

May 31, 2010

THE WSU ORGANIC STANDARD

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The Yearly Puzzle: How the Farm Takes Shape

We've been busy at the farm preparing for the final rounds of spring transplanting. This involves getting the soil prepared and making sure we have enough space for all the plants we've been growing of each crop. The planning part comes way back in the winter when we sit down and make a detailed map of the farm for the year. Each year we move crops about the farm in a complicated rotation between our three different sized fields. We know how much of each crop we want to grow but need to make sure that each will fit in its new location. Crop rotations are important to help reduce disease problems, change weed patterns, and change nutrient demands in our soil.

Once we know where all the crops will go on paper, it's important to make sure our maps match what is possible in the fields. At the beginning of the season I spend a lot of time measuring out each area and flagging. Then it slowly fills in as each crop gets added to the yearly puzzle. As it comes time to seed or transplant a new area, we have to mow and till any remaining cover crops from the winter, or weeds that have come up during the spring. Timing is important as many of the greenhouse grown plants will become stressed if left too long in their containers. Timing is also important for our

direct seeded crops like corn and beans. Soil temperature needs to reach high enough temperatures to ensure successful germination while fitting into overall seeding plans.

Last week we finally got the potatoes in the ground as well as the hoop house peppers, basil, and first green beans. The snap pea crop looks great and loves this cool wet weather. We will continue to have a lot of greens for many weeks to come! The cabbages have been a little slow to start heading up but should be in the harvest before too long. For our new customers who may be new to storing some of these greens it's important to get any tender green crop into the fridge as soon as possible. Most will benefit from storage in a plastic bag and this includes radishes, turnips, beets and carrots. If your produce does become wilted, you can try to revive it by placing in a shallow container of water where the stems can soak up some cool moisture.

Happy cooking!

-Brad

Pickup Reminders

Please remember to bring your own bag or box to repack your share.
We are happy to reuse any twist-ties, ziplock bags, or berry containers that you may receive from us.



Among the goodies in our boxes this week are shallot greens and radishes. We've had shallot greens for a few weeks now, and I've been using and enjoying them like scallions, or green onions, garnishing pasta salad, eggs and stir fry's. If you can't use your shallot greens right away, I've read that shallot greens can be chopped and frozen like chives!

Having radishes is especially nice this time of year, as they're milder and very crisp when the weather is still on the cool side like it is now. I like to slice radishes and put them in our green salads, of course, or just slice them and sprinkle them with salt, having them as a raw vegetable side with dinner or lunch—my daughter loves whole radishes in her lunch box. They are also a yummy addition to cole slaw, and I'm eager to enjoy them in the noodle salad recipe below. This recipe, actually, is a great base that can be adapted for many summer vegetables, especially cabbage, when it comes into season, and cucumbers as well. But the crunch of radish and the warmth of the sesame oil is a delicious combination and I'm looking forward to having this salad for supper soon. Have a great week!

--Jamaica

Soba Noodle Salad with Shallot Greens and Radishes, adapted from Feeding the Whole Family, By Cynthia Lair (Sasquatch Books, 2008)

For the Salad:

1- 8 ounce package soba noodles
¼ cup sesame seeds
¼ cup chopped cilantro leaves
Shallot greens (slice horizontally, like green onions)
Finely sliced radishes

For the Dressing:

2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil
3 tablespoons tamari or other soy sauce
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon maple syrup
1 tablespoon hot pepper oil, or the addition of pepper flakes, to taste.

Cook soba noodles according package directions. Drain and rinse in colander.

Toast sesame seeds by placing in a dry skillet over medium heat. Keep seeds moving until they give aroma, pop and begin to change color. Whisk together the dressing ingredients in a small bowl.

In a large bowl, toss together the noodles, dressing, sesame seeds, and vegetables. Serve and enjoy!