a serving bowl. Toss with vinaigrette.

Beets

Beet Rosti

4-6 medium sized roasted beets, about 2 pounds
salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup flour
3 tablespoons butter
garnish chives and sour cream

See recipe for roasted beets on previous page. Toss grated roasted beets in a bowl with salt and pepper. Add half the flour; toss well. Add the rest of flour, and toss again. Pre-heat a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat. Put half the butter in skillet; heat until it begins to brown. Scrape beet mixture into skillet, and press with spatula to form a large round pancake. Cook over medium to medium-high heat. Pancake should gently sizzle. Shake pan occasionally, until bottom crisp, about 8 to 10 minutes. Invert pancake onto a plate, add the rest of the butter to the pan and slide pancake back into the pan. Cook about an additional 10 minutes. Garnish, cut into wedges, and serve.

Left over Beet Rosti makes excellent sandwiches. Add soft goat cheese, arugula or watercress, slivered fennel if you have it, and ciabatta bread.



Spinach Salad with Beets and Goat Cheese



Vinaigrette

1/4 cup white balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup honey
1/4 cup olive oil
2 teaspoons dry mustard
Salt and pepper to taste

Salad

4 cups fresh spinach leaves
2 small pickled beets, cubed
1/4 cup goat cheese

Combine all ingredients for vinaigrette in a bottle, shake well, and set aside. Plate spinach greens. Top with beets and sprinkle feta over all. Drizzle with vinaigrette.

Beets

Pickled Beets

4 pounds beets
3 medium onions, sliced
2 cups sugar
2 sticks cinnamon
1 tablespoon whole all spice
1 teaspoons salt
2 1/2 cups vinegar, 5% acidity
1 1/2 cups water

Wash and scrub beets under cold running water. Leave 2 inches of the stem and taproots attached. Place in a large pot and cover with boiling water. Cook until tender but still slightly firm. (Do not over cook as beets continue to cook during processing.) Drain. Let cool until comfortable to handle beets. Peel and trim ends. Cut into slices or cubes. Combine remaining ingredients in a large pot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes. Add beets and cook until heated through. Remove cinnamon sticks. Pack hot beets into hot jars, leaving 1/4" headspace. Ladle hot liquid over beets leaving 1/4 inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Adjust 2 piece caps. Process 30 minutes in a boiling water canner. Makes 4 pints.



Important! Do not alter the proportions of vegetables to acid as it could make pickles unsafe.

Recipe source: Ball Blue Book Guide to Preserving 2010



Chocolate Beet Cake

1 package chocolate cake mix
1 cup pureed red beets
1 1/2 cups water
3 eggs (one whole egg, two egg whites)

Heat oven to 350° F. Grease a 9x13 sheet pan or 2 round 8 inch pans.

Wash 2 medium beets under cold running water, scrub well. Trim tops and taproot. Place in a pan and cover with water. Bring to a slow boil and cook until soft. Puree beets using a food processor. (You may substitute a 15 ounce can of **salt free** beets, drained well, and pureed instead of fresh beets.)

In a large bowl, add cake mix, water, eggs, and beet puree. Mix about 2 minutes with a handheld mixer. Pour into prepared pan.

Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, about 30-35 minutes. When cake has cooled, frost with chocolate fudge frosting or dust with powdered sugar.

Recipe source: Cornell Extension, Schenectady County NY

Veggie Tips

by Patty Ferguson

Broccoli (*Brassica oleracea*)

Over thousands of years farmers have selected for widely diverse plant traits of the *Brassica oleracea* species which includes the edible leaves of collards, kale, cabbage, Brussels sprouts; the stems of kohlrabi; the flower buds of cauliflower, and of course, broccoli.

Broccoli is a cool-season crop that can be grown in the spring or fall. If you practice succession gardening, you may be able to get a continual harvest throughout the summer and fall. Broccoli can germinate in soil when temperatures are as low as 40° but prefers temperatures closer to 60°. It requires full sun and moist, fertile, slightly acidic soil. It's advised to work in 2 – 4 inches of compost or a thin layer of manure before planting.

For spring planting, seed or set transplants 2 to 3 weeks before last spring frost date. For fall plantings, seed 85 to 100 days before your average first fall frost. In Yakima, plant seeds in late June for a late fall harvest. Plant seeds ½ inch deep, or set transplants slightly deeper than they were grown originally. Within a row, space your plants 12 to 24 inches apart with 36 inches between each row. Broccoli needs room to grow and doesn't like to be crowded. Fertilize three weeks after transplanting. Provide consistent soil moisture with regular watering, especially in drought conditions. Some varieties of broccoli are heat tolerant, but all need moisture. Do not get developing heads wet when watering. Roots are very shallow. Use mulch to retain moisture, keep soil temperatures cool, and suffocate weeds. Broccoli is attractive to many pests—flea beetles, aphids, cabbage loopers, cabbage worms, and white flies. Planting flowers or blooming cover crops like agricultural mustard or buckwheat may reduce these pests by attracting predators.



Broccoli planted with buckwheat for organic insect control.

Harvest broccoli when the buds of the head are firm and tight, but before the heads flower. If you do see yellow petals, harvest immediately. For best taste, harvest in the morning before the soil heats up. Cut heads from the plant, taking at least 6 inches of stem. Most varieties have side-shoots that will continue to develop after the main head is harvested. You can harvest from one plant for many weeks, in some cases, from spring to fall, if the summer isn't too hot. Store broccoli in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. If you wash before storing, make sure to dry it thoroughly. Broccoli can be blanched and frozen for up to one year.

Recommended varieties include: 'Green Goliath' for heat-tolerance and side shoots; 'Calabrese' a prolific Italian heirloom that is good for fall planting; 'Flash' a fast-growing, heat-resistant hybrid; 'Paragon' a popular variety in Canada; and 'Umpqua' a variety that resists premature bolting.

Broccoli

Pan-Roasted Broccoli

3 tablespoons water
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 1/4 pounds broccoli

Rinse broccoli under cool running water, separate into florets, and sliced stems (about 5 cups). Stir water, salt, and pepper together in small bowl, until salt dissolves. In a large skillet, heat oil over medium high heat then add the broccoli stems in an even layer. Don't stir for about two minutes until they get light browned. Add the florets and toss to combine and don't stir for another two minutes, until they just begin to brown. Add water spice mixture and cover pan with lid, cooking for two additional minutes. Uncover and cook until desired doneness. *Recipe Source: Food.com*



Broccoli Bacon Salad

Salad

3 heads broccoli, cut into bite sized pieces
2 carrots, shredded
1/2 red onion, thinly sliced
1/2 cup dried cranberries
1/2 cup sliced almonds
6 slices bacon, cooked until crisp and crumbled

Dressing

1/2 cup mayonnaise
3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Wash vegetables under cool running water then slice as indicated above. Add broccoli, carrots, red onion, cranberries, nuts and bacon to a large bowl. In a small bowl, whisk together mayonnaise and vinegar and season with salt and pepper.

Pour dressing over salad mixture and toss to combine. This salad is best when made a few hours ahead and refrigerated until served.

Recipe source: Delish.com

Veggie Tips

by Cindy Smith

Brussels Sprouts (*brassica oleracea*)

If I felt sorry for a vegetable, it would be Brussels sprouts. It isn't a food that makes top billing at any pot luck. A survey conducted by Heinz in 2008 revealed that Brussels sprouts are the most hated vegetable in the United States.

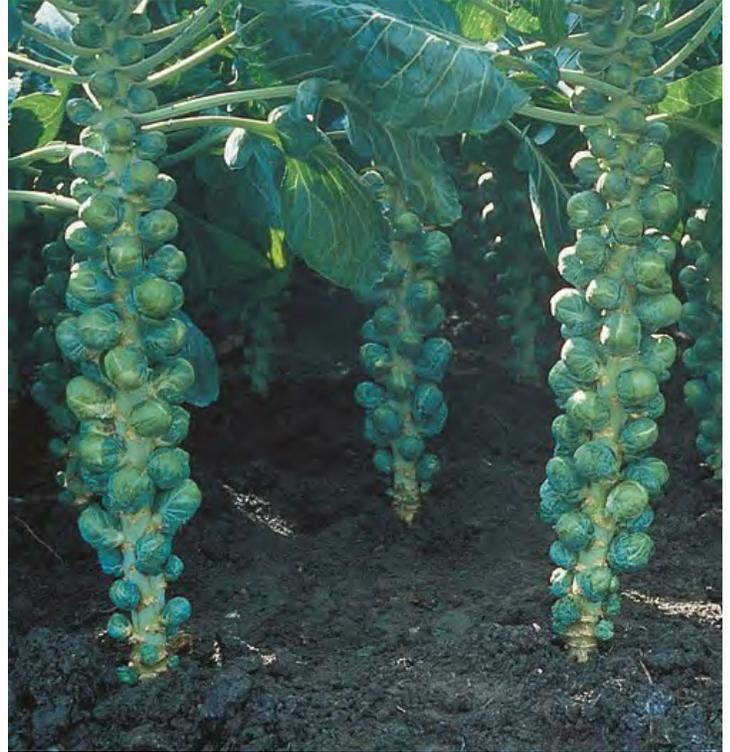
Many people hate Brussels sprouts because of the sulfur smell when cooked. This compound is also responsible for repelling insects and fighting cancer. Brussels sprouts are an excellent source of vitamins A, C (even more than oranges) and K, beta-carotene, folic acid, magnesium, fiber, and more protein than most vegetables. Like cabbage, Brussels sprouts are a member of the *Brassica oleracea*. Forerunners to Brussels sprouts were likely cultivated in ancient Rome. Brussels sprouts as they are now known were grown possibly as early as the 13th century in what is now Belgium (thus the reference to Brussels.) The first written reference dates to 1587 and were introduced to the US in the 1800s.

Most American production is in California, with a smaller percentage of the crop grown in Skagit Valley, Washington, where cool springs, mild summers and rich soil abounds. Brussels sprouts are a hearty winter vegetable usually in season from fall through late winter.

The 'sprouts' are small heads that resemble miniature cabbages and are produced in the leaf axils, starting at the base of the stem and working upward. Brussels sprouts should be planted in early summer for a crop that matures in the fall. The small heads mature best in cool and even in light frosty weather. They like fertile, well-drained, moist soils with plenty of organic matter. The soil pH should be about 6.8, for optimum growth.

Seeds should be sown in a protected space 4-5 weeks before transplanting. Transplant seedlings when they are about 3 inches tall at least 100 days before the first frost in an area that will receive at least 6 hours of sun during the fall. Space plants 24-36 inches apart. Sprouts maturing in hot, dry weather are more likely to develop an unpleasant bitter flavor.

Some gardeners believe that the sprouts develop better if the lowermost six to eight leaves are removed from the sides of the stalk as the sprouts develop. Two or three additional leaves can be removed each week, but several of the largest, healthiest, fully expanded upper leaves should always be left intact on top to continue feeding the plant.



About 3 weeks before harvest, the plants may have the tops cut off to speed the completion of sprout development. Harvest Brussels sprouts after the first or second frost. The entire stalk may be cut; or sprouts may be picked or cut off the stem when they are firm, bright green, and about one inch in size. The lower sprouts mature first.

Brussels sprouts are sweetest right after harvest. The key to cooking Brussels sprouts is— do not overcook! Depending on size, cooking time should not exceed 7 to 10 minutes whether you are steaming, braising, roasting, or boiling. Select sprouts of even size for uniform cooking. Large sprouts should be cut in half. If the sprouts are no longer bright green they have been overcooked.

Brussels sprouts keep longest if left attached to the stalk. Whether attached to the stalk or cut off the stalk, wrap in plastic and refrigerate to prevent wilting. Do not wash or trim outer leaves until immediately before cooking. Brussels sprouts will store this way for several weeks, but with a gradual loss of sweetness.

Brussels Sprouts

Stir Fried Brussels Sprouts

4 slices thick bacon
1½ pounds fresh Brussels sprouts, shredded
2½ tablespoons water
1 teaspoon soy sauce
2 teaspoons cider vinegar
1 teaspoon brown sugar
3 tablespoons dried cranberries, coarsely chopped

Shred Brussels sprouts with a food processor or cut very thin with a knife. Set aside. Cut bacon into small pieces and fry until crisp. Drain on paper towels. Leave fat in pan, turn the heat to medium high, add shredded Brussels sprouts. Stir continuously while frying for about 2 minutes, making sure all pieces are coated with a little bacon fat. Add the water to the pan all at once and stir gently once or twice. Let the sprouts cook for another 2 minutes until water evaporates. Sprouts should be crisp-tender but not raw. Add bacon pieces, and cranberries. Mix soy sauce, vinegar, and sugar. Add to pan and toss to evenly distribute everything. Serve hot. *Recipe adapted from Steamy Kitchen.*



Honey Roasted Brussels Sprouts



1 1/2 pounds Brussels sprouts
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 teaspoon honey

Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil. Wash, trim, and cut Brussels sprouts in half. In a large bowl, toss Brussels sprouts with 2 tablespoons olive oil, salt and pepper. Transfer to baking sheet and roast at 425°, stirring occasionally to ensure even browning, until tender and caramelized, about 20 minutes. Place Brussels sprouts back in bowl. Add remaining olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and honey. Toss to coat evenly. Taste and adjust seasoning if necessary. Serve hot.

Easy Roasted Brussels Sprouts

This is an easy recipe. Amounts of all ingredients can be adjusted to personal taste. Use about 6-8 sprouts per person. Wash, trim, and cut Brussels sprouts in half. Place in bowl and sprinkle with cayenne pepper, salt, and freshly ground black pepper, then drizzle with either bacon fat or olive oil. Toss to coat evenly. Place in a single layer on a foil lined baking sheet. Roast at 425° for 10 minutes. Stir and continue to roast about an additional 10-15 minutes until outside is crispy and browned and inside is tender. Sprinkle with fresh lime juice. Serve hot.

Cabbage

Crunchy Napa Cabbage Slaw and Creamy Soy Dressing

Slaw

2 quarts Napa cabbage, coarsely chopped (about 1 pound)
12 ounces snow peas, thinly sliced
1 ½ cups radishes, thinly sliced
1 ½ cups green onions, thinly sliced
1 ½ cups cilantro leaves, chopped and lightly packed
¾ cups slivered almonds

Toss all ingredients together and top with about ¾ of the Creamy Soy Dressing. Taste and add more if necessary.

Dressing

3 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 clove garlic, minced
½ teaspoon ground ginger
½ teaspoon toasted sesame oil
1 cup mayonnaise



Whisk together all ingredients except mayonnaise. Add mayonnaise and continue to whisk until creamy.

Recipe source: Diana Pieti

Crunchy Asian Chicken Salad



Salad

3 cups cabbage, shredded
3 cups red cabbage, shredded
2 large carrots, julienned
3 cups bean sprouts
3 green onions, finely sliced
2 cups cooked chicken, shredded
¼ cup fresh cilantro leaves, coarsely chopped

Dressing

3 tablespoon rice vinegar
3 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoon lime juice
3 tablespoon peanut oil
1½ tablespoon sugar
½ small jalapeno, finely diced
2 garlic cloves, minced

In a large bowl combine all salad ingredients. In a jar, add all dressing ingredients and shake well. Pour over salad. Toss and serve.

Cabbage

Sweet and Sour Red Cabbage

4 cups shredded red cabbage
1 medium red onion chopped
1 medium apple peeled and chopped
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup cider vinegar
1/2 teaspoon maple flavor
1/2 teaspoon salt

Place shredded cabbage, chopped red onion, and chopped apple in a slow cooker. In a small bowl mix together brown sugar, vinegar, maple flavor and salt. Pour over cabbage mixture and stir to mix. Simmer in slow cooker on low for 6-8 hours. Good served as a side dish with mashed potatoes and bratwurst.



If you have an abundance of red cabbage, this freezes very well. Follow all directions but instead of using a slow cooker, cook on stove top until veggies are tender-crisp, then freeze. When you are ready to use cabbage, defrost in the refrigerator, and cook on low in a slow cooker for 5-6 hours. *Recipe source: Phyllis Pugnetti*

Cabbage Roll Casserole



1/2 pound bulk sausage
1/2 pound ground beef
1 small onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 cup cooked rice
1 small head cabbage, chopped or shredded
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 cup water

Sauce

14 ounce can stewed tomatoes
16 ounces tomato sauce
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
salt and pepper to taste

Sauté onion and garlic about 2 minutes, add meat and continue cooking until meat is no longer pink. Stir in rice and set aside. In a large skillet with olive oil and water, sauté cabbage until wilted and tender, and water has evaporated. In a large bowl mix together all ingredients for sauce. Pour 1/3 of the sauce mixture in the bottom of a 10"x13" baking dish. Top with a layer of 1/2 the cabbage, then all the meat mixture, and another layer of cabbage. Pour the remaining sauce over the top. Bake at 350° for 35-45 minutes until hot and bubbly.



Cauliflower

Cauliflower (*Brassica oleracea*) is a cool-season crop that doesn't tolerate the heat or cold, needing consistently cool weather with temperatures in the 60's. If temperatures are too warm cauliflower may prematurely 'button', forming very small heads rather than a single, large, white head. When the weather is too cold it stops growing. It is a challenging crop in Yakima where cool spring and fall weather is short lived.

In order to form large heads, cauliflower needs fertile soil, rich in nitrogen and potassium, and high in organic matter, for steady uninterrupted growth. Cauliflower also needs consistent soil moisture. Adding a thick layer of mulch will help to retain moisture and keep the soil cool. Soil pH should be between 6.5-6.8. Cauliflower needs a planting site that receives at least 6 hours of full sun, but has shade during the heat of the day. Cauliflower seedlings are not frost tolerant. If you are able to provide cover for your seedlings in the spring, you may plant outside 2 -4 weeks before the frost-free date. Space 18-24 inches apart with 30 inches between rows. The plants will get very large. Do not crowd them. Most varieties will take 75 to 85 days to mature. Common pests are cabbage worms, cabbage root maggots, and aphids.

Cauliflower will start out with a loose head. It takes time for the head to fill out. When it is 2-3 inches across, blanch the heads by tying the outer leaves together over the head to protect from sunlight. Some cauliflower varieties come in green, purple, or yellow; and these do not need to be blanched. Cauliflower that is exposed to the sun will become discolored due to chlorophyll which may affect the taste. Ideally, the heads should be firm and white, growing to 6-8 inches in diameter. Once the heads start to open up, they will not improve in appearance or flavor, and should be harvested immediately. Cauliflower with a coarse appearance is overly mature and will have a poor taste. It's best to add these plants to the compost pile. To harvest cauliflower, cut the heads off with a large, sharp knife. Leave some of the blanching leaves around the head to protect it. Cauliflower can be stored in the refrigerator for about a week.

Cauliflower

Cauliflower and Squash Swirl

1 head cauliflower
1 winter squash
1/4 cup milk, divided
1 teaspoon garlic powder, divided
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, divided
salt and pepper to taste

Break cauliflower into florets and microwave about 10 minutes until tender. Place in blender with half the milk, garlic powder, and Parmesan cheese. Blend until smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste. Bake squash (any sweet winter squash will work) about 40 minutes at 350° until tender. Scoop flesh out of skin. Place in blender with the other half of the milk, garlic powder and Parmesan cheese. Blend until smooth. Add salt and pepper to taste. You should have 3-4 cups of cauliflower puree and 2-3 cups of squash puree. Add alternating scoops of each to a large bowl and swirl lightly to blend. You should still be able to see swirls of each.



Recipe source: thrillist.com

Cauliflower Steaks



1 large head of cauliflower
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 1/2 teaspoons soy sauce
2 teaspoons water
Pinch of sugar
1 green onion, finely minced
1 teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger
2 teaspoons toasted sesame seeds

Heat oven to 400°. Remove any outer leaves from the cauliflower head. Trim the bottom of the stem off. Cut cauliflower into 3/4-inch slices; cut lengthwise from top to bottom. Place on a large baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil. Roast for 25 minutes, or until the tops are lightly browned in places and the stems are easily pierced with a fork. Whisk together the remaining ingredients and pour over the cauliflower to serve.

Recipe source: twopeasintheirpod.com

Veggie Tips

by Patty Ferguson

Carrots are jammed with a wealth of nutrients, and medium-sized sticks are only 25 calories. Standard orange carrots contain vitamin A. Carrots come in a rainbow of colors that are equally healthy. Although there is much we don't know about phytonutrients found in various colors of food, they do seem to play important roles in overall health.

Orange: Beta and alpha carotene pigment. This promotes vitamin A production by the body, which is essential for healthy immune and reproductive systems, and overall eye health.

Purple: Anthocyanin the purple pigment may play a role in fighting heart disease and stroke, lower the risk of some cancers, and reduce the risk of macular degeneration which is a leading cause of blindness in people over the age of 60.

Red: Lycopene and beta-carotene pigment. Lycopene is the same red pigment that gives tomatoes their deep color and is linked to a lower risk of certain cancers, such as prostate cancer.

Yellow: Xanthophyll and lutein. Both are linked to cancer prevention, healthy immune systems, and better eye health.

White: the nutrients don't come from the pigment but from the fiber, which promotes healthy digestion.

Carrots can be planted in early spring to ripen in summer. However, carrots germinate best in warm weather, around 85°, and prefer to mature in gradually cooling weather. With a thick layer of mulch and a cover to prevent cold water logged soil, mature carrots will often survive Yakima winters. They actually taste much better after a couple of frosts, as the carbohydrates convert to sugars.

Carrots are grown from seed and take about 2-3 months to mature depending on variety. Carrot roots are rich in sugar, and a great source of vitamins and carotene. Growing carrots can be tricky, since you can't see what's going on until you harvest. So often carrots can disappoint with bland, misshapen, tough roots. The soil will make the difference. Heavy soils cause the carrots to mature slowly and the roots end up unattractive and rough. Carrots need loose, sandy, deep and well-draining soil. Rocks and clumps will cause the carrot roots to split and deform. Growing carrots in raised-beds is the ideal situation. For spring planting sow seed as soon as the soil can be worked 2-3 weeks before last frost. You can succession plant carrots every couple of weeks, throughout the spring. Sow the seeds thinly, depending on variety. Cover with ¼ inch thick layer of soil. For fall planting, sow seed about mid-July or early August so carrots are mature by the time hard frost arrives. Except for the coldest of winters, carrots can remain in the ground all winter.

Once plants are 1 inch tall, thin so that they stand 3 inches apart. Snip them with scissors instead of pulling them out to



prevent damage to the roots of the remaining plants. Water at least 1 inch every week. Mulching will help conserve water and keep the soil cool. If your soil is not rich in organic matter, supplemental feeding will be necessary about 2 weeks after the carrots emerge.

Carrots do not grow well in highly acidic soil. A soil Ph in the range of 6.0- 6.8 is recommended. And because they are grown for their roots, don't use too much nitrogen fertilizer. Keep carrots free of weeds. This is most important when they're small. The weeds will take nutrients away from the carrots. This will cause poor carrot development. Even though the roots are growing underground, carrot tops need full sun to light shade, for the carrots to grow quickly and develop their sugars. Sometimes carrots can bolt, producing foliage and flowers but little root. To avoid this, keep the soil moist in dry weather. Carrots can be harvested at any size. To harvest, gently lift the carrot from the soil.

Carrots

Pan Roasted Carrots

2 pounds carrots
1 small onion chopped
Fresh ground pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil
Juice of one orange
1 tablespoon rosemary, finely chopped

Peel and cut carrots into 2 inch lengths, slice thick carrots in half length-wise. In a large bowl whisk together remaining ingredients. Add carrots and toss to coat. Heat a large sauté pan on medium heat. Add carrots and cover. Cook for 30 minutes until liquid is evaporated and carrots are beginning to caramelize.



Maple Dill Carrots

3 cups peeled and sliced carrots
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 1/2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
salt and pepper to taste

Place carrots in a skillet and pour in just enough water to cover. Bring to a boil over medium heat; simmer until water has evaporated and the carrots are tender. Stir in butter, brown sugar, dill, salt, and pepper.



Marsala Glazed Carrots

1/2 cup coarsely chopped hazelnuts, toasted
1 pound baby carrots, peeled and sliced diagonally
1/2 cup water
1/4 cup Marsala wine
1 tablespoon olive oil
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped fine

Preheat oven to 300°. Toast hazelnuts until browned and fragrant, about 5 minutes. In a saucepan combine water, carrots, Marsala, and oil. Bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat and simmer for 10-15 minutes until tender but still slightly firm and sauce has thickened slightly. Sprinkle with hazelnuts and parsley. Serve immediately.



Veggie Tips

by Patty Ferguson

Celery (*Apium graveolens*)

Celery is a vegetable that is popular with the health conscious. The stalks are almost absent of calories, yet contains important vitamins and minerals. Many herbal remedies claim that celery helps balance blood pH., lowers cholesterol, relieves constipation, normalizes body temperature, and promotes normal healthy kidney function, although there is not much science based information to substantiate these claims.

Celery has a very mild flavor. Fresh garden grown celery usually has a stronger, yet pleasant flavor. The mild taste is what makes celery such a great tool for dipping into your favorite dip, salad dressing, or sauce. It also adds a little crunch to recipes.

Celery originated 3000 years ago in wild wetland areas of Europe, especially the Mediterranean, and is related to parsley. Originally, it was used for medicinal purposes and had religious significance in some cultures. It requires a very long growing season but has a very low tolerance for both heat and cold. The demanding growing conditions makes it an ultimate growing challenge and not for the faint of heart. Although some gardeners rise to the challenge, many growers look for different edible plants such as bulb fennel which has the look and crunch of celery but not the flavor; or lovage, a leafy perennial herb with a strong celery flavor but not the crunch of celery.

If you're up for a challenge, why try growing celery? With that said, there are a limited number of varieties on the market. Varieties that require blanching are used very little in the home garden, as they require a lot of extra work. It usually is difficult to find in seed catalogues, but seedlings are sometimes available in garden stores.

Celery has a long maturity time, 120 to 140 days. If you want to start from seeds, sow indoors at least 10 weeks before the last frost date. Celery seeds are tiny and tricky to plant. Try mixing them with sand and then sprinkle the sand-seed mix over the potting soil. Celery seeds like to be planted shallowly. Cover the seeds with just a little bit of soil. Once the celery seeds have sprouted and are large enough, thin the seedlings down to 2 or 3. As they continue to grow, thin to one per pot. Once the temperatures outside are consistently above 50° you can transplant into your garden. Celery is very temperature sensitive; don't transplant too early or you will kill or weaken the plant. Space plants one foot apart, in rows 2 - 2 ½ feet apart.

Celery grows best in evenly moist, nutrient-rich soil with a pH of 6.0 – 7.0. It needs at least 6 hours of sun, but also needs to be shaded during the hottest part of the day. A growing celery plant needs lots of water and can't tolerate drought of any kind. If the ground isn't kept consistently moist, it will negatively affect the



Celery is native to wetlands near streams and marshes.

taste of the celery. Add plenty of compost and mulch around the plants to help retain moisture and fertility. Add general purpose fertilizer before planting, and fertilize regularly throughout the growing season. Harvest stalks from the outside in. You may begin harvesting when stalks are about 8 inches tall. Celery will tolerate a light frost, but not consecutive frosts or hard frost.

Many gardeners prefer to blanch their celery. This means to make them lighter in color and more tender. When blanching celery, you are reducing the amount of vitamins in the plant. Blanching celery can be done one of two ways. The first way is to just slowly build a mound around a growing celery plant. Every few days add a little more soil or mulch and at harvest the celery plant will be blanched. The other method is to cover the lower half of the celery plant with thick brown paper or cardboard a few weeks before you plan to harvest the celery.

A broad range of insects and pests are attracted to celery, including slugs, aphids, leafhoppers, celery flies, and more. Diseases can also be problematic, especially leaf spot and blight. Splitting of stalks is a result of dry weather and too little moisture.

Celery

A head of celery is called a stalk and one stem of celery is called a rib. Many recipes, especially from the internet, mistakenly use the word stalk when they actually mean rib. Use care when deciding how much celery you need.



Thai Celery Salad

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 teaspoons fish sauce
- 6 celery ribs, thinly sliced on a diagonal
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced
- 1 red chili, thinly sliced
- 1 cup fresh cilantro leaves with tender stems
- ¼ cup chopped roasted, salted peanuts

Whisk together oil, lime juice, and fish sauce. Toss with celery, scallions, chili, cilantro, and peanuts.

Recipe source: Bon Appetit

Broccoli and Celery Slaw

- 1 medium head broccoli, stalks sliced and florets chopped
- 4 celery ribs, thinly sliced on the diagonal
- ½ medium red onion, thinly sliced
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 lime, zested and juiced
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- ½ cup golden raisins

Wash broccoli and celery under cool running water. Combine the broccoli, celery, and red onion in a large mixing bowl and set aside. To prepare the dressing, in a small bowl combine the mayonnaise, lime juice and zest, cumin, chili powder, sugar, salt and pepper. Whisk to combine. Pour the dressing over the vegetables and toss. Cover and place in refrigerator for at least 30 minutes, tossing occasionally to combine well. Top with raisins before serving.

Recipe source: Food Network



Veggie Tips

by Phyllis Pugnetti

Cilantro (*Coriandrum sativum*)

Cilantro can be difficult to grow in Yakima because it bolts very quickly in warm weather. However, when planted in the late summer, in a sheltered sunny place, cilantro can actually grow all winter with just a bit of mulch to protect the roots from freezing. Cilantro has a long taproot that doesn't like being transplanted. For this reason, seedlings will often times bolt immediately after transplanting. Cilantro has a light, fresh flavor similar to a combination of citrus and parsley which many people love. There are those who do not like cilantro because of a soapy taste. Few people have the genetic ability to taste the soapy flavor. If you are one, don't give up on cilantro until you grow your own! Before cilantro bolts the plant doesn't have the soapy trait. As soon as cilantro begins to bolt the *entire* plant will taste soapy almost immediately. Obviously much cilantro in grocery stores has already started to bolt. When cilantro bolts it sends up frond-like leaves in the center that look wispy and a bit like carrot tops. The best cilantro is picked before this stage.

After bolting, if you leave a couple plants in the garden they will grow to 3 feet tall with small attractive white flowers that are edible and also attractive to pollinators. Leave the plants longer, and they will set golden-brown seeds which are coriander and when ground into a fine powder it tastes similar to cilantro leaves but with a more herbal flavor. The seeds should not be ground until you are ready to use them, as they lose their flavor very quickly. Coriander found in stores is usually so old has virtually no identifiable flavor. If you think you don't like cilantro or coriander, consider growing your own so that you can harvest at the exact right time. It is quite possible the fresh flavor will make a cilantro lover out of you!



Cilantro ready to harvest



Cilantro flowers and frond-like leaves



Cilantro seeds

Cilantro Chutney

- 1 cup cilantro stems and leaves, roughly chopped
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1-2 jalapeños
- 1/2 cup walnuts, coarsely chopped
- 1/4 lemon juice
- Salt to taste
- 1-2 tablespoons olive oil

Place all ingredients in a blender and puree until smooth. Many variations of this recipe can be made by adding raisins, other nuts, flavored vinegar, coconut, mint, and other spices. Chutney is very versatile and can be used as a dip, or a spread for sandwiches and bruschetta, or added to pasta or soup. *Recipe source Christina Zaragoza.*



Cucumber (*Cucumis sativus*)

Cucumbers originated in India and West Asia over 3,000 years ago. It is believed that the cucumber spread across Europe with the spread of the Roman Empire. Because cucumbers are easy to grow and provide high yields of fruits, it was rapidly embraced by most cultures. Today, they are grown throughout most of the world and are the fourth most commonly grown vegetable in the world. China and India are still the leading producers of cucumbers. Looking at recipes from various parts of the world shows that cucumber recipes are quite similar from one country to another. Cucumbers are nearly always eaten raw in salads, salsas, or on sandwiches. When cooked, cucumbers are nearly always some form of pickles or relish.

There are three main varieties of cucumbers, slicing, pickling, and burpless. Within these varieties there are many different cultivars. English cucumbers are long and thin with dark green skin, have a mild flavor and minimal seeds. They are sometimes labeled as burpless. Garden cucumbers are the most common. They are dark green and have smooth skin. Kirby cucumbers are short and always bumpy. They can range in color from yellow to dark green, are great for eating raw and are also used as for pickling. Lemon cucumbers are the size of a fist and yellow in color. They are sweet tasting and have minimal soft seeds. They can also be used for pickles. Botanically, Armenian cucumbers are melons (*cucumis melo*) but are used as cucumbers. They are large, have very pale green thin skin, relatively dry flesh, and keep longer in the refrigerator than most cucumbers. They are eaten raw and are also used for pickles.

Cucumbers thrive when the weather is hot. They are very frost tender and should not be planted until soil temperatures are in the 70° degree range. They grow in two forms: vining and bush. Use a trellis for vines, or they will scramble along the ground and many fruits will suffer insect damage, mold, or rot. Bush types form a compact plant and allow you to plant in a small space or a container. When planting cucumbers, select a site with full sun. Soil should be neutral or slightly alkaline with a pH of 7. Before planting, add 2 inches of compost and work into the soil to a depth of 6-8 inches. Soil should be moist and well drained. You may use seeds or seedlings. Sow seeds in rows 1 inch deep and 6-10 inches apart. Plant seedlings 12 inches apart. Water consistently and avoid the leaves, or water early in the day so leaves have a chance to dry. Spread mulch around plants to retain moisture. Straw mulch is beneficial to limit slugs and cucumber beetles, and will keep fruits dry preventing rot and mold. At peak harvesting time you should pick cucumbers every other day as this will encourage further production. If cucumbers are allowed to become oversized they will taste bitter and both skins and seeds will become tough. Once the color of the fruits starts to change from green to a spot of yellow or white the cucumbers begin to turn bitter. Cucumbers are low in calories and fat and have a high water content. Most of the nutrients in cucumbers are in the skin. For fresh eating thin skinned cucumbers, like Japanese Suyo or English Tall Telegraph, can be used without peeling, retaining most of the nutrients.

Cucumbers should be used immediately after harvest as they do not have a long shelf life. To store fresh cucumbers, make sure they are dry then wrap in plastic wrap. They should store 7-10 days in the refrigerator.



Cucumber

Mexican Cucumber Salad

2 medium cucumbers
1 cup fresh or canned corn
2 tomatoes
1 green pepper
1 red pepper
1 sweet onion
2 tablespoons wine vinegar
1/2 teaspoon garlic, minced
1/2 teaspoon cumin
2 tablespoons fresh cilantro
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste

Chop cucumbers, tomatoes, and peppers to bite size pieces. Finely chop onion and cilantro. Toss all ingredients together. Cover and refrigerate for 1-2 hours before serving.



Thai Cucumber Salad

3 cucumbers, peeled, halved, and sliced
1/2 cup rice vinegar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup sugar
2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped
1/4 cup fresh cilantro
1/2 cup peanuts, chopped

In a medium size bowl, mix vinegar, salt, sugar, jalapenos, and cilantro. Add cucumber slices, stir to coat vegetables. Cover and refrigerate for 1-2 hours. Sprinkle with peanuts before serving.



Japanese Cucumber Salad

2 Japanese cucumbers, thinly sliced, unpeeled
1/3 cup carrots cut into thin match sticks
1/3 cup rice vinegar
3 teaspoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
cracked black pepper to taste
sesame seeds (optional)

Mix vinegar, sugar, salt, ginger and pepper in a bowl that has a tight fitting lid. Add sliced vegetables, cover and shake to coat the vegetables. Refrigerate for 1-2 hours. Shake well and sprinkle with sesame seeds before serving.



Veggie Tips

by Elaine Krump

Eggplant (*Solanum melongena*)

Eggplant are in the same family as potatoes, peppers and tomatoes. Eggplants originally had small, bitter, pea-sized fruits. It is believed they originated in India and have been cultivated for more than 1500 years. Today, they are a common food in all Mediterranean cultures.

Eggplant is a unique plant for home gardens and is one of the lesser grown vegetables. These plants look great in containers, raised beds, or traditional in-ground gardens. Eggplant may be purplish-black, white, magenta, lavender, green, orange, or red; but purple remains the most common color associated with eggplant. They will differ in size, shape, color, growth habit and maturation time. For decades, the most popular home garden cultivar has been Black Beauty which produces a large, plump, glossy eggplant. It is an old variety and tends to be bitter unless harvested at the exact right time—too early or too late and it will be bitter. Most people who don't like eggplant have never eaten any variety other than Black Beauty. Many newer cultivars have better flavor that is mild, almost sweet, and rarely bitter.



Ping Tung, Rosita, and Listada de Gandia are some varieties that are very mild, rarely bitter and have a long window for harvest. The added bonus is that they are very attractive in the garden. Ping Tung has long slender purple fruits that measure a foot long or more. Its slender shape makes slices that are perfect for appetizers. Ping Tung is high yielding and is an attractive plant with bright purple stems, veins, and blooms. It could be grown among flower and perennial beds. Rosita is another beauty with bright magenta 8 inch globe shaped fruits that are pretty when planted among pink or magenta flowers. Listada de Gandia has stunning fruits with purple and cream striations.

Eggplant is a perennial in the tropics but grown as an annual in zones 4-10. Start eggplant seeds indoors about 6 weeks before the last spring frost and then transfer seedlings to the garden after the last frost date, when the soil has warmed to at least 60°. To reduce pest problems choose an area where you have not planted eggplant, tomatoes, potatoes or peppers for at least 2 years. The area should have full sun and well drained fertile soil with a pH between 5.5 and 6.5. Mix a 2 inch layer of compost into the soil and water well. Plant 18-24 inches apart and mulch to maintain even moisture and soil temperatures. Eggplants thrive in hot humid conditions. They need evenly moist soil to ensure the best and fastest growth. If growing in a container use one plant per 5 gallon container. Flea beetles and potato beetle larvae are common pests. Growing eggplant in containers keeps the ground dwelling beetles at bay. Plants may need some staking to prevent fruits from breaking the branches.

Harvest when fruits when they have a glossy smooth skin that is slightly soft when you squeeze it. Immature fruits will be rock hard and over mature plants will feel spongy. The fruits need to be cut off the plant to prevent damage to the stems. The plants have hairy prickly spines, so wear gloves. Eggplant will only store for a few days in the refrigerator which is why eggplant purchased at a store is often is bitter or flavorless. Generally, eggplant should be used fresh immediately after harvest. It can not be canned and the texture when dried becomes tough and rubbery. If you have an abundance of eggplant you can preserve it with good results by partially drying it and then freezing. To do this lay sliced fruits on food safe screens for about 3-4 hours, in the sun on a warm day, around 80°-90°. Eggplant slices should feel dry to the touch, but still be pliable. Transfer to a single layer on a baking sheet and freeze. Once frozen you can store in zip lock bags. To use, remove from freezer, thaw at room temperature, blot dry, and use like fresh.

Fresh eggplant should be stored at room temperature, out of direct sunlight, away from tomatoes and bananas.

Eggplant

Many people complain that eggplant is mushy or slimy. Most recipes suggest slicing eggplants then salting to draw out some of the water. For a low sodium alternative, you can slice eggplant and dry it on a food safe screen for 3-4 hours outside when the temperature is 80° to 90°. The eggplant should feel dry to the touch but still be pliable. When prepared this way, cooked eggplant slices will have a texture similar to pasta. Eggplant dried this way can be frozen in single layers on a baking sheet, then transfer to zip lock bags. Remove from freezer, defrost, and blot dry before using.

Spicy Eggplant Spread

1 ½ tablespoon brown sugar
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoon rice vinegar
2-3 serrano chilies, chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoon Thai basil, chopped
3 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
1 pound eggplant

Roast eggplant at 425° for 40 minutes until eggplant begins to collapse. Peel and coarsely chop. Mix sugar, vinegar, soy sauce, and chilies together to make a sauce. Heat oil, add garlic and sauté 30 seconds. Add eggplant and stir fry for 2 minutes. Add sauce and stir fry for 1-2 more minutes. Remove from heat and stir in basil. Serve with bruschetta or crackers. This also makes a delicious spread on sandwiches instead of mayonnaise. Freezes well.

Recipe source: Carol Woolcock



Eggplant Appetizers Three Ways

- 1 Slice eggplant into rounds 1/4 inch thick. Spread with mayonnaise, top with Parmesan cheese. Broil until bubbly.
Recipe source: Diana Pieti
- 2 Slice eggplant into rounds 1/4 inch thick. Spread with pesto. Top with a fresh tomato slice.
Recipe source: Nancy Probst
- 3 Slice eggplant into rounds 1/4 inch thick. Dip in egg, then bread crumbs. Broil each side until crispy. Top with roasted tomatoes and smoked Havarti. Return to broiler until cheese melts.
Recipe source: Phyllis Pugnetti



Ping Tung is a long and slender eggplant which is the perfect size for appetizers, and also has a very mild flavor.

Eggplant

Eggplant Rollatini

2 long slender eggplants
1 teaspoon salt
pepper, to taste
1½ cups marinara
1 large egg
½ cup ricotta cheese
½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
4 slices bacon, diced
8 ounces kale, chopped and blanched
1 garlic clove, minced
4 ounces mozzarella, shredded

Pre-heat oven to 400°. Cut both ends off the eggplant and slice lengthwise on a mandolin into ¼ inch thick slices. Sprinkle with salt to remove excess moisture. Set aside for 15 minutes. Pat dry with a clean towel. Place in single layer on parchment lined cookie sheet. Season with pepper to taste. Cover with foil and bake for about 8-10 minutes until eggplant is pliable but not fully cooked. In a sauté pan, fry diced bacon until well cooked. Add garlic and sauté for 1-2 minutes. Add kale that has already been chopped and blanched for 5 minutes, then sauté until kale is wilted and tender. Spread ¼ cup marinara sauce on the bottom of a 13 x 9-inch baking dish. In a medium bowl, beat the egg then mix together with ricotta, Parmesan, and kale. Evenly spread about 2 tablespoons of the cheese mixture on each eggplant slice. Roll up the slices and place seam side down in the baking pan. Top with remaining marinara sauce and mozzarella cheese. Cover and bake for 45-50 minutes until eggplant is soft.

Recipe adapted from skinnytaste.com



Grilled Eggplant



Cut one eggplant into ½ inch thick slices. Brush both sides with olive oil. Season with salt, pepper, and garlic powder to taste. Place on medium high grill for 3-4 minutes on each side. Eggplant should be golden brown with darker grill marks on both sides. Arrange grilled eggplant on a platter. Top with ¼ cup feta cheese and 2 tablespoons finely chopped basil. Drizzle with balsamic or Italian vinaigrette. Serve immediately. Also makes excellent vegetarian sandwiches. *Recipe adapted from Fincooking.com*

Grilled eggplant also makes a good vegetarian burger or pannini.

Eggplant

Moussaka is a common Greek dish, but nearly every Mediterranean culture has their own version of this dish. It is traditionally served with lamb. Often instead of meat there are layers of lentils, white beans, chickpeas (garbanzo beans) potatoes, or sweet potatoes. Like almost any casserole, every cook has their own recipe.



Moussaka

- 1/2 pound Italian sausage
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 small sweet pepper, chopped
- 6 ounces mushrooms sliced
- 3 cups thick marinara sauce; or a 28 ounce jar spaghetti sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1-2 eggplants, cubed
- 2 cups milk
- 1/4 cup butter
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 8 ounces cheddar

Do not peel eggplant unless skin is tough. Cut eggplant into bite size cubes and dry in sun 3-4 hours. In a skillet, sauté sausage, onions, peppers, and mushrooms until meat is no longer pink. Add thick marinara. It needs to be very thick as the eggplant will release some moisture. Add 1-2 tablespoons tomato paste if necessary to thicken. Simmer on low until warm. In a small skillet heat butter until melted, add flour and whisk to make a smooth paste. Whisk in milk and stir over medium heat until thick and smooth. Add cheddar (or any cheese that melts to a smooth creamy texture). In an 8"x8" baking dish put in a layer of eggplant, then meat and sauce mixture, top with white cheese sauce. Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes until cheese is browned. Let rest 15 minutes before serving.

Recipe source: Phyllis Pugnetti.

Chunky Baked Ratatouille

- 6 ounce can tomato paste
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3/4 cup water
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 small eggplant, trimmed and very thinly sliced
- 1 zucchini, trimmed and very thinly sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, cored and very thinly sliced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, cored and very thinly sliced
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, or to taste
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves, or to taste



Spread tomato paste into the bottom of a 9x9 inch baking dish. Sprinkle with onion and garlic and stir in 1 tablespoon olive oil and water until thoroughly combined. Season with salt and black pepper. Arrange alternating slices of vegetables overlapping to display the colors. Drizzle the vegetables with 3 tablespoons olive oil and season with salt and black pepper. Sprinkle with thyme leaves. Cover vegetables loosely with a foil. Bake in the preheated 375° oven until vegetables are roasted and tender, about 45 minutes. Any left overs can be pureed and used as a pasta sauce.

Veggie Tips

by Carol Barany

Garlic (*Allium sativum*)

Garlic is an essential ingredient in a myriad of international cuisines, which comes as no surprise, given its history. Believed to be a native of central or South Asia or possibly, southwestern Siberia, garlic aficionados in ancient times carried the fragrant bulbs to Egypt, Pakistan, India and China. Crusaders, returning to Europe, brought back garlic. Later, Spanish, French, and Portuguese settlers introduced garlic to the Americas, where native people had been eating garlic's wild forms for ages. Since then, each new wave of immigration has added more garlicky recipes to the American menu.

One of the easiest vegetables to grow, garlic comes in two forms. We're all familiar with the softnecks, found in supermarkets because they're good keepers, and likely imported from China. A softneck bulb is composed of many small cloves in a swirl of overlapping layers with no defined neck. Hardnecks typically have a few large cloves surrounding a hard central stem, or 'neck'. While more tolerant of cold winters, they don't store as long as softnecks. Elephant garlic (*Allium ampeloprasum*) is not really garlic at all, but a leek with a mild garlic flavor. Depending on the form, individual cloves can be big as an onion or small as a bean. Some taste mild and nutty while others can make you to break into a sweat.

The last crop to go into the garden, garlic is planted in the fall, harvested the following summer, and delicious at every stage of growth. Harvest leaf tips or pull some young shoots and use them as you would green onions. If you're growing hardnecks, a month or so after the first leaves emerge, you'll see a thin stalk growing up from the center of the plant. Thicker than the leaves, this is the scape, and if left on the plant, it'll form a flower and then seeds (both good to eat). Many garlic growers cut off the scape, directing the plant's energy into increasing the bulb size. They are tender and succulent.

Garlic is planted in a full-sun location in late-September or October, giving the roots time to establish before winter dormancy. Follow a rotation and plant where no onions, leeks, shallots, or garlics were planted in the last three years. Garlic is a heavy feeder, so at planting time, loosen the soil with a digging fork and add 2- 3" of organic matter. Gently break apart the garlic bulb and plant only the largest, plumpiest cloves with their papery coverings still intact, pointy side up. Space cloves 4" apart, cover with 2" of soil, and water well. Each clove will produce a whole garlic bulb at harvest.



Cover the bed with 4" of mulch to protect any green growth that emerges, though you may not see any until early spring. That's the time to remove the mulch. Once garlic starts growing, 1" of water per week, delivered by drip irrigation, is needed for the best bulbs. Garlic has a fairly shallow root system and will produce smaller bulbs in dry soil. Stop irrigating when the bottom leaves begin to yellow, usually about 2 weeks before harvest. According to WSU Extension, garlic plants should be side-dressed with ½ pound of ammonium sulfate (21-0-0) per 100 square feet in early spring, and again in late April or early May.

Garlic plants usually produce 5-6 green leaves, and when 2 or 3 have turned brown, it's time to harvest, usually in late-June or July. Each leaf represents a wrapper layer surrounding the head. To harvest, drive a garden fork carefully beneath the plants and gently pry out the bulbs. Shake off any excess soil, and move the plants to an airy location that's protected from sun and rain.

Bulbs intended for storage must be cured by hanging the bare bulbs with their foliage in bundles or spread them out on a table or rack for a few weeks until the papery wrappers are very dry. You can braid the bulbs together, or cut off the leaves 1" above each head. Using a toothbrush, remove the soil around the roots and cut them to ½" long. Garlic stores best at 40 degrees with a relative humidity lower than 70%. Hardnecks will keep for around 6 months; softnecks up to a year. If you're hooked on homegrown garlic, set aside the biggest bulbs for planting in the fall.

Garlic

Roasted Garlic

Roasted garlic is sweet and mild without the strong biting flavor normally associated with garlic. It can be used in any recipe that calls for garlic, but is especially good when added to mashed potatoes, pasta, salad dressing, or spread on warm bread.

Use your fingers to peel away most of the outer papery layers surrounding the garlic bulb. Cut 1/4 inch off the top of each bulb to expose the cloves inside. Drizzle with olive oil and use your hands to coat the garlic completely. Place on foil and drizzle with enough additional so that it sinks into the cloves. Sprinkle with salt, pepper and fresh chopped herbs if you like. Rosemary, sage or thyme work well. Wrap tightly with foil. Bake on middle rack of a pre-heated 400° oven for 50-60 minutes until the middle clove is the consistency of butter. Let garlic cool. Squeeze cloves out of each bulb. Store in refrigerator for up to a week or in the freezer for up to 3 months.



Roasted Garlic Scapes

Take the scapes and put them in a lightly oiled roasting pan, top with salt. Cover pan with foil and place in a hot 425 ° oven for 30 to 45 minutes or until they begin to turn brown. Serve as a side or main dish. Tastes like roasted garlic, but creamier.

Aioli

3/4 cup mayonnaise
3 cloves garlic, minced very fine
2 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper

Use a mortar and pestle to form a paste of the garlic and salt. (Alternatively you can mash the garlic and salt in a bowl until a paste forms.) Add lemon juice and pepper and mix well. Refrigerate at least one hour.

Aioli is a garlic mayonnaise that can be substituted for regular mayonnaise. A creamier aioli can be made by using roasted garlic instead of fresh minced garlic. For a little kick add some cayenne pepper.



Veggie Tips

by Carol Barany

Leafy Greens

Did you know that fall is the best time for growing salad greens? Statistically, Yakima's first frost date is during the first two weeks of October. Determine when to plant by working backwards. Some greens mature in as little as 30 days. Add two weeks to make sure you have enough growing time since plant growth slows as temperatures drop and days shorten. Leafy greens germinate best in soil temperatures of 68°-77°, but won't have rapid leaf growth until the air and soil temperature drop to between 50° and 65° F. If you want greens in September, you'll be sowing the first of August, and young seedlings will need consistent moisture and protection from sun and heat. Although most seed packets recommend sowing in full sun, a half day of shade is helpful if you're planting in August. By sowing some seeds every 10 days or so, you'll have an abundant and long supply. For crops sown later, providing frost protection will allow hardier varieties to grow into winter. Remember, cold hardy vegetables must be 80-90% mature by the first frost, since they don't grow and thrive in low temperatures; they simply survive.



Fall is the perfect time to grow spinach, arugula, and mache (sometimes called corn salad) since they thrive in the shorter days and cooler nights of late August and early September. However, germination is poor in soil warmer than 75°, so shade the soil or wait a few weeks for cooler night temperatures. Spinach, and arugula reach edible maturity in 37 to 45 days, and can withstand hard frosts. Mache is a true cold weather loving salad green. It germinates and grows very slowly until cold weather hits and then it really takes off. Expect to harvest mache from Thanksgiving to Valentine's Day.



If you love bountiful salads, don't skimp. Plant a 5 foot row of salad greens each week in successive plantings. Seeds are sold individual varieties or in mixes such as mesculin, with their Technicolor combinations of lettuce, chicory, dandelion greens, cress, arugula, chervil, endive, fennel, parsley, oriental greens, mustard, purslane, orach and mache. Some varieties survive temperatures in the low 20s.

For decades, kale was a green even Popeye wouldn't touch, but lately, it's become a trendy uber-food. The fact that kale can be harvested all winter long in Yakima without frost protection is not a small thing. By blanching it for 4-5 minutes before sautéing, a sweetness is reached, converting kale scoffers into kale evangelists.

Bright Lights Swiss Chard, an All-America Selections winner, is a rainbow of colored stems in gold, pink, crimson, orange, scarlet, green, and white. It can be harvested young for salads, and will survive light frost. Harvest just the large outer leaves and the small inner leaves will continue to grow. Chard dies back to the ground with a hard freeze, but will be among the first leaves to re-grow in the early spring, so don't pull the roots out.

Harvest greens by the cut and come again method and they'll re-grow for more than one cutting until the weather really cools and growth ceases.

To store leafy greens, wash and pat leaves dry, wrap in paper towels or a flour sack towel, place in a plastic bag and press out as much air as possible. Stored this way greens should be good for 7-10 days.

Veggie Tips

by Cindy Smith

Mache (*Valerianella locusta*)

Looking for something to grow that is a good interim salad crop while you're patiently waiting for spring greens? Mache may be just what you're looking for. It's pronounced mosh and rhymes with squash.

Wild mache was originally foraged by European peasants in every country that touched the Alps. Yet it is Jean-Baptiste de La Quintinie, the royal gardener of King Louis XIV, who is credited with introducing it to the world. It has been cultivated in France under the name doucette since the 17th century. As a cold weather crop, it spread rapidly from the Alps to the rest of Europe, including Britain where it has been eaten for centuries, and was documented in John Gerard's, *The Herball or the Generall Historie of Plantes* of 1597.

Mache is very delicate and only stores a few days in the refrigerator, therefore is rarely available at grocery stores. If you want it, you probably need to grow it. Mache is very undemanding. In late September, in a protected area of an unheated cold frame, or along a south facing wall, plant the seed in rows 3-4 inches apart and approximately ¼ inch deep. Then wait very patiently. Mache grows very slowly and may take up to a month to germinate. Be patient. Don't get discouraged when it stays to size of a four leaf clover for a very, very long time. Just keep waiting! Mache has small leaves about the size and shape of your thumb that grow in rosettes up to 4 inches across. The small rosettes can be harvested any time that the leaves are **not** frozen. When the leaves freeze, simply wait until the weather warms and the leaves thaw and start growing again. Expect to harvest typically from Thanksgiving to Valentine's Day.

True to its claim to fame that it grows in very cold weather, mache bolts in late February or early March, as the weather begins to warm. The leaves will begin to look like blades of grass; and while they may still taste good, who wants to eat a grass salad? No worries, Mache makes an excellent green manure and soil conditioner if what is left after the last harvest is turned under. It is also very pest and disease resistant.



To harvest mache, cut rosettes at the ground. They can be served whole as individual salads or twist off the stem and root to serve individual leaves. The greens are high in vitamins B and C, iron, folic acid, and potassium. While it is similar to baby spinach, it doesn't have oxalic acid, so eat it as often as you like. Mache can be a bit bland, so you may want to mix it with roasted root vegetables or more flavorful greens, such as mustard or arugula. Mache can be quickly steamed and served like spinach or used as a bed for placing other foods on. Mache leaves are delicate and will wilt if cooked too long.

Like all seed, mache seed is only available for purchase in the spring and summer. By late September, when it's time to plant mache, you can't buy seeds anywhere. Mache seeds are not long lived, so remember to purchase a new packet of seed every spring. Mache is also known as corn salad, field salad, lamb's lettuce, or rapunzel. It is most commonly referred to as corn salad, as it is planted after the corn harvest. In his garden journal, Thomas Jefferson, documented growing mache in the early 1800s at Monticello, his plantation in Virginia.

Mache never gets very big and only grows when nothing else is in the garden, so plant a lot. Photo shows mache plants ready for harvest.

Mache

Mache is a delicious, mild tasting salad green with very small leaves, similar to baby spinach leaves. Due to its very short shelf life, it is rarely found in grocery stores. Mache is easy to grow, but only grows in the fall and winter. Fall mache may keep a day or two in the refrigerator but is best used immediately after harvest. In the recipes below, if you don't have mache you can substitute any leafy baby green. Spinach, arugula, mild mustard, and cress, are especially good choices. See also recipes for arugula.

Mache Salad with Maple Vinaigrette

Vinaigrette

1/4 cup white balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup maple syrup
1/4 cup olive oil

Salad

4 cups fresh mache leaves
1 apple cut in thin slices
1/4 cup dried cranberries
1/4 cup crumbled goat cheese

Combine all ingredients for vinaigrette in a bottle shake well, then set aside. In a large salad bowl combine mache, apples, and cranberries. Toss with Maple Vinaigrette. Sprinkle with goat cheese crumbles. Serve immediately. *Recipe source: Phyllis Pugnetti*



Mache Salad with Beets and Feta



Vinaigrette

1/4 cup white balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup honey
1/4 cup olive oil
2 teaspoons dry mustard
Salt and pepper to taste

Salad

4 cups fresh mache leaves
2 small roasted beets, sliced
1/4 cup feta crumbles

Combine all ingredients for vinaigrette in a bottle, shake well, and set aside. Plate mache greens. Top with beets and sprinkle feta over all. Drizzle with vinaigrette.

Recipe source: philmaffetone.com

OKRA (*Abelmoschus esculentus* also known as *Hibiscus esculentus*)

The name 'okra' probably derives from one of the African Niger-Congo group of languages. Okra is native to Ethiopia and a close relative to the ornamental hibiscus, hollyhock, and cotton. Okra was cultivated by the ancient Egyptians by the 12th century BC, and was probably brought to the United States in the 1700s by slaves from West Africa. The Creoles in Louisiana learned from slaves how to use okra to thicken soups and is now an essential ingredient in Creole Gumbo. Okra is one of the oldest vegetables and the only member of the mallow family that is used as food.

Okra is an attractive plant and can be used as focal points or backdrops in flower borders. It is a tropical plant and grows best in hot climates, preferring temperatures above 85 degrees. Okra should be planted in full sun with at least 8 hours of sun each day, in well drained, fertile sandy or silt-loam soil with a pH of 6-7.

Sow seed when the soil temperature reaches at least 65° or start indoors 3-5 weeks prior to last frost. Plant seedlings 12-18 inches apart. Keep okra evenly moist until established. Once established plants can be kept on the dry side. During prolonged dry periods, a deep soaking once every 7-10 days with 1 – 1½ inches of water should be adequate. Add aged compost to planting beds in spring and again at midseason. Plants can grow 3-7 feet tall and generally will not grow well in containers.

Okra will produce large flowers about two months after planting. Pods appear about a week after bloom. Harvest when pods are tender and immature, about 2-3 inches long. Pick pods at least every other day as this will encourage flowering and pods will not become tough. Pods should be cut with a knife to prevent damage to the stem.

Red or burgundy okra is the most productive variety, even in less-than-ideal conditions. They are very attractive plants with the contrast of green leaves and burgundy colored pods, stems and midribs.

The most common insects that may damage okra include aphids, various beetles, corn earworms, and stinkbug. Diseases problematic with okra are Verticillium, Fusarium and several fungal diseases in wet weather. Using proper crop rotation and good garden sanitation is very important when growing okra.



Okra is related to hibiscus and very attractive in ornamental beds.

Young okra is tender and mild tasting. Okra can be steamed, baked, pickled, boiled, or stewed, but to prevent the 'slimy' texture try it grilled, fried, or roasted. Okra can be used in place of eggplant in many recipes and can be used raw in salads.

Okra does not store well so use within 2 or 3 days at most. Do not wash until ready to use or okra will become slimy. Try to make as few cuts as possible since over handling can also cause okra to become slimy.

Freezing is the best method for long term home storage of okra. Freeze only young, tender pods. Before freezing, blanch in boiling water for 4 minutes and then emerge okra in ice water bath until completely cool. Place okra in freezer bags and squeeze out as much air as possible. Freeze for up to one year at 32° or below.

Okra

Do a Google search on the “most hated vegetables” and okra usually makes the list. It’s easy to understand why. Okra is intimidating. Its appearance doesn’t give you too many clues about how to eat it. Do you cut off the top? Can you eat it raw? How the heck do you cook it? When you finally cut into okra, the pods ooze a slimy juice. Slime is the word most often associated with okra and for many people that is what ends the okra eating experience before it even begins. But don’t discard okra before you try it. Okra’s texture is very appealing when cooked properly. Grill, fry, or oven roast okra and it retains a crunchy on-the-outside, creamy on-the-inside texture that is unique. The less you cut or chop it the less slimy it is. Okra is easy to cook, versatile, and healthy. So if you are an okra hater, give it another try!



Pan Fried Herbed Okra

1 pound okra, washed and slit in half lengthwise
½ teaspoon cumin seeds
½ teaspoon coriander seeds
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper, coarsely crushed
salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons oil
lemon wedges

Heat oil in a large non-stick skillet add cumin seeds and fry until lightly brown, about 30-45 seconds. Add okra and stir fry on medium heat for 2-3 minutes until lightly browned. Add all the spices and cook for 2-3 minutes. Cover the pan and cook for another 3-4 minutes. Remove lid and cook for another 1-2 minutes on high heat until okra pods are crispy and moisture dries completely. While cooking stir often but gently to prevent breaking pods. Serve with lemon wedges.

Grilled Okra

1 pound fresh okra, washed
2 teaspoons olive oil
salt and pepper to taste
pinch of cayenne pepper
lime wedges

Pre-heat grill to 450°. In a large bowl, toss oil and herbs to coat okra. Grill until okra begins to caramelize then flip and do the other side. Drizzle with lime juice. Add more salt if necessary. Serve while still warm.



Veggie Tips

By Cindy Smith

Potatoes (*Solanum tuberosum*)

Potatoes have been a staple of mankind for centuries. They are native to the Andes Mountains and were taken to Spain by the conquistadors, eventually spreading throughout Europe and Asia. Later, British colonists introduced potatoes to North America. When first introduced to Europe, potatoes were regarded with suspicion and distaste. They were considered unfit for human consumption and used primarily as animal feed and ornamental plants. Even peasants refused to eat potatoes as they were considered ugly, had no taste or smell, and came from a heathen civilization. Everywhere the potato traveled it was met with overwhelming rejection. In Prussia, Fredrick the Great planted a field of potatoes and stationed guards to protect the crop from 'thieves', knowing the local peasants wouldn't be able to resist stealing the forbidden fruit. Shortly after, the potato started turning up in many nearby gardens and rapidly spread throughout all of Prussia. Wherever the potato gained popularity, it brought a more reliable crop to farmers, more calories and higher nutrition to peasant diets, causing populations to explode with higher birth rates and lower mortality. Potato flowers were prized as ornamental plants and became fashionable in France when Marie Antoinette was seen wearing a sprig of potato blossoms in her hair and Louis XVI wore a blossom in his buttonhole.

Potatoes are easy to grow and packed with nutrition. Potatoes contain more potassium than bananas and are rich in vitamin C and B vitamins. Potatoes contain no fat or cholesterol, minimal sodium, a great source of carbohydrates, and their skins are also a healthy source of fiber. A 6-ounce potato contains 2 grams of protein.

Potatoes come in a variety of colors—brown, yellow, white, red, and purple. Most potatoes fall in two main categories based on starch content, baking and boiling. Baking potatoes are high in starch. They turn light and fluffy when cooked and are ideal for baking, mashing, and French fries. Idaho, Russet Burbank, and Goldrush are considered baking potatoes. Boiling potatoes are low in starch. They are ideal for soups, casseroles, and potato salad. Yellow Potato, Round White, and Red Potato are varieties of boiling potatoes.

Potatoes require full sun and sandy, loose, well-drained, acidic soil, preferring a pH around 4.8 to 5.5. They need consistent moisture. Do not plant potatoes where you have previously planted tomatoes, peppers, or eggplant,



as this will increase susceptibility to blight. Potatoes can be planted as early as March to harvest in the summer and early fall. For a late harvest, plant in June. Seed potatoes are not really seeds, but are pieces of a whole potato or small potatoes. Potatoes should be planted one foot apart in an 8 inch deep trench. Each piece should have at least two eyes. Spread and mix compost in the bottom of the trench before planting. Hilling should be done starting when the plants are 6 inches tall. Hoe the soil up around the base of the plant every couple weeks to cover the root and support the plant. Potatoes benefit from a thick layer of straw mulch. Common pests are aphids, flea beetles, leafhoppers, and blight. Potato scab is most likely caused by soil with a high pH.

New potatoes are small, immature potatoes of any variety and will be ready for harvest when the plants bloom. Dig gently, being careful not to puncture the tubers. All potatoes should be harvested once the vines die. Brush soil off potatoes and store in a cool, dry, dark place at 35°-40°. Do not let them freeze. Do not wash potatoes prior to storage, as moisture may cause rot.

Potatoes

Tarragon Potato Salad

- 1 pound red potatoes
- 2 tablespoon white wine
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 ribs celery, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup green onions, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons fresh tarragon, chopped fine
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper



Scrub potatoes with vegetable brush under cold running water. Cut into 1/2-inch cubes. Place in 3-quart saucepan and add cold water to cover. Over high heat, bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-high and cook until potatoes are tender, about 10 minutes. Drain potatoes. Place in large bowl. While still warm, add wine and toss to mix. Let sit 5 minutes for potatoes to absorb the wine. Add tomatoes, celery, green onions, and tarragon. In a small bowl, whisk together oil, vinegar, mustard, salt, and pepper. Pour dressing over potato mixture and toss well. Serve warm. If you don't have tarragon try substituting basil. *Recipe source: www.potatoes.com.*



German Potato Salad

- 1/4 C oil
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon turmeric
- 1/2 C water
- 1/4 C vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 C chopped onion
- 1/2 C chopped red pepper
- 2 tablespoons sweet relish
- 8 medium cooked potatoes

Heat oil in pan. Add flour, sugar, pepper, and turmeric. Stir until smooth. Gradually stir in water and vinegar. Bring to a boil. Dice potatoes and sprinkle with salt. Add onion, red pepper, and relish. Pour sauce over vegetables. Serve warm or cold.

Best Mashed Potatoes

All measurements are approximate and can be changed based on personal preference. Pierce skins of potatoes and microwave on high until tender. Let potatoes rest about 5 minutes until cool enough to peel. Put potatoes in a large bowl, add about 2 teaspoons butter for each potato. Mix well with electric mixer. Add finely chopped fresh basil and a sprinkle of garlic powder. Mix well. Heat half and half in microwave (about 1/4 cup for each potato). Add half and half a little at a time until potatoes hold together and look creamy. Add salt and pepper to taste. Baking the potatoes instead of boiling them, prevents them from becoming water logged which makes them light and fluffy.

Veggie Tips

by Cindy Smith

Peas are one of the oldest crops cultivated by humans, being cultivated perhaps as long as 10,000 years. It is believed that the ancestral pea plant is extinct and possibly originated around the Mediterranean. Dried peas (split peas) have about twice as many calories as grains and are easy to winnow the pod from the seed which makes them a desirable staple crop for many people. Fresh green peas did not become a popular vegetable until many centuries later. They were considered a delicacy and were available only to royalty and the very wealthy. Today peas are a common vegetable and are eaten in the immature green stage when the sugars have not yet become starchy.

Peas can have either edible or inedible pods. Edible podded peas are snow peas and sugar peas, sometimes called snap peas. They can be eaten raw or cooked and are typically used for stir-fries, salads, or just as a healthy snack. They are slightly sweeter and crisper than other peas, and are not shelled. They yield much more food per plant than shell peas. Shelling peas have inedible pods and are usually used for cooking. The peas should be removed from the pod as soon as possible after harvesting.

Peas are also available as bush or pole peas and can have green or purple pods. Bush peas which grow 2-3 feet tall, are free standing, and need little or no support. Pole peas grow up to 6 feet tall and need support. Commercial growers prefer bush peas because they are more suitable for mechanical harvest, as a result pole peas have become less common, and some are now endangered. New varieties of pole peas are in steep decline. Yet, pole peas generally produce higher yields which frequently makes them more desirable for home gardens.

Peas, like most vegetables, prefer full sun and fertile, well-drained soil with sufficient organic matter to allow for good moisture retention. Peas can grow in a range of soil pH levels between 5.5 and 7.0. Gardeners who have never grown peas may want to mix a pea inoculant (a Rhizobia bacteria mixture) into the soil. All legumes, including peas, take nitrogen gas from the air and working together with Rhizobia change it into a plant-usable form of nitrogen.

Peas can be planted from seed or transplants. Peas prefer cool moist soil. Pea seeds can be planted once the soil reaches 45°. Seeds should be planted one



Purple podded pole peas are attractive and easy to see at harvest.

inch deep and 2-3 inches apart. Transplants should be planted after the threat of spring frosts have passed. Plants may be started anywhere between 2 and 6 weeks prior to transplanting in the garden. Peas benefit from good crop rotation and should not be planted in the same location more frequently than every three years. The flowers on pea plants are self-pollinating, meaning each flower contains both male and female parts; so cross pollination is not a problem for seed saving of open pollinated varieties. To prevent fungus, do not use overhead water or water early in the day so plants have an opportunity to dry before nightfall. Keep soil evenly moist, but not water logged.

Peas are typically ready to harvest in 50-80 days and should be harvested based on their size. Sugar or snow peas should be harvested when peas are small and pods are still slightly flat. For shelling peas, harvest when pods are well developed, but not bulging. Remove pods from the vines ¼ inch above the fruit. Pick fruit frequently for quality and production. After harvesting, compost the pea vines, but leave roots in the soil. As the roots decay they provide nitrogen for the next crop.

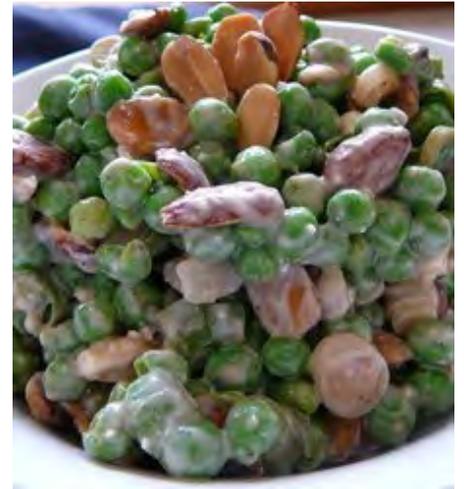
Peas

Peas grow during the cool weather of early spring and late fall, so traditional pairings with other cool weather plants are common. Try cooking peas with mint or parsley, potatoes, garlic, radishes, or early leafy salad greens.

Fresh Pea Salad

16 ounces fresh shelled peas
1/2 cup coarsely chopped cashews
1/2 cup chopped green onion
1/2 cup crumbled feta or cheddar cheese
1/4 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar
Fresh ground black pepper to taste
Red pepper flakes to taste (optional)

Shell and wash peas. Steam for 2-3 minutes until tender but not mushy. In a medium bowl mix together onions, cheese, mayonnaise, vinegar, pepper, and red pepper flakes. Add peas and refrigerate at least 2 hours, overnight is better. Add chopped cashews immediately before serving. *Recipe adapted from Allrecipes.com.*



Peas and Mashed Potatoes

Make buttery mashed potatoes. Add cooked peas. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper.

Creamed Peas and New Potatoes

Cook 1 pound whole new potatoes until tender. In separate pan cook 1 cup fresh peas until tender. In skillet make a béchamel sauce of 1 tablespoon melted butter and 1 1/2 tablespoons flour whisk until thick. Add 1 cup milk and 1/2 cup half and half whisk until thick smooth bring to a boil and cook for 2 minutes until thick. Add 1/2 teaspoon salt. Dice potatoes. Add peas and potatoes to sauce. Stir to combine and mix evenly.

Sautéed Sugar Snap Peas

Wash pea pods, remove stems and strings. Sauté 1 pound of pea pods in 1/2 tablespoon olive oil over medium-high heat for 3-5 minutes until crisp tender. Sprinkle on 1 teaspoon salt and freshly ground pepper to taste. Toss to mix well and coat.

Additional flavors that go well with this dish; lemon or lime juice; fresh mint, thyme or parsley; or sautéed garlic and shallots.



Veggie Tips

by Pat Moszeter

Sweet and Hot Peppers (*Capsicum annuum*)

Along with more worldly treasures, Christopher Columbus carried seeds of pepper plants back to Spain. Peppers have been cultivated in Central and South America as far back as 7500 BC. The fiery taste of hot peppers reminded Columbus of *Piper nigrum*, or black pepper which at the time was so precious it was worth its weight in gold. Columbus called the new plants 'pimento' which translates to pepper, hoping their flavor would make him wealthy. It didn't take long before peppers become a valuable commodity, traded throughout Europe, Africa, and Asia. Every cuisine has its signature varieties, and 3,000 cultivars are grown around the world today.

The canny observation that 'you can't judge a book by its cover' certainly applies to peppers. Some can look tiny and innocent, but a single bite is all it takes to set your face on fire. That's because hot peppers contain capsaicinoids, molecules that bring on the burn when they contact pain receptors on the body's mucous membranes. While they can't cause an actual chemical burn, they can definitely cause a panic attack. To determine what's hot and what's not, the Scoville Scale was devised in 1912 to measure a pepper's concentration of capsaicin—the higher the score the hotter the pepper. Sweet bell peppers come in at 0, while pepperoncins are a bland 900. Poblanos and pasillas score 2,000, topped by jalapenos at 10,000. But that's nothing compared to the Carolina Reaper that scored over 2,000,000, giving police pepper spray a run for its money.

In hot peppers, most of the heat is in the seeds and the white inner membrane. In sweet peppers the seeds and membranes are bitter, so removing these parts can make the pepper more palatable. If a pepper is hotter than you expect, capsaicins are soluble in both alcohol and fat; so a stiff drink, or full-fat milk shake or ice cream could bring relief. Chugging water, beer, or soda will only spread the capsaicins around the inside of your mouth, igniting even more pain receptors and amplifying your misery. If you find you've added too much heat to a recipe, try adding a fat like cheese, sour cream, butter; or sugar a teaspoon at a time will neutralize some of the heat.

Peppers thrive in the Yakima Valley's hot, dry summers. Some gardeners grow them from seed sown indoors about 8 weeks before transplanting in mid-May after all danger of frost, but most prefer to buy seedlings. Either way, harden them off before transplanting into the garden. And no matter how warm the spring weather is, be patient! Wait until all danger of frost has passed, the soil has warmed to at least 65°, and nighttime temperatures are consistently above 55°. Planting peppers too early can doom them to a season of stunted growth and poor production



Most varieties don't grow especially tall, but peppers can become top-heavy, so stake to keep upright or grow inside a tomato cage. Choose site with full sun and well drained soil, with a PH between 6.0 and 6.5. Enrich soil with compost or other organic matter. Plant in rows 18 to 24 inches apart with rows 2 feet apart. Mulch to moderate soil temperature and moisture. Peppers need a moderate amount of water and won't tolerate a saturated soil that waterlogs their roots. If you want your hot peppers to be even hotter, exposing them to drought stress will increase their heat, so allow the soil to dry out occasionally. Otherwise, keep the soil consistently moist. When temperatures rise above 90° or drop below 60°, peppers can drop their flowers, but the plants will rebound when the weather moderates. Harvest mature fruits regularly to keep the plants setting fruit over a long season. Use scissors or pruners to cut peppers from the plant.

Peppers are self-fertile, yet insects that visit the flowers, may result in cross-pollination about 20% of the time. The genes for heat are usually dominant, which can make the next generation of sweet peppers much hotter. If you're a seed-saver, isolate each variety by 500 feet to ensure each pepper remains true to type.

Peppers

Stuffed Sweet Peppers

10-12 sweet bell peppers
1 pound ground beef
1 pound sausage
2 sweet onions
1 jalapeno (optional)
1/2 cup chopped dried cranberries
1/2 cup chopped basil
2 cups thick marinara
3 cups cooked rice

Sauté onions and jalapeno until slightly soft. Set aside. Sauté beef and sausage together, add onion mixture, cranberries, and rice. Stir in marinara. Wash peppers, cut off tops, and core.

Fill peppers with filling and place in baking dish. ******(At this point stuffed peppers may be frozen for later use. See instructions below) To bake for immediate use, pour thinned down marinara in bottom of baking dish, just enough to cover bottom. Stand peppers upright in baking dish. Cover with foil, bake at 375° for 50-60 minutes. Remove foil and bake 20 more minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes and serve. Tip: Peppers will stand upright on the plate if they are placed in a mound of mashed potatoes.

******Frozen peppers will store for a year. To freeze, place stuffed peppers upright in a baking pan in freezer. Once frozen put peppers in a gallon zip lock bag. To prepare frozen peppers, remove from freezer, do not thaw, place in microwave safe dish and microwave on high for approximately 6 minutes per pepper. Let rest 5 minutes before serving. Refrigerate any unused portion within one hour. *Recipe source: Phyllis Pugnetti*



Jalapeno Jelly

3/4 pound jalapeno peppers
2 cups cider vinegar, divided
6 cups sugar
2 pouches liquid pectin
green food color (optional)

Wash peppers and drain. Remove stems and seeds. Puree peppers and one cup of vinegar in food processor or blender. Combine puree, one cup vinegar, and sugar in a large sauce pan. Bring to a boil. Boil for 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Stir in liquid pectin. Return to a rolling boil for one minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim foam if necessary. Stir in a few drops food color if desired. Ladle hot jelly into hot jars, leaving 1/4 inch head space. Adjust two-piece caps. Process 10 minutes in a boiling water canner.

Recipe source: Ball Blue Book Guide to Preserving 2010

Veggie Tips

by Phyllis Pugnetti



Rhubarb looks beautiful in ornamental beds. It is an undemanding perennial plant with large tropical looking foliage, dazzling upright blooms, and produces edible stalks for decades ... what's not to love?

Rhubarb is a long-lived, undemanding perennial plant that prefers slightly acidic fertile soil with lots of organic material, constant moisture, and lots of sun. Historically, rhubarb was a welcome relief in the spring when food supplies were low. Many old homesteads still have rhubarb plants growing around them decades after they've been abandoned. Rhubarb is originally from Mongolia and requires at least 21 days of freezing weather. We usually eat this vegetable as a fruit, but don't banish rhubarb to the back of the veggie patch. With very large leaves that look tropical, dazzling blooms, and red edible stalks, rhubarb looks great in ornamental beds too.

Rhubarb doesn't breed true from seed, so it is usually grown from root divisions. You'll know when to divide plants because the stalks will become crowded and skinny. This should be done in early spring or late fall when plants are dormant. Prepare the garden bed carefully as rhubarb may grow there for decades. Stalks emerge in the spring after the soil and air temperatures have reached the high 40s. Do not harvest rhubarb during the first year. This will allow the roots to become well established. Each spring thereafter, wait to harvest until the stalks are 18 inches high and leaves reach their full maturity. To harvest, twist and pull stalks upward to break. Do not cut, as the partial stalk left behind may introduce disease as it decays. To keep the roots healthy do not harvest more

than half of the stalks in any growing season. The leaves and dark green stalks are toxic and should *not* be eaten, but can be safely composted. Place mulch around plants to within 3 inches of the base, to maintain moisture and keep organic material high. Long, hot, dry days will encourage the plant to send up seed stalks that are quite a show stopper in your ornamental beds and can also be deep fried and eaten. However for a good edible crop of rhubarb stalks, the flower stalks should be pulled out right away to maintain high yields.

Rhubarb is rich in vitamins, minerals and acids such as citric and oxalic acid. It is known to be blood-cleansing, but can reduce your calcium levels if you consume it everyday. Different colors of stalks will determine the taste. Green stalks with green flesh are particularly sour and is mainly suitable for jams and jellies. Red stalks with green flesh are less sour with a tangy taste and are good for cake and cookie fillings. Red stalks with red flesh have a sweeter and somewhat raspberry flavor and are good in fruit tarts or pies. Freezing rhubarb is also an option. Wash the rhubarb stems and cut them into ½ inch pieces. Pack the pieces into a freezer container. Freeze for up to one year. Rhubarb is a versatile fruit that is hard to ruin.

Information source: <http://ext100.wsu.edu/clark/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2014/02/Rubarb.pdf>

Rhubarb

Spinach Salad with Strawberry Rhubarb Vinaigrette

Vinaigrette

- 1 cup chopped fresh rhubarb
- 1 ¼ cup chopped fresh strawberries
- 3 large shallots, coarsely chopped
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ cup red wine vinegar
- ¾ cup canola oil
- ¼ teaspoon Dijon mustard

Salad

- 1 bunch spinach, coarsely chopped
- 12 strawberries, washed and sliced
- 4 ounces goat cheese, crumbles

Simmer rhubarb, strawberries, shallots, sugar, and red wine vinegar in small non-reactive saucepan until tender, about 10 minutes. Puree, strain into large bowl, and cool. Whisk in canola oil and Dijon. Serve over salad and toss.



Rhubarb-Raspberry Freezer Jam

- 5 cups rhubarb, cut into fine pieces
- 4 cups sugar
- 6 ounces raspberry gelatin

Over medium heat cook the rhubarb with a small amount of water in the saucepan. Heat until stringy and soft, about 10-15 minutes. Add sugar and cook an additional 10 minutes exactly. Remove the saucepan from the heat and add the gelatin and stir. Carefully pour the mixture into jelly jars and cover with lids. Allow to cool completely and freeze until ready to use. Yield 3 pints.



Rhubarb Mustard Salsa

- 1 tsp olive oil
- ½ pound rhubarb
- 1 tablespoon sugar (more if necessary)
- 1 ½ tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ½ small red onion, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon lime juice
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh basil
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat oil in skillet over medium heat. Add rhubarb and sugar, cook, stirring often, until rhubarb is soft, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in remaining ingredients. Serve over fish or chicken.



*Rhubarb recipes from WSU Extension of Clark County,
<http://ext100.wsu.edu/clark/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2014/02/Rubarb.pdf>*

Rhubarb

Rhubarb Sweet Rolls

Sauce

1 ½ cup sugar
1 tablespoon flour
1 ½ teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon salt
1 ½ cup water
⅓ cup butter or margarine
1 teaspoon vanilla

In a medium bowl combine sugar, flour, cinnamon and salt. Stir in water. Add butter. Bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 1 minute. Remove from heat. Add vanilla and set aside.

Dough

2 cup flour
2 tablespoon sugar
2 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
1 ½ tablespoon butter or margarine
¾ cup milk

In a medium bowl combine flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt. Cut in butter until mixture is the size of coarse crumbs. Add milk and mix quickly. Do not over mix. Form dough into a ball then roll out on a floured surface into a rectangle about 9" x 12".

Filling

2 tablespoon butter or margarine, softened
2 cup finely chopped rhubarb
½ cup sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon

Spread dough with softened butter and arrange rhubarb on top. Combine sugar and cinnamon and sprinkle over rhubarb. Roll up from the long side and place on a cutting board seam side down. Cut roll into 12 slices. Arrange slices in a greased 9" x 13" baking dish. Pour sauce over. Bake at 350 for 35-40 minutes until golden brown.

*Recipe submitted by Diana Pieti
Original source: justapinch.com*



Savory Rhubarb-Onion Pork

4 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
1 ½ teaspoons fresh ground coriander
1 teaspoon salt, divided
¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
1-1¼ pounds pork tenderloin, trimmed
1 large sweet onion, sliced
2-4 tablespoons water
2 cups diced rhubarb
¼ cup red-wine vinegar
¼ cup brown sugar
¼ cup minced fresh chives

Mix 1 teaspoon oil, coriander, 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper in a small bowl. Rub the mixture into pork. Heat 1 teaspoon oil in a large ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat. Add the pork and cook, turning occasionally, until brown on all sides, 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer the pan to pre-heated oven and roast pork at 450° until thermometer registers 160°F, about 20 minutes. Let rest 5 minutes and slice.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining 2 teaspoons oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add onion and the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt; cook, stirring occasionally, until browned. Add 3 tablespoons water; continue cooking, stirring often, until the onion is soft. Stir in rhubarb, vinegar, and brown sugar and cook, stirring often, until the rhubarb has broken down, about 5 minutes. Spoon the sauce over the sliced pork and sprinkle with chives.

For food safety, refrigerate any unused portion within one hour.
Recipe source: EatingWell.com

Rhubarb

If you think you don't like rhubarb, think again! These two recipes might make you reconsider this humble vegetable. Yes, rhubarb is a vegetable! It's a plant that asks for little, but grows for decades in return. Even if you don't eat it, rhubarb won't hold it against you. It will still look great in your garden for most of your lifetime.

Rhubarb-Blueberry Streusel Bars

Makes 16 bars, each 2 inches square

1½ cups blueberries
2 cups rhubarb, cut into thin slices
1 cup sugar, divided
¼ cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 ⅔ cups all-purpose flour, divided
6 ounces cold butter (not margarine)
2 ounces cream cheese
½ teaspoon salt
1 large egg
½ teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease an 8-inch square pan with non-stick spray. Line it with parchment paper (so you'll be able to lift the bars out later for cutting) and spray again.

Combine the blueberries, sliced rhubarb, and ¼ cup of the sugar in a large bowl. Set this aside to macerate.

In a large mixing bowl, add 2½ cups flour, remaining ¾ cup of sugar, salt, butter and cream cheese. Using a pastry cutter combine until the mixture is moist and crumbly. Remove 1¾ cups of this mixture and place in a small mixing bowl and add ¼ cup brown sugar and cinnamon, and set it aside for the streusel topping. To the rest of the mixture still in the first large bowl, add the remaining ¼ cup of flour, egg, baking powder and vanilla. Blend until it just starts to come together to form a dough. Press the dough evenly into the lined pan. Bake for 15 minutes.

Strain the macerated fruit to remove the excess liquid. Spread the fruit in an even layer over the surface of the partially baked crust. Sprinkle the reserved streusel topping over the surface of the fruit and then sprinkle with 3 tablespoons more sugar. Bake again for 40 to 50 minutes until the topping is golden brown.

Let cool for 20 minutes before lifting the bars out of the pan using the parchment paper. Slice into 16 squares. Store in an airtight container for up to 5 days.



Grandma Pauline's Rhubarb Custard Pie

3 eggs, beaten
3 tablespoons milk
2 cups sugar
½ cup flour
1 teaspoon nutmeg
4 cups rhubarb peeled and sliced
2 tablespoons butter

In unbaked pie shell place cut rhubarb. Mix remaining ingredients in a bowl and pour over rhubarb. Dot with butter. Bake at 400 degrees for 50-60 minutes. Cool before cutting.

*Recipe Submitted by Claudia Steen
Recipe Source: Pauline Weidman*

Rose (*Rosa*)

According to fossil evidence, roses are 35 million years old. In nature, the genus *Rosa* has some 150 species spread throughout the Northern Hemisphere. During the Roman period, roses were grown extensively in the Middle East and were used for medicinal purposes, and perfume. At one time royalty used rose petals as currency. Catholic Rosary beads were made from dried rose hips. Preserved rose hips have been found in archeological sites across Europe and in Egyptian tombs.

Roses have been cultivated by humans for food, medicine, and fragrance for over 5000 years. We can be certain that for nearly all those years roses have been grown without the 'benefit' of chemical fertilizer, pesticide, and herbicide. So it should come as no surprise that roses are actually quite easy to grow organically. Prevention is nearly always the key to healthy roses. For aphids, check the new growth whenever you are in the garden. If you see aphids, squash with your fingers *gently* so you don't damage any new plant growth. Aphid eggs overwinter in plant litter on the ground. In the early spring clear all debris away before the weather warms, and you'll clear most of the aphids away too. Prevent Black Spot, Rust, and Powdery Mildew by keeping leaves dry. Prune plants to be open in the middle for good air flow, adjust sprinklers to spray near the base of the plants, and water early in the day so foliage has time to dry. Prune off any diseased leaves and leaves that touch the ground. These easy steps will eliminate nearly all common rose problems, and welcome pollinators and beneficial predators into your garden.

If you're encouraged to try growing roses organically, you also may want to try making Rose Petal Jam. It's a special treat to be able to make fresh jam early in the year before most fruits and berries are in season. It only takes about 30 minutes from the time you head out to the garden until the jam is on your freshly baked biscuit or scone.

Rose petal jam and jelly are fairly common in Europe and are used mainly in fancy pastries and deserts. Roses should be organically grown and pesticide free. Never use roses from florists or garden centers as they are not food safe. Pick dark colored roses that are fully open and fragrant. Wrap your hand around the whole bloom and gently pull all petals off the plant. Still holding the entire rose bloom, cut the white or yellow pith off all petals in one quick snip with sharp scissors. The pith is the part where the petal attaches to the hip and is bitter. Drop petals into a measuring cup. Pack down very lightly. Jam will be slightly lighter than the color of the rose petals.



Rose Petal Jam

2 cups organic rose petals with pith cut off
3 cups water, divided
5½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
5 cups sugar
2 package powdered regular full-sugar pectin
(not low-sugar pectin)

Gently rinse rose petals, drain in colander, and then sprinkle on a clean kitchen towel to absorb excess water. Put rose petals, 1½ cup water, and lemon juice in blender and puree until smooth. Continue to blend while slowly adding sugar. Blend for about 2 minutes until all the sugar has dissolved. Pour in a bowl and microwave for 2 minutes but do not boil. Set aside. In a small sauce pan add 1½ cup hot water and slowly add 2 packages pectin. Stir until dissolved. Bring to a full rolling boil. Boil for one minute, stirring constantly. Slowly pour rose mixture into pectin while stirring gently but quickly. Pour into clean sterile jars or plastic freezer containers. Cool to room temperature. Store in freezer. This jam sets up very quickly, so work fast! Jam will store for 2-3 weeks in the refrigerator or 6 months in the freezer. Makes 7 cups.

Recipe source: Phyllis Pugnetti

Rutabaga

Rutabaga Hash

4 slices bacon, cut crosswise into $\frac{3}{4}$ inch pieces
1-3 tablespoons olive oil
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds rutabaga, peeled and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch cubes
1 medium onion, diced
2 ribs celery, sliced thin
1 Anaheim chili, seeded and diced
1 small jalapeno, seeded and minced (optional)
Salt and pepper to taste
3 tablespoons cilantro, chopped fine

Cook bacon in skillet over medium heat minutes until crisp, about 5-8 . Remove bacon from pan, drain on paper towels and set aside. Measure fat in pan. Add enough olive oil to bacon fat to equal 3 tablespoons. Return fat mixture to pan. Sauté prepared rutabagas and onion in fat mixture over medium heat until onion starts to soften, about 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low. Cover tightly with lid, and cook 7-10 minutes until tender, stirring once. Add celery, chilies, salt and pepper, and cook uncovered on medium-high heat, stirring frequently, until rutabagas are browned and celery and chilies are tender, 7-10 minutes. Fold in cilantro and bacon. *Recipe source: Diana Pieti*



Roasted Rutabaga

1 large rutabaga
3 tablespoons olive oil,
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon apple cider vinegar
1 teaspoon parsley, chopped

Wash rutabaga under cool running water, peel, and slice into cubes. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Place rutabagas on baking sheet and toss with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Roast at 425° F until golden and soft, about 40 minutes. Drizzle with apple cider vinegar and sprinkle with parsley. Toss to coat.

Veggie Tips

by Phyllis Pignetti

When fall rolls around my thoughts turn to comfort foods. One of my favorites is winter squash. Unlike its fellow summer squashes, winter squash and pumpkins are botanically the same. The only difference is the shape of pumpkins are traditionally round or oval. Winter squash is eaten after it reaches the mature fruit stage, when the rind has become thick and hardened. Winter squash is a great source of complex carbohydrates and fiber as well as high in potassium, niacin, beta carotene and iron. It stores well without refrigeration or canning and each vine will yield from 10 to 20 squash if properly maintained.



Winter squash is one of the most popular fall vegetables. Some varieties can weigh over a thousand pounds, as seen in competitions across the country each fall. Smaller fruits with small seed cavities takes up less room in storage than a large hollow pumpkin shaped fruits.

Planting

Plant winter squash when all danger of frost is past and the soil is well warmed by the sun, about 60 – 65°. Don't rush to plant as the seeds will only germinate in warm soil. Seedlings are extremely tender and will not tolerate the slightest frost. To plant, pile your soil into a hill about 18 inches high. This allows the soil to heat around the seeds and roots. Your soil should be well amended and well fertilized since winter squash plants are heavy feeders. Plant five or six seeds

per hill about 4 inches apart and 1 inch deep. Keep the soil moist, but not soggy. In about 10 days, the seeds will sprout. When they're about 6 inches high, thin out the weakest seedlings leaving only 3 plants per hill. The winter squash growing season is about 110-120 days to maturity. You can start your seeds indoors to give them a head start. The seeds should be planted six weeks before the last spring frost date. Plant in good soil in a warm sunny window or greenhouse and transplant to the garden after all danger of frost is past. Remember to harden off the seedlings before transplanting.

Growing

Winter squash cultivation takes up a great deal of space in the home garden. Vines grow up to 15 feet and should be moved as little as possible, as roots will sprout at the leaf nodes in many places along the vine which results in healthier plants. Winter squash are heavy feeders and grow well in soil that is high in organic matter. Fertilize well throughout the growing season. Regular feeding will produce the most abundant crop. Another big help is keeping the hills weed free. Cultivation should be done by hand or with a hoe. Don't cultivate too deeply since the roots are shallow. Your squash will be ready for harvesting when the skin turns hard and is difficult to pierce with your thumbnail.

Winter squash can be stored at room temperature for 3 months to a year (depending on variety) with little change in flavor or texture. Winter squash is very versatile and can be used in either savory dishes or sweet desserts. It can be roasted or boiled. Cooked squash can be pureed with an immersion blender and frozen in portions of one or two cups to be used like canned pumpkin.

Veggie Tips

by Cindy Smith

Tromboncino Squash (*Curcubita moschata*)

Tromboncino is a vegetable appreciated by those with a sense of humor as its appearance is very whimsical and its shape is much like a trombone with a long, skinny neck and round bulb at the end if allowed to mature to full size.

This Italian heirloom squash is unusual in that it can be eaten as either a summer or winter squash. It is very popular in Italy but not well known elsewhere. Tromboncino is very vigorous with vines up to 20 feet and a single plant can produce up to 20 squash. If vines remain on the ground, the developing fruits will curl around themselves, when trellised they will be straight and less prone to rot. The fruits can grow 3-4 feet long and may be harvested anytime, from just a few inches through its full size.

Just like other squashes, Tromboncino prefers good fertile soil and plenty of sunshine. Start indoors 3-4 weeks prior to the average last frost date (in Yakima the last frost date is approximately May 15). If planting seed, wait until soil has warmed to at least 65°. Plant seeds on hills spaced 4-5' apart at 1-1 ½ inches deep with 3-4 seeds per hill. Later thin plants to 1-2 per hill. Squash need just barely damp soil to germinate. All squash bear separate male and female flowers on the same plant and require bees and insects for successful pollination. Planting with a cover crop of buckwheat or agricultural mustard will attract pollinators for increased fruits and beneficial predators to help combat the insect pests. The major insect pests for squash are spotted and striped cucumber beetles, vine borers, and squash bugs. Diseases commonly experienced with growing squash include powdery mildew, mosaic virus, and Verticillium wilt. Planting varieties not susceptible to these diseases and not over-watering can help avoid these problems.

Tromboncino can be harvested immature as a summer squash when they are still light green or can be harvested as a winter squash when they have turned a tan color and the skin is hard. When the squash is young, between 4 and 12 inches long, it can be eaten like zucchini with no need to peel before eating. There are no seeds in the slender neck of the squash, so unlike zucchini, there is no concern about the center being pithy or seedy. In larger Tromboncinos, the squash will form a round bulb at the end, which contains the all seeds. At maturity Tromboncinos will turn to a tan color with a tough skin. They taste a bit like a Winter squash. A squash variety that has both summer and winter squash on the same vine might be a good



Tromboncino squash can be eaten as winter or summer squash.

choice for gardeners with limited space when grown on a sturdy trellis.

Fresh immature Tromboncino should last a good week or longer in the refrigerator. Once cut, it will begin to weep and dry out so use within a few days at most. Cut squash can be wrapped in plastic wrap. As a winter squash, store undamaged and uncut fruits in a cool, dry place for as long as the skin remains hard, usually 4-5 months. It can be cooked just as any winter squash, but with no seeds in the neck preparation is much easier.

For Tromboncino recipes use any Summer or Winter squash recipes.

Summer Squash

Zucchini is the most popular summer squash in the US. It comes in dark green, light green, green-grey, yellow and striped. Other varieties include Patty Pan, Tromboncino, Straight Neck, and Crooked Neck. All can be used interchangeably in recipes.

Zucchini Frittata

4 eggs
2 tablespoons cream
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 small onion, chopped
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 clove garlic, minced
3 small zucchini trimmed, halved and chopped
1/3 cup Parmesan or other hard cheese
2 tablespoons minced fresh herbs (parsley, basil, thyme, or oregano)
1/4 tsp. ground pepper



In a large bowl, whisk eggs and cream thoroughly and set aside. In a large oven-proof frying pan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add onion and salt, cook until starting to brown, about five minutes. Stir in the garlic. Add zucchini and cook until the zucchini has just wilted, about five minutes. Remove from the heat. Stir cheese, herbs and ground pepper into the egg mixture. Add the vegetable mixture. Return pan to the burner on medium heat. Pour in egg and vegetable mixture. Reduce heat to med-low and cook until eggs just start to set, about five minutes. Meanwhile, heat the broiler with rack about 6-8 inches from element. Place pan under broiler and cook until frittata is set and top is slightly browned, watching carefully to make sure the top doesn't burn. Remove from the heat. Allow to cool for five minutes. Loosen with a spatula, running it around the edge. Carefully slide the frittata onto a serving plate. Cut into wedges. Serve immediately. *Recipe Source: Bev Vonfeld*

Italian Stuffed Zucchini

2 medium zucchini
1 small sweet onion, chopped
1 small clove garlic, minced
8 ounces Italian sausage
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Slice zucchini lengthwise and scoop out center pith and seeds. Sauté onions until soft add garlic and sauté for 30 seconds. Add crumbled sausage and cook until done. Spoon sausage mixture into zucchini shells. Sprinkle with Parmesan. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes until top is browned and cheese is bubbly.



Summer Squash

Zucchini Meatloaf

2 eggs beaten
2 cups grated zucchini
1/3 cup seasoned bread crumbs
1/3 cup chopped onions
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoons oregano
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 1/2 pounds lean ground beef

Topping

1 tablespoon brown sugar
3 tablespoons ketchup
1/2 teaspoon yellow mustard

In a large bowl mix all ingredients until well blended. Press mixture into an ungreased 9 inch deep-dish glass pie plate. Bake at 350° for 35 minutes. In a small bowl mix all topping ingredients. Spread topping over top of meatloaf and return to oven to bake an additional 10 minutes or until meat thermometer reads 160°. Let stand 5 minutes before cutting.



Zucchini Bean Salad

3 small zucchini, shredded or sliced
1/4 cup sweet red peppers chopped
1/2 cup red onions, chopped
15 ounce can kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1/4 cup olive oil
3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt
1/4 teaspoon salt

In a large bowl combine zucchini, peppers, onions, and beans. In a separate bowl whisk together oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Pour over vegetables and mix well. Chill. This recipe is very similar to the traditional three bean salad.



Zucchini Enchiladas

2 zucchini, sliced in thin lengthwise strips
1 small onion, chopped
1/2 green pepper, seeded and chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/8 teaspoon chili powder
4 corn tortillas
15 ounces enchilada sauce
1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

Sauté zucchini, onions, peppers, and garlic in olive oil until tender. Toss with chili powder. Divide mixture onto tortillas. Top with 2 tablespoons cheddar cheese and roll up. Spread 1/2 cup enchilada sauce on bottom of 8x8 baking dish. Place rolled enchiladas on top. Pour remaining sauce over top. Sprinkle remaining cheese evenly over all. Bake at 350° for 20 minutes.



Summer Squash

Zucchini is actually a fruit. Although not as sweet or tart as apples, zucchini is lower in calories and higher in nutrients than apples. This recipe is a good way to use the abundance of zucchini. Yellow fruits look like peaches and green look more like apples.

Zucchini Crisp

Fruit filling:

8 cups zucchini, washed, peeled, sliced
1/4 cup lemon juice
1/2 cup apple or peach juice concentrate
3/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 - 1/2 cup flour

Crumb topping:

3/4 cup flour
1/2 cup rolled oats
1/3 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup soft butter or margarine

In large pot, combine zucchini and juices; simmer until tender about 30 minutes. (Zucchini will not continue to soften during baking.) Add sugar and cinnamon and enough flour to thicken mixture. Mix well. Spread evenly into 9 x 13 greased baking dish. In separate bowl, mix crumb topping ingredients. Sprinkle over the top of zucchini mixture. Bake at 375° for 35 minutes and top is browned. *Recipe source: Phyllis Pugnetti*



National Sneak Some Zucchini Onto Your Neighbor's Porch Day

We all need this holiday, but who knew we actually have one? So get ready to sneak under the stealth of night to leave some zucchini for the neighbor. What a great surprise...and everyone LOVES surprises!!! But in case your neighbors aren't so thrilled to get your very generous gift, here are some other ways to use zucchini.



Use a julienne peeler to make zucchini 'pasta' for your favorite pasta salad, or serve it with hot marinara.

Use a vegetable peeler to slice in long thin ribbons and toss with vinaigrette.

Cut into matchsticks, toss with just enough olive oil to coat, and sauté for a minute on each side until slightly crisp, sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Use grated zucchini to substitute for potatoes in potato pancakes.

If all else fails, chop it up and feed to your dog.

Winter Squash

Winter squash and pumpkins are botanically the same and are all interchangeable in cooking.

Roasted Squash and Apple Soup



2 pounds winter squash or pumpkin; seeded and cut in half
1 pound granny smith apples; unpeeled, cored, cut in wedges
2 cups onion, chopped
4 tablespoons garlic, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 cups chicken broth
8 thin sliced apple pieces for garnish
2 tablespoons maple syrup

Heat oven to 400°. Place squash cut side down on a large baking sheet. Bake for 25 minutes. Add apples to the roasting squash and continue baking additional 20 minutes. Stir the apples when golden, roasting until tender and brown. Sauté onion and garlic in oil until tender, about 6 minutes. Add chicken broth and bring to a boil, reduce heat to simmer. Transfer about half the squash and apples to a blender along with half of the onion broth mixture. Puree until smooth. Repeat with remaining ingredients. Season with salt and pepper. Serve topped with thinly sliced apples and a drizzle of maple syrup. Makes 4 servings.

Recipe source Nan Romney.

Spicy Squash Soup

3 tablespoons butter
½ cup minced shallots
2 cups mashed squash
1 tablespoon sugar
½ teaspoon nutmeg
1 tablespoon red pepper flakes
1 cup apple juice
½ cup heavy cream
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
2 tablespoons bacon bits

Melt butter in large pot over medium heat. Add shallots and sauté until translucent, about 8 minutes. Mix in squash, sugar, nutmeg, pepper flakes, apple juice and heavy cream. Simmer 40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper. Serve drizzled with heavy cream, bacon bits and red pepper flakes. May be served in the shell of small pumpkins or squash.

Recipe Source: Nan Romney



Winter Squash

Three Sisters Stew

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 pound winter squash, peeled, diced and steamed;
1 medium green bell pepper, diced
2 cups diced tomatoes with liquid, fresh or canned
2 cups cooked red or black beans
1 cup corn
1 cup vegetable stock
1 jalapeno, seeded and minced
2 teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon dried oregano
salt and black pepper taste
1/4 cup minced fresh cilantro



Heat the oil in a soup pot. Add the onion and sauté over medium-low heat until translucent. Add the garlic and continue to sauté until the onion is golden. Add the remaining ingredients except the cilantro, and bring to a simmer. Cover and simmer gently until all the vegetables are tender, about 20 to 25 minutes. Add cilantro. Taste and add more salt and pepper if necessary. Stew will be very thick. Add more broth if you prefer the consistency of soup.

Savory Roasted Winter Squash



1 medium winter squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed
2 tablespoons olive oil
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh sage, rosemary, or thyme
2 cloves garlic, finely minced

Preheat oven to 425°. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. Combine squash with oil, salt and pepper in a large mixing bowl. Toss well to coat evenly. Spread squash cubes in an even layer on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Roast for about 20 minutes. Add garlic and herb of choice. Toss to coat. Continue to roast for another 20 minutes until squash is tender and starting to caramelize. Refrigerate un-used portion within 2 hours.

Recipe source Phyllis Pugnetti

Winter Squash

Winter squash and pumpkins are botanically the same and are all interchangeable in cooking.

Baked Pumpkin Custard

3 large eggs
2 cups pureed squash or pumpkin
1 1/2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
14 ounce can Eagle Brand® Sweetened Condensed Milk
1 cup whole milk
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/4 teaspoon salt
whipped cream for topping

Heat oven to 350°. Whisk eggs in a large bowl. Stir in squash puree and pumpkin pie spice until well blended. Continue to whisk in sweetened condensed milk, whole milk, vanilla extract and salt. Pour into 6 custard cups, 6 ounces each. Place custard cups in a baking dish. Place on middle rack in oven and pour boiling water into baking dish to a depth of one inch. Bake 35 minutes, until center are almost set. Remove custard cups from baking dish and cool on a wire rack. Serve warm or cold. Top with whipped cream immediately before serving. Serves 6. This recipe has all the taste of pumpkin pie but without the hassle of making a pie crust. *Recipe source: Eagle Brand*



Pumpkin Bread

2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 cup butter
2 cups sugar
4 eggs
2 cups pureed squash or pumpkin
1 cup milk
1 cup pecans, chopped

Heat oven to 350°. In medium bowl, sift together all dry ingredients. In large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and cream again. Add fruit puree, milk, and nuts. Stir well. Add dry ingredi-

ents and mix well. Pour into two well greased 8"x4" loaf pans, or one bundt pan. Bake 45-55 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes, remove from pan and cool completely on a wire rack. *Recipe source: Libby's Pumpkin*

Strawberries (*Fragaria × ananassa*)

Why is it that Strawberries taste so much sweeter and juicier right off the plant? There's a good reason for it. Supermarket berries tend to be tart and grainy. The natural sugar in berries has already begun converting to starch as soon as it's picked. So, why not try growing your own?

Strawberry plants come in three types:

Day-Neutral: This type of strawberry is insensitive to day length, these varieties produce buds, fruit and runners continuously when temperatures are between 35 and 85 degrees. They produce less fruit than June bearers.

Ever bearing: This type form buds during long summer days and short days of autumn. The summer formed buds flower and fruit in autumn and the autumn formed buds fruit the following spring.

June bearing: This type is sensitive to the length of day. These varieties produce buds in the autumn, flowers and fruits, the following spring and runners during long days of summer.

How to Plant

Plant strawberries as soon as the ground can be worked in the spring. Make planting holes deep and wide for entire root system without bending them. The roots should be covered but the crown should be right at the soil surface. Set plants out 20" apart and 4' between rows. The pH for strawberries should be between 5.5 - 7. Amend soil in advance if necessary. Strawberries are tolerant of different soil types but prefer loam. The planting site must be well drained. Raised beds are an excellent option for strawberry plants. Don't plant in a site that recently had strawberries, tomatoes, peppers or eggplant. Water 1" per week. Keep beds mulched to reduce water needs and weed invasion. New plants will develop much healthier root systems when flowering is discouraged during the first year. Remove runners and daughter plants. This will result in higher yields in following years. When you want to replace old strawberry plants (about every 3-4 years) use only first or second generation of daughter plants, as the yields decrease with each successive generation.

Pests and Diseases

Very small or deformed berries may be a result of weather or lack of pollinators. You can increase yields by planting flowers nearby to attract bees. By far, birds are the biggest pest of strawberries. Covering the berry patch with bird netting is the only effective deterrent for birds. Slugs may live in organic mulch and damage berries by eating holes in them. To deter slugs use an organic mulch that drains water quickly, such as pine needles. Water early in the day to allow the foliage and mulch to dry. Water deeply but less often. When the growing season is over, mow or cut foliage down to 1". To reduce disease and pests, remove or compost the cut foliage and old mulch. Use 4" of fresh mulch of straw, pine needles, or other organic material after the first couple of frosts, when air temperatures drop to 20 degrees.



Children in the garden are one of the best reasons to grow strawberries

Strawberry

Strawberry Soufflé

12 ounces fresh strawberries without stems
2 tsp lemon juice
½ cup sugar, divided
1 tablespoon cornstarch
4 egg whites
pinch of salt
butter and powdered sugar topping, optional

Coat ramekins or cake pan with butter and then sugar. Set aside. Preheat oven to 400 F.



In a food processor, combine the strawberries, lemon juice, ¼ cup of sugar, and cornstarch. Mix it until very fine and not chunky. Beat egg whites with a whisk attachment until soft peaks (you may also add a pinch of cream of tartar to help foam). Continue to beat while adding the other ¼ cup sugar and salt until stiff peaks form. Add 1/3 of the strawberry mixture to egg whites and gently fold with the spatula. Add the rest of the strawberry mixture and continue to fold in. Be sure to scrape down the sides of the bowl too. Put batter into the ramekins, dividing the mixture evenly among them. Fill nearly to the top of each ramekin. If using a cake pan, spread mixture evenly with a spatula. Put ramekins on a cookie sheet and place in oven. Bake for 14 – 17 minutes, until lightly browned on top. Remove from oven when soufflés are slightly brownish pink. Top with butter and sprinkle with powdered sugar if desired. Eat right away.

Note: this recipe makes 6 individual soufflés or one large one. If you do not have ramekins, use any small baking dishes or for one large soufflé use a small cake pan.

Recipe source: Snapguide by brit+co



Strawberry Jam

2 quarts strawberries
1 package powdered pectin
1/4 cup lemon juice
7 cups sugar

Wash strawberries and drain. Remove stems. Crush strawberries. Combine strawberries, powdered pectin, and lemon juice in a large pot. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Add sugar, stirring until dissolved. Return to a rolling boil. Boil hard for one minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim foam if necessary. Ladle hot jam into hot jars. Leaving 1/4 inch headspace. Adjust two-piece caps. Process 10 minutes in a boiling water canner.

Recipe source: Ball Blue Book Guide to Preserving, 2010

Veggie Tips

by Cindy Smith

True confessions... I have enjoyed eating salsa verde, other green sauces, and Mexican dishes, yet have never bothered to investigate a main ingredient that makes these so delectable. The culprit? Tomatillos!

Tomatillos are a member of the nightshade family (tomato, potato, eggplant & peppers are also members) and are also known as the Mexican husk tomato. They are a relative of the tomato but should not be confused with green tomatoes. Tomatillos originated in Mexico and South America and played an important part of Mayan and Aztec culture, even more so than the tomato. Tomatillo means, 'little tomato'.

Tomatillos are grown mostly in Mexico and the highlands of Guatemala and are a key ingredient in fresh and cooked Mexican and Central American green sauces and other dishes. Tomatillos are also grown and processed in Australia, South Africa, and Kenya. In the United States, tomatillos are grown mostly in California and Iowa. Iowa State University promoted a strain of tomatillos for Midwestern farmers they call *jamberry*. In 1952, another strain was introduced in Ohio under the name *jumbo husk tomato*.

An inedible paper-like husk formed from the calyx covers tomatillos. They are often described as looking like a Chinese lantern when hanging on the plant. As the fruit matures it fills the husk, which can split open by harvest. The fruit can be yellow, red, green, or even purple when ripe. Purple and red cultivars tend to be slightly sweet in flavor and therefore are used in jams and preserves.

A bit of 'controversy' surrounds tomatillos as most online sources including commercial plant nurseries and universities say that two or more should be planted in order for them to pollinate one another. Others state that tomatillos are *Physalis ixocarpa* which are inbreeding plants with perfect self-pollinating flowers, meaning that they pollinate themselves before the flower is fully open; therefore one plant is enough.

Tomatillos may be started by seed indoors or from starts. They should be transplanted when the chance of a freeze has passed. Tomatillos should be planted as you would tomatoes, burying 2/3 of the plant. They require 6-8 hours of sunlight daily. To harden off trans-

plants, place plants in a shady, protected location and gradually expose them to longer periods of sun. They grow well in containers. Tomatillos should be watered regularly, approximately 1-2 inches a week depending on how hot the weather is. Drip irrigation or watering by hand is best as wet leaves may be susceptible to powdery mildew. All-purpose garden fertilizer may be used (10-10-10). Till or dig into the top 4-6 inches to loosen soil before planting.

Tomatillos are a bushy plant that grows 3-4 feet tall and most times as wide. Plant at least 3 feet apart with rows 3-6 feet apart. Stake the plants to keep the fruit off the ground. They are somewhat draught tolerant once established. Each plant typically produces 1 pound of fruit over the season. Most recipes call for ½ pound to make sauces.



Insect infestation is uncommon with tomatillos but they are susceptible to the same insects and diseases as tomatoes – aphids, cucumber beetles, potato beetles, and cutworms.

The husk indicates when the fruit is ripe. Harvest fruit when they are still firm and have a light brown husk that is tight fitting. Fruit the size of a golf ball or smaller usually have the best flavor. Fruit that has been allowed to yellow is usually beyond ripe.

Store the fruit in paper sacks in the refrigerator with the husk for 3 weeks to 1 month. To keep longer, remove the husk, wash, and freeze either whole or sliced. The fruit will be sticky but will wash easily with mild soapy water.

Tomatillos

Salsa Verde

5 cups tomatillos
1 ½ cups finely chopped and seeded long green chilies
½ cup finely chopped and seeded jalapeño peppers
4 cups chopped onions
1 cup bottled lemon or lime juice
6 cloves finely chopped garlic
1 tablespoon ground cumin
3 tablespoons dried oregano leaves
1 tablespoon salt
1 teaspoon black pepper

Remove the dry outer husks from tomatillos and wash thoroughly. They do not need to be peeled or seeded. Combine all ingredients in a large sauce pan and stir frequently over high heat until mixture begins to boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. In the Yakima area, process in a boiling water canner for 20 minutes for pints.

Important! Do not alter the proportions of vegetables, acid, or tomatillos. Do not substitute vinegar for lemon or lime juice as it might make the salsa unsafe.

Recipe Source: WSU and Pacific NW Extension publication Salsa Recipes for Canning.



Tortilla Soup



8 corn tortillas
1 cup salsa
1 cup salsa verde
1 cup chicken broth
1 teaspoon cumin
1 cup whole milk
1 cup shredded or cubed chicken
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
Sour cream and cilantro garnish (optional)

Cut tortillas into 1/2 inch strips. Place on a lightly oiled cookie sheet and broil until light brown and crisp. Set aside. In large pot, combine salsas, broth and cumin. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer. Add chicken and milk, heat until hot. Add cheese and simmer until melted. Add tortilla strips and simmer 3 or 4 minutes until soft. Serve immediately. Garnish with sour cream and cilantro if desired. Serves 4.

Recipe source: Phyllis Pugnetti

Veggie Tips

by Cindy Smith

Tomatoes (*Solanum lycopersicum*)

Tomatoes are believed to have originated in Central and South America and belong to the family, Solanaceae. Americans may be in love with tomatoes today, but the relationship got off to a rocky start since tomatoes closely resemble the poisonous plant, nightshade. During Colonial times tomatoes were grown purely for decoration. There is dispute on how the tomato finally became accepted by Americans. Thomas Jefferson grew tomatoes at Monticello and promoted their use in cooking. Two other creations increased the lowly tomato's desirability—pizza and tomato soup. Pizza was invented in 1880s and gained widespread popularity throughout much of Europe and America. Without tomatoes for pizza sauce there is no pizza. Joseph Campbell of Campbell's soup fame came out with condensed tomato soup in 1897, which many say assured the tomato's place in American culinary history.



There are over 7,500 tomato varieties to choose from, with a myriad of choices in color, shape, growth habit, taste, and disease resistance. Tomatoes are classified as either determinate or indeterminate. Determinate varieties are bush-like and 2-6 feet in height, with all the tomatoes ripening about the same time. Indeterminate varieties are vine-like, with tomatoes ripening throughout the growing season, until frost kills the plant. Mid-season, and heat tolerant varieties do well in Yakima. Late season varieties oftentimes do well here, but an early frost can result in the whole crop being lost. If you have room in your garden, growing a main crop of mid-season tomatoes and adding plant or two of early and late season tomatoes can extend the season and assure a good crop in almost any year.

Home gardeners have access to many excellent tomato varieties, ranging from new hybrids to tasty heirlooms. Hybrid varieties tend to have traits that are desirable to commercial growers like, improved vigor, disease resistance, and firm flesh and skin to survive mechanical picking and long-distance shipping. Many hybrid varieties are labeled with some or all of the letters VFNT, which means the plants will be more resistant to Verticillium wilt (V), Fusarium wilt (F), nematodes (N), and tobacco mosaic virus (T). If your garden routinely suffers from any of these problems look for resistant varieties. On the other hand, if you don't have a problem with nematodes in your garden, there is no advantage growing a nematode resistant variety. For home gardeners the most desirable traits are always about flavor. Most of the 'improvements' of hybrids are not about flavor, so they may not be as appealing to many home gardeners.

To grow tomatoes from seed. Plant seed 6-8 weeks before the last frost date. Keep temperature at 75-80° if possible. Before planting into the garden, harden seedlings off for 1-2 weeks, gradually increasing their exposure outdoors. Plant into the garden when the weather and soil temperatures remain consistently above 60°. Extended periods of 50° or lower may permanently stunt tomato plants. Tomatoes require at least 6-8 hours of direct sun daily. The ideal tomato seedling should be 8 to 10 inches tall and dark green with a stocky stem and a well-developed, healthy root system. Set plants a little deeper than they were originally grown. Remove all the leaves from the lower two-thirds of the plant and bury as much of the plant stem as you can, but no deeper than 6-7 inches as the deeper soil may be too cool. When buried, roots will grow along the stem promoting a more vigorous plant.

Tomatoes grow best in soil with a pH of 6.0 to 6.5. Apply liquid fertilizer or side dress with granular fertilizer or compost around of the first of June and first of July. 'Side dress' means placing fertilizer around the plants at the drip line and covering with one to two inches of soil. Be careful not to apply too much nitrogen, which will inhibit fruiting.

Ideal spacing for home garden tomatoes is generally 24 to 36 inches between plants. This increases air circulation around the plants and discourages disease outbreaks. Large-vine tomatoes should be spaced 36 inches apart. Rows should be 4 to 5 feet apart. Tomatoes

Veggie Tips

by Cindy Smith

need a lot of water on a consistent basis and should receive 1-2 inches of water a week. Watering at the base of the plant is highly recommended. Keeping water off the foliage will reduce mold, mildew, rot, and some pests. Mulching with straw, shredded leaves, or compost will reduce evaporation from the soil.

It is wise to stake or trellis tomatoes early in the growing process for support. Check plants often to see if additional ties or additional support are needed to keep the plants upright and healthy. Indeterminate varieties will benefit from occasional pruning to keep them from becoming too bushy and tall. Generally speaking, determinant varieties should not be pruned.

Common tomato diseases are: blight, Verticillium wilt, Fusarium wilt, tobacco mosaic virus, and powdery mildew. Many other problems are not due to disease. Blossom end rot is a condition caused by a calcium deficiency in the fruit usually caused by extreme fluctuations in moisture. Cracking and splitting are also caused by fluctuations in moisture. Catfacing is usually caused by fluctuating weather temperature—a sudden brief period of either cool or hot weather. Sunscald is caused by high heat and intense sunlight. A good leaf canopy will protect against sunscald.

Insects that commonly attack tomatoes include aphids, cutworms, flea beetles, hornworms, leaf miners, spider mites, stalk borers, stink bugs and tomato fruit worms. Healthy, vigorous plants are your best defense against pest problems.

Pick tomatoes when they have ripened fully on the vine but before they begin to soften. Tomatoes usually ripen about one month after the fruit begins to show. Do not refrigerate tomatoes after harvest. Keeping them at room temperature pre-



serves flavor and quality. Storing stem down can prolong shelf life as well. Mature green fruits can be harvested in the fall and held for later use. Select fruits that are free of disease, wrap them in paper and store them at about 60° to 65°. They will ripen slowly and provide good tomatoes for several weeks.

Tomatoes can be eaten raw or used as an ingredient in many dishes, sauces, salads, and drinks. Unripe green tomatoes can be breaded and fried, used to make salsa, pickled, or baked in bread and muffins. Tomatoes can be stored by freezing, juicing, pickling, stewing, drying, or canning.

Home Canning Safety

Tomatoes are the most common home canned product in the US. They are also the most commonly spoiled home canned product. For many decades tomatoes were a high acid food. However, many new tomato varieties are sweeter with less acid. Science based research has resulted in many changes to home canning procedures. In 1987, the USDA completed extensive testing of tomato canning procedures. If you are using instructions and recipes that were printed before 1987, it could potentially result in unsafe food. If you can tomatoes at home it is important to review current recommendations made by a reliable source, including universities, the USDA, or the most recent edition of *The Ball Blue Book Guide to Preserving*, Ball also has a very user friendly website. Some skills are worth updating, and food safety is definitely one of them.



Tomatoes

Roasted Tomato Spread



- 8 cups tomatoes, cores removed and coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 cup basil leaves, chopped (or 1 tablespoon dried)
- 1/4 cup fresh oregano (or 1 teaspoon of dried)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Wash tomatoes and fresh herbs before chopping. There is no need to peel the tomatoes. Place all ingredients on a baking sheet. Stir and spread evenly. Roast in 425° oven, stirring occasionally until tomatoes begin to caramelize and juice has evaporated. It will take 1-2 hours. When mixture is very thick, taste and adjust seasonings if necessary. Allow to cool to room temperature. Mixture will be chunky. This spread is very good on bruschetta, on top of crispy fried eggplant slices, or as a pizza sauce. Roasting tomatoes intensifies flavor so that even end of the season tomatoes that are picked green and allowed to ripen off the vine will have a very good flavor. Freezes well in individual containers.

Adapted from a recipe by Carol Barany.

Quick Roasted Tomatoes

- 1 dozen roma tomatoes, sliced in half lengthwise
- 3 tablespoons fresh rosemary, basil or thyme, finely chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- olive oil

Heat oven to 425°. Rub olive oil in the bottom of a roasting pan. In a bowl, toss tomatoes with a generous splash of olive oil and sprinkle with herbs, salt and pepper. Turn tomato halves so they are all cut-side up in pan. Cook 30-45 minutes, checking every 15 minutes to insure they don't burn. Will store in refrigerator for a week or may be frozen.



Caprese Salad with Heirloom Tomatoes

For a beautiful salad, slice colorful vine-ripened heirloom tomatoes and fresh mozzarella. Arrange on plate and sprinkle with fresh ribbons of basil. When tomatoes are in season, this is a perfect salad and needs nothing else added. If you want to add dressing, mix equal parts olive oil and white champagne vinegar or white balsamic vinegar, and drizzle over tomatoes.

Tomatoes

Green Tomato Bread



3 cups all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
1 ½ cups sugar
1 tablespoon cinnamon
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups green unripe tomatoes, finely chopped
1 ½ cups pecans, chopped

Combine the first 6 ingredients in large bowl. In a separate bowl, combine eggs, oil, and vanilla; stir well. Add to dry ingredients and stir just until moistened. Fold in tomatoes and pecans. Spoon batter into 2 greased and floured 8½ x 4¼ inch loaf pans. Bake at 350° for 1 hour or until toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes, then remove from pans and cool completely on wire rack.

Green Tomato Soup

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
½ cup ham, chopped
1 ½ cups scallions, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 bay leaf
2 pounds green unripe tomatoes, chopped
1 cup chicken broth
2 cups water
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper

Heat oil in a 3-quart heavy saucepan over moderate heat until hot but not smoking; add ham, stirring occasionally, until beginning to brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Add scallions, garlic, and bay leaf and cook, stirring occasionally, until scallions are tender and lightly browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Add tomatoes, broth, water, salt, and pepper and simmer, partially covered, until tomatoes are tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Discard bay leaf and season soup with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

