

ROASTED BEET SALAD

Adapted from houseofnasheats.com

3-4 large beets	2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar
10 oz salad greens	2 Tbsp honey
1/2 c crumbled goat cheese	1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
1/4 c chopped roasted pistachios	1/2 tsp kosher salt
1/3 c olive oil	1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Cut leaves and stems from beets, leaving about 1-inch attached to the root. Wash beets well and drizzle with some olive oil before wrapping in aluminum foil. Bake for 50-60 minutes until knife tender. Remove the beets from the oven and unwrap. Once cool enough to handle, rub skins off with a paper towel or your hands. Slice into bite-size chunks.
2. Mix salt, pepper, and liquid ingredients in a bowl, whisking well.
3. Add the salad greens to a large bowl. Add half the vinaigrette and toss well. Pile the dressed greens on individual salad plates, then top with beets, goat cheese, and pistachios. Drizzle with remaining dressing.

CARROT CAKE BARS

Adapted from fatfreevegan.com

10 medjool dates, pitted	1 tsp ground ginger
2 c shredded carrots	1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
3/4 c unsweetened applesauce	1/4 tsp ground allspice
1/2 c raisins	1/8 tsp ground cloves
2 tsp vanilla extract	3/4 c whole wheat pastry flour (or gluten-free flour)
1 1/4 tsp ground cinnamon	
1 tsp baking powder	2 Tbsp chopped walnuts (optional)

1. Grease an 8"x8" glass baking dish and preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Place dates in a food processor and pulse until chopped and beginning to form a paste. Move to a bowl and add all ingredients except flour, baking powder, and walnuts. Stir until well-blended.
3. Combine flour and baking powder in small bowl and mix well. Add mixture to wet ingredients and stir until just blended. Spoon into prepared pan, sprinkle with walnuts if desired, and press them lightly into the batter with the back of a spoon. Bake for 30 minutes. Allow to cool before cutting into bars and serving.



Winter/Spring CSA News



Feb 12-18, 2024
Week 5 of 17
Volume 21, No. 5



Sweet Potatoes: Store sweet potatoes at room temperature. Refrigeration will cause them to harden and turn black when you cook them! The sweet potatoes you receive will keep for weeks or even months.

Leafy Greens: Store leafy greens in the fridge inside a perforated plastic bag. If you chop and wash ahead of time, spin the leaves dry before placing them back in the bag with a dry paper towel to absorb the moisture. Refresh limp leafy greens by plunging them into ice water.

Root and spuds (carrots, turnips, beets and potatoes): Store in a plastic or cloth bag in the crisper bin of your refrigerator. Both root veggies and potatoes should last for weeks.

Jarred Items: It's the best time of year to include Elmwood's organic Diced Tomatoes, Ketchup, Marinara, BBQ or Salsa in your seasonal recipes—think chili, lasagna, soups, or what about as a pizza topping?

Winter Squash: The flavor of butternuts and other fall squashes intensifies over time as the sugars concentrate. Store in the pantry or on the counter; plan to use within a month or so.

Eat Good Food for Fun

I often share in these newsletters about why organic foods are important for you and the world around you. Sometimes we get into some serious topics like keeping toxic chemicals out of your diet and the economic consequences of Big Food. So, while many of us are keeping up the New Year resolution ritual, it seems like a good time to lighten up the conversation. Remember that things like food and cooking are fun!

Get in the habit of pre-baking a few potatoes, beets, or sweet potatoes while the oven is already on for something else. It greatly simplifies tomorrow's quick meal if all you have to do is warm them while you prep the rest of the recipe. Remember, they are not leftovers if you purposely cooked them ahead of time. Go ahead and cook some dry beans or black-eyed peas while you are already in the kitchen and refrigerate for later. Our salad spinner lives in the fridge because we prep enough lettuce or spinach or kale for several days until we're ready to chop some up for the bowl and add fixings. When we know it's a hectic week, we prep onions, radishes, carrots, pre-cooked beets, peppers, whatever we have, and keep on the ready. Dinner can be on the table in minutes.

As for recipes, let the food speak for itself. During the busy season, we steam fresh greens, nothing else required, while broccoli, cabbage or kohlrabi can be steamed and served with real grass-fed butter. Roast your root vegetables with a drizzle of olive oil, salt, pepper, and garlic powder—get too much more complicated than that and you're gilding lilies. Bake or boil potatoes or sweet potatoes, then just add butter, salt and pepper.

We like to keep several dried spice blends mixed up and ready to go. Italian seasoning for spaghetti or pizza, a creole/old bay hybrid for baked chicken thighs, southwest mix for taco salad, an Asian blend for stir fries, and of course, lots of garlic powder. Over the winter when you are at home and inside more, build up a playbook of basic recipes, stock the seasonings to make them, and you can whip up a fun meal on short order using whatever is available in your CSA share.

And don't be a germaphobe. To help you relax, buy a \$3 thermometer and check the temps in various locations in your fridge. The health department

standard is to keep meat, milk, and previously cooked foods under 40°, or over 140°. When you know your fridge is cold enough, previously prepared meals are good for days. Leafy greens and other produce will hold a long time. Leftover chicken and meats will wait all week for you to re-heat or break down as ingredients in a recipe. A lot of food gets thrown out simply because people do not make sure their fridge is cold enough, and it's hard to remember how long it has been in there. When you know what you have on hand, and can make a little time to cook in batches, it becomes easier.

Some customers are intimidated by cooking a whole chicken or a beautiful beef roast. Simply put it in a Pyrex dish with a little water, add salt and pepper to taste, cover with lid or foil, then bake at 325° until tender. Each one will need a different amount of time (chicken will take 2-3 hours and the beef 4-6), so just start early. The chicken is done when you poke the thigh and the juices run clear. A beef chuck/shoulder roast is ready when the strands easily flake apart. These hours-long roasts are a golden opportunity to precook those veggies, by the way. We usually eat the beef or chicken as is the first couple meals, then cut into the rest for fajitas, stir fry, pizza toppings, and so on, and we only "cooked" once for the week! The cooked meat is easily frozen in portions for quick and easy meals.

Don't be swayed by what may be on display in the supermarket; rather, revel in the offerings of the season. Our organic sweet corn is amazing, but we can all only have it in July and August. That's it, finito, finished, no more, no matter how much we want it other times of the year. There are really just two options: buy lots during the season and freeze it, or move on and revel in the sweet potatoes, roots, and other seasonal crops. Our bodies are attuned to it anyway. Maybe you did not like Swiss chard the one time you tried it at the in-law's dinner party. Try it again, fixed another way, and you may just add another easy vegetable to your quiver.

It adds to the fun when you don't have to worry about what might be in or on your food. Organic potatoes have not been adulterated with a chemical sprout retardant, and that knowledge should make them more palatable. You don't have to worry about chemical residues on the greens, or garlic, or dried tomatoes. Eat as much local organic food as possible, make it as easy on yourself as possible, and let good food speak for itself. - Mac Stone