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THE WSU ORGANIC STANDARD

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Summer to Fall Transitions

Last week saw the return of our first crop in the fall greens planting: bok choy. We will continue to have greens and cabbage crops harvested for the remainder of the season now that the weather has turned cooler. We are unable to successfully grow many of these through the heat of the summer as they prefer the cooler months of spring and fall. The crops will include head lettuce, bok choy, Napa cabbage, kohlrabi, green cabbage, and broccoli.

These are all the same crops that we grow in the spring but we plan a smaller planting for fall harvest and hope to have these through the end of October. It's taken a few years to get the timing right on when to put these in and where they can fit into our complex crop rotation. Space begins to open up on the farm usually by the end of July when some of the early crops have finished. When the three beds of spring peas and fava beans are done we clean those beds out and ready them for transplanting. The irrigation is first shut off and then we run the line trimmer along the base of the peas to stop any more growth. After they've died back they are removed from the trellis and the t-posts and fencing are put away for next year. The fava beans are allowed to finish maturing and any remaining beans are harvested for next year's seed. Then all three beds are tilled and left to sit until transplanting time.

While all this field work is happening we begin seeding the crops in trays early in July. Broccoli takes the longest to mature so we start with that one and then continue seeding the other

crops each week into August. You might be wondering how this works when July and August are the hottest months of the summer. We are very careful with these transplants and protect them from the heat by creating a shade house where the temperatures are more moderate. This year we took the plastic off one of the hoopouses and just replaced that with shade cloth. The starts are usually ready to get in the ground 6-8 weeks after seeding allowing enough time to finish prepping the beds. Once they are in the ground we fertilize, cover with floating row cover for the bugs, and irrigate as needed.

The quick growing crops like bok choy and lettuce will be harvested first, while the broccoli and cabbages won't be ready until October. And if you remember last year, there's still a gamble on getting those to maturity. Covering all these crops with fabric will help with bugs but also protects from fall frosts. This is a great example of utilizing garden space for two different crops in the same season and one thing that you can practice in your home gardens!

--Brad

Pickup Reminder:

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.



Bok choy is yet another member of the vast cabbage family. It is high in vitamins A and C, as well as being rich in calcium. It's also, of course, delicious, with bright green leaves and creamy white, edible stalks. Bok choy best lends itself to Asian dishes and it's a quick and easy addition to any sort of stir fry. It is also delicious braised in a little sesame oil and garlic. I thinly slice the stalks and put them in the pan a minute or two before the tender leaves and cook until the greens are just wilted.

If you don't plan to use it right away, bok choy can be stored in a plastic bag in the fridge for about a week—be sure it's stored unwashed—if bok choy is stored in the fridge wet it can become limp and slimy. For long stints, bok choy can be stored in the freezer. To do so, wash the bok choy, slice the stalks and chop the leaves. Then, blanch the bok choy in boiling water for about 2 minutes. Lift the greens, drain all excess water and pack into airtight storage containers or plastic freezer bags.

-Jamaica

Bok Choy and Buckwheat Noodles in Seasoned Broth (aka Yakisoba)

From Feeding the Whole Family, by Cynthia Lair (Sasquatch Books, 2008)

Prep time 30 min

Serves 4



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| 1 (8-ounce) package soba noodles | ½ cup tamari or shoyu |
| 2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil | ½ pound firm tofu, cut into ½-inch cubes |
| 2 to 3 cloves of garlic, minced | 1 tablespoon freshly grated ginger |
| 1 carrot, cut into matchsticks | 2 cups chopped bok choy |
| 5 shiitake mushrooms, bite-size
(rehydrated dried mushrooms also work well) | 2 scallions, cut into thin slices, for garnish |
| 4 cups water | |

Prepare soba noodles according to package directions. Drain and set aside.

Heat oil in pot and add onions and garlic; sauté over medium heat until onions start to soften. Add carrot and mushroom; sauté for a few more minutes. Add water, tamari, tofu and ginger. Bring heat up until mixture begins to simmer. Cover and let simmer for 10 min. Add bok choy and simmer until leaves are bright green.

Serve by placing a handful of noodles into each bowl. Ladle broth and veggies over the noodles and garnish with scallions.

