



News from the Fields of Driftless Organics

Snow! We've gotten a bit, the folks up in the Twin Cities and gotten more than a bit; and so begins another Midwestern Winter. I've got mixed feelings about it all - I love watching the snow coming down and I really enjoy all sorts of different outdoor wintertime activities. But man, does it make things tough! Everything from driving to market to getting a bin of carrots out of the cooler takes more time, more effort and more care. Maybe there is a lesson here - something that old man winter is trying to press onto us. Slow down! Be careful! And most of all enjoy the winter, as before we know it the craziness of spring will be upon us once again.

Thanks to all of you for ordering a winter storage box. I hope you enjoy the goodies and I hope you have a wonderful holiday season! Take some time to enjoy the season and yes, even the snow...

Winter is indeed upon us and we keep

ourselves busy with all sorts of indoor tasks. First and foremost is washing, packing and delivering the remaining produce from the season. Left in the cooler is an array of potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, turnips and radishes. We ship what we can sell and take as much as we can haul down to the farmers market in Madison each Saturday.

2011 planning began some time ago and Josh, Noah and I spend countless hours pouring over notes from prior years, and figuring out areas that need improvement and how we can go about growing better vegetables this next season.

The seed catalogs have all arrived and it is time to start pouring over those, putting in the hundreds of orders needed to be placed from the dozen or so seed companies to get all the seeds we need to grow the multitude of crops we grow. The the planning begins! How much of each crop must be carefully

THIS WEEK'S BOX:

- Acorn Squash
- Beauty Heart Radish
- Black Spanish Radish
- Butternut Squash
- Carrots
- Daikon Radish
- Frisee Endive
- Garlic
- Gold Turnips
- Heart of Gold Squash
- Onions
- Parsnips
- Purple Top Turnips
- Red Beets
- Red Kuri or Buttercup Squash
- Red Potatoes
- Rutabaga
- Sweet Potatoes
- Yellow Potatoes

figured out and where it is all going to go needs to be roughed out so we can hit the ground running come next spring. We then start putting together our 2011 crew, which we hope will have a lot of the great folks that helped us out this last year.

And finally, sometime in the next 2 months, each of us hopes to squeeze in a vacation or two to relax, revitalize and see some parts of the country or world that we haven't seen yet. That's the winter in brief here at Driftless... Keep an eye out for 2011 sign up info - it will be here before you know it. We hope to see you next spring!

--Mike



Happy Holidays from us all at Driftless Organics!

THIS WEEK'S BOX by Dani Lind

A few words about your storage box: nearly everything can be stored for a number of weeks, so please don't be overwhelmed if you feel there is too much stuff. It is time to discover those nooks and crannies of your fridge, pantry, cupboards and even closets to squirrel away your goods (just don't forget about them!) Remember, as a general rule: keep things out of the light and most importantly: dry! This will help tremendously in the storage of your vegetables. HAPPY HOLIDAYS! --dani

Acorn Squash – a very moist, yellow fleshed squash classically cut in half & roasted cut side down & served with butter and brown sugar (return to the oven for a couple of minutes cut side up after filling the cavity with the butter & sugar). Store at room temperature or a bit cooler for several weeks.

Beauty Heart Radish – Look for the beige and green roots with the reddish tinged bottom. These are great thinly sliced on a veggie platter with hummus in the center. A wonderful addition to any salad – just great or slice thinly.

Black Spanish Radish – This is the black skinned root with a white flesh. They are a robust winter storage radish that will store in plastic in the fridge for many months, getting mellower with time or cooking. They tend to be more bite-y than beauty hearts, but will mellow with age. They can be eaten raw or cooked in stir-fries or soups.

Butternut Squash – A smooth, orange fleshed squash that is the easiest to peel if you want to cube it up to steam, simmer in soups, or roast at 400 degrees in chunks tossed with oil, herbs & garlic. Store at room temperature for many weeks or at 50-55 degrees for longer.

Carrots – we eat a lot of these carrots raw as snacks because they're so sweet! Also delicious steamed or braised or in roasts, soups, or freshly juiced. These carrots don't look the best and we still can't explain what the blackening on the skins is all about. Never fear! They are still great tasting carrots and the spots are merely skin deep. Just peel and away you go. Store in plastic in the fridge.

Celeriac – You will be getting 1-2 of these

funky light brown and green roots. They are a wonderful local winter substitute for California celery in soups, casseroles, & roasts. You can eat them raw, too, if you toss cut/grated pieces in some lemon juice to prevent them from browning. Peel carefully with a sharp paring knife. Store in plastic in the fridge.

Daikon Radish – another winter radish that stores a long time & sweetens with age. A staple food in Japan, Daikon can be eaten raw, cooked, or pickled. I highly recommend a quick pickle of these and maybe your other radishes as well.

Frisee Endive – a wonderfully hardy storage green related to escarole & radicchio. Slightly bitter, it's best mixed with other greens in a salad, wilted with a hot dressing (hot bacon dressing would be perfect!), or tossed in to soup at the end of cooking. Store in plastic with a paper towel in the fridge & use up within a week or two.

Garlic – store in a dark, cool place (or the counter if you don't mind it sprouting - remove & discard sprout before using). To roast, preheat oven to 400 degrees. Cut the top off a whole bulb to expose the tips of the cloves, drizzle with olive oil, & cover with foil & roast for about 30 minutes.

Gold Turnips – Look for the green topped and yellow roots. Try them raw grated in slaw, sliced with dip, or cooked like any of the other root veggies - boiled, steamed, simmered in soup, or roasted. Their sweet yet slightly spicy flavor is especially delicious cooked alongside pot roast or other roots. Will keep for many weeks in plastic in the fridge.

Heart of Gold Squash – You will be getting 1 or 2 of this smaller, roundish squash. It is striped white/yellow and green. Heart of Gold's are very sweet and best just cut in half and then baked or steamed (cut side down). Once soft, remove from heat and apply butter, salt and pepper. Eat right out of the skin!

Onions – There will be a mixture of cipollini (the flat ones), red and yellows. We are bit nervous about putting these onions in the box, as we've been finding some rot in the middle of some, even when the outside looks fine. This is the very last of our onions and we apologize if you do get some rot. Store your onions somewhere dry and try to use them up asap.

Parsnips – this pale, sweet, aromatic cousin of the more widely used carrot is terrific in roasts or boiled & mashed or braised & glazed (try a maple syrup & beer or honey & butter glaze). It cooks just like a carrot, & like organic carrots: no need to peel, just scrub - lots of nutrients are found in or just under the peel. Store in plastic in the fridge for several weeks.

Purple Top Turnips – another turnip - this one is white with a purple top (hence the name). They are great roasted or raw in salads (see recipe). Will keep for a while in the crisper drawer of your fridge (in plastic).

Red Beets – delicious & full of minerals grated raw on to salads, sliced raw on vegetable & dip trays, or baked/steamed/boiled whole & slipped from skin & served hot with butter & fresh mint or cold marinated in lemon juice, olive oil, & herbs. Or slice thinly or cube & roast drizzled with olive oil, garlic, salt & pepper & a little water. Store in plastic in the fridge.

Red Kuri or Buttercup Squash – The red kuri (red and roundish with a point at the stem) is a bit drier and is great for steaming. The Buttercup (dark greenish brown) is slightly sweeter and can be treated like a heart of gold squash).

Red Potatoes – great for roasting or making hashbrown. Also good for making potato soup to keep you warm during these cold winter months. Keep them dry and store out of the light!

Rutabaga – is another underutilized & tasty storage veggie. Look for 1-2 yellowish beige roots with purple tops in your box. Its creamy color, earthy sweet flavor, & smooth texture is great mashed or in soups, stews, or roasts. You can also grate it raw in slaws.

Sweet Potatoes – Yum! If you have a wood stove or a fireplace, try wrapping them individually in foil like a baked potato & tucking them into a corner with some coals for 20-30 minutes. Or bake them whole in the oven or peel & cube to steam, simmer, or roast. Store in a cool to room temperature place.

Yellow Potatoes – not our prettiest potatoes to say the least, but the taste is great. Perfect potatoes for mashin'. Store out of the light in the paper bag they came in.

Winter Root Vegetable au Gratin

1/2 c. onions, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
! Tbsp. fresh thyme (or 1/2 tsp. dried)
salt & pepper to taste
1 c. milk
1 c. heavy cream (or condensed milk)
8 c. thinly sliced mixed winter root vegetables (potatoes, sweet potatoes, parsnips, turnips, etc.)
1 c. grated cheese of choice such as parmesan, asiago, Gruyere, aged cheddar, etc.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Oil a 7" x 11" baking dish. In a large bowl, mix all ingredients but the cheese & pour into baking dish. Press down any veggies that are sticking out. Top with grated cheese & bake uncovered for 45-60 minutes, rotating if necessary, until vegetables are tender & top is crisp. Remove from oven & let stand a few minutes before serving.

RECIPES!

Grated Beet and Orange Salad

3 medium beets, grated (no need to peel)
1/4 c. dried cranberries
Juice of one orange (plus a bit of zest if you wish)
2 Tbsp. olive or cold-pressed sunflower oil
salt & pepper to taste
1 clove garlic, minced
FOR GARNISH: cashews & peeled chunks of navel oranges or sections of satsuma mandarins or clementines (optional)

Combine orange juice, oil, salt, pepper, & garlic. Add grated beets & cranberries. Garnish with cashews & orange chunks if you wish. Let sit at room temperature for 15 minutes so flavors can meld. Will store in fridge for several days.

Garlic Miso Mashed Potatoes

1 bulb garlic, unpeeled
1/2 teaspoon olive oil
2 pounds potatoes, rinsed and quartered
Salt and pepper to taste
3/4 to 1 cup plain soy milk (unsweetened)
2 tablespoons aged barley miso
Chives or green onions, finely chopped (for garnish)

Heat oven to 425°F. Slice 1/2-inch top off garlic bulb and drizzle with olive oil. Wrap in aluminum foil. Bake until garlic is soft and golden, about 45 minutes. Remove from oven. When cool enough to handle, peel garlic cloves, mince and set aside.

In large pot, add potatoes and cover with salted water. Bring to a boil then reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, until tender, about 15 to 25 minutes.

Drain potatoes and force through a potato ricer or mash until smooth. Transfer to a large bowl and mix in garlic. Cover and keep warm.

Sweet Potato Apple Sausage Bake

Try this incredibly easy & comforting dish from Noah's mother-in-law, Emily.

3 parts sweet potatoes, peeled & cut into 1" cubes
2 part apples, cubed a bit smaller
1 part Italian sausage, rolled into small balls
1 part onions, cut into thick pieces (optional)
salt & pepper to taste

Mix all ingredients into a single layer in a cast iron pan or baking dish. Bake at 350 for about 45 minutes or 400 degrees for about 30 minutes. No need for oil, the grease from the sausage & juice from the apples suffice for moisture.

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Squash w/ Herbs

2 medium winter squash (about 2 pounds)
3 tablespoons butter
1/4 cup fresh sage, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
1 1/2 cups apple cider or juice
1 cup water
2 teaspoons wine or herb vinegar
1 teaspoon salt
freshly ground pepper to taste

Squash should be peeled, seeded, cut into 1x 1/2 inch pieces. Melt the butter in a large skillet over low heat. Add the sage and rosemary and cook until the butter just begins to turn color-3to5minutes. Add the squash to the skillet, then the apple cider, water, vinegar, and salt. Cook stirring occasionally, over medium heat at an even boil until the cider has boiled down to a glaze and the squash is tender, 20 to 30 minutes. Taste and season with pepper and additional salt if needed.

Endive, Turnip and Apple Salad

Adapted from Monique Hooker's "Cooking With the Seasons"

4 Tbs apple cider vinegar
4 Tbs walnut, sunflower or olive oil
1 Tbs chopped fresh parsley
1 medium purple top turnip, coarsely grated
2 small golden delicious apples, diced with peel
1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese
1/2 cup walnut pieces
1/2 - 3/4 head of endive, chopped into bite sized pieces
Salt and pepper

In a salad bowl, whisk together the vinegar, oil, and parsley. Salt and pepper to taste. Mix together the turnip and apples, and toss with the dressing. Top with the cheese and walnuts.

Place endive onto the number of plates you are serving. Place your mixture on top of the endive.

Squash Feta Casserole

2 medium winter squashes
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 Tbsp. butter
1/2 c. green pepper, chopped
1/ c. red pepper, chopped
2 eggs
1 c. plain yogurt or sour cream
1 c. feta cheese, crumbled
dash of cayenne pepper
salt & pepper to taste
1/ c. sunflower seeds

Cut squash in half & remove seeds. Place cut side down on a greased cookie sheet & bake at 375 degrees for 30-40 minutes, until tender. Leave oven on. Cool slightly & scoop flesh into a bowl & mash.

Meanwhile, saute onion in butter in a skillet for a couple minutes. Add garlic & peppers & saute for another couple minutes. In a large bowl, whisk eggs, yogurt/sour cream, salt, pepper, & cayenne. Stir in feta, squash, & onion/pepper mixture. Transfer to a greased 11X7 inch baking pan, sprinkle with sunflower seeds, cover & bake at 375 degrees for 25 minutes, uncover & bake for another 25 minutes. Serves 6-8.

Smashed Rutabagas with Ginger-Roasted Pears

2 pounds rutabagas, peeled, cut into 3/4- to 1-inch cubes
1 1/2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1 Tbsp. minced peeled fresh ginger
1 tsp sugar
2 firm Anjou pears (about 1 lb), peeled, cored, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
2 1/2 Tbsp. butter
1/2 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
Coarse kosher salt

Cook rutabagas in pot of boiling salted water until tender, about 25 minutes.

Meanwhile, preheat oven to 400°F. Grease a rimmed baking sheet. Combine oil, lemon juice, ginger, and sugar in large bowl. Add pears; toss to coat. Spread on prepared sheet. Roast until tender, turning pears every 10 minutes, about 25 minutes total.

Drain rutabagas; return to same pot. Mash to coarse puree. Stir over medium heat until excess moisture evaporates, 5 minutes. Add cream, butter, and thyme. Mix in pears and any juices from baking sheet. Season with salt and pepper. \ Serves 4.