

# The WSU Organic Standard

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WSU Organic Farm  
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I guess I had the weather all wrong last week, especially when it started to hit 90 on Wednesday! It comes as a shock to us and the crops. But we were able to put the plastic on our new hoophouse Wednesday and that makes all the difference when trying to stretch it tight. It's a good idea to put on greenhouse plastic when it's hot and calm so that when it cools it will stretch even tighter. This is important in helping the roof shed winter or spring snow and it just adds strength to the entire structure.

We now have 11 students taking the summer class and they were all there to help hold down the 35' by 52' sheet of plastic it takes to cover the arches. It was quite the team building exercise and was really fun to get to work with everyone together on a large project. We will usually spend an hour or two in lecture/discussion and then have a field project to work on what we talked about as a group. Hopefully we will get the potatoes planted this week.

We are still putting in cooler season transplants. Most recently we planted starts of pak choi, kohlrabi, cilantro, and green onions. These are all plants that we were able to seed in the nice climate controlled greenhouses on campus. We have two rooms we use through the spring to ensure we get lots of plants

started for early production. We keep the temperature at a cozy 65 and even use growlights until early April.

Another handy tool is a heat mat. We have one that can hold 4 flats of plants and raise their soil temperature 20 degrees above room temperature.

This basically jumpstarts some of the more difficult seeds to germinate such as tomatoes, peppers and watermelons.

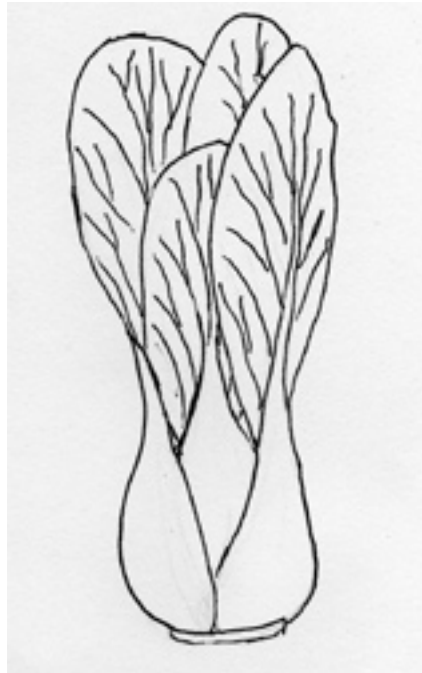
After the plants are strong enough we move them

to the farm to harden off to the outside world before we transplant. Right now the pumpkins and cucumbers are getting accustomed to the farm and hopefully will get planted by early June. It's a bit of a gamble on how early we can get some plants outside. It seems like things should be fine now and typically we are done with hard frosts at the farm by the middle of May. BUT I like to wait a couple more weeks to ensure there isn't a major loss to a late frost.

On another note, we are happy to reuse any twist ties, rubber bands,

Ziploc bags, and strawberry containers that you may receive from the CSA. We're working on an incentive plan to encourage everyone to participate in this reuse idea. It will probably be a way for

you to get an extra something off the market table when you come in with the reusable items. We will let you know more when we come up with a good plan. - Brad Jaeckel



Bok choy.

## ***Pullman Parking - Please Take Note!***

Due to the need to replace a main water line next to the farm, the usual gravel parking spaces right next to the organic farm are unavailable indefinitely - in fact, right now there's just a big ditch.

So, when you come to pick up your CSA share, or if you're coming to the farm for any other reason, please pull in between the trees in the orchard on the left side of the road after you've made the right turn at the top of the hill. There are cherries and apples planted there, for about 100 or 150 yards, all along the downhill slope, and the orchard manager has said it is okay to park on the grass. You can then walk the short distance to get your produce. Thanks for your patience and understanding!

**“Bok choy, a juicy and refreshing Chinese white cabbage, is also packed with vitamins and nutrients.”** - Bill Jones & Stephen Wong, *New World Chinese Cooking*

### **Pan-Fried Baby Bok Choy with Sesame Oil and Ginger (both recipes from *New World Chinese Cooking*)**

For additional flavor, cook this dish in the same pan in which your meat or fish has been cooked.

1 lb. baby bok choy  
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil  
1 Tbsp. minced ginger root  
3 Tbsp. water or chicken stock  
1 tsp. sesame oil  
Salt and pepper to taste

With a heavy knife, cut bok choy across the bottom to separate stems. Cut each stem in half lengthwise and wash thoroughly.

In a nonstick pan, heat oil for 30 seconds. Add ginger root and saute' until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add bok choy and cook until it begins to color and the leaves turn bright green, about 2 to 3 minutes. Add water or stock and sesame oil; cook until all the liquid has evaporated.

Transfer to a platter, season with salt and pepper and serve immediately.

### **Braised Shanghai Bok Choy with Oyster Mushrooms and Garlic**

1 Tbsp. cornstarch  
1 Tsp. sesame oil  
1 Tbsp. oyster sauce  
1 Tbsp. chicken stock  
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil  
2 cups oyster mushrooms, torn into bite-sized pieces  
1 tsp. minced garlic  
4 medium Shanghai (baby) bok choy or regular bok choy, cut lengthwise into quarters  
1/3 cup chicken stock  
Salt and pepper to taste

In a small bowl, combine ingredients for sauce; mix well and set aside.

In a wok or deep skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat for about 30 seconds. Add mushrooms, garlic and ginger root; saute' until mushrooms are golden, about 1 to 2 minutes. Add bok choy; toss and cook briefly. Add chicken stock; bring to boil. Turn heat to low; cover and allow to braise for 2 to 3 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

Stir in sauce ingredients and cook until slightly thickened. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Transfer to a platter and serve immediately.

Bok choy also works well uncooked in vegetable salads. Try chopping the white parts into a medium dice, the leaves into strips, and combine with diced sweet red peppers, mushrooms, carrots, and whatever else is fresh and crunchy, toss in a few sesame seeds, and dress with a sweet-sour type dressing or a sesame vinaigrette.

*Newsletter by Carol Price Spurling - [www.plumassignment.net](http://www.plumassignment.net)*

*Bok choy illustration by Alice Swan*

*Thanks to Bookpeople for the use of the cookbook*