



## In the Share

Broccoli, 1 head  
Kohlrabi, 1 bulb  
Turnips, 1 bunch  
Garlic Scapes, 1 bunch  
Fennel, 2 heads  
Summer Squash, 3 pieces  
Lettuce, 1 Batavian & 1 Romaine  
Kale, Collards or Chard, 1 bunch  
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch

Overeating is one of my favorite past-times. I know you're not supposed to admit that in print, especially if you're a girl, but there it is. I love to cook, although I don't spend nearly enough time doing it, and I love to eat. Now that it's summer, that glorious, heady season in WI, fulfilling this hedonistic tendency just got easier with several new items in the share: broccoli, garlic scapes, fennel, summer squash, and a choice of kale, collards or chard.

Why is broccoli the quintessential vegetable? A glimmer of understanding came to me when I ran into Kat, Jake's wife, and offered her some broccoli. She immediately accepted saying that it is one of the few vegetables that her daughter will eat raw so she likes to have it around. For whatever reason, broccoli pleases the palate, even in an unadorned state. If you wish for adornment, chop the broccoli (include the stems-it's the best part!) into (continued on the back)

## From the Farmer

### Multivariable Equation

As an engineering and mathematics major in college, I have fond memories of tucking myself away in my favorite corner of the library and sitting down to tackle that night's problem set. I specifically remember struggling through the homework for Multivariable Calculus. I will spare you all the details (I find that not many people pick up their farm newsletter hoping for a lengthy discussion of limits and derivatives), but let's just say that I found equations with more than one variable to be far more challenging than their single variable brethren.

The little bit of broccoli that is finally appearing in your share this week is a testament to the fact that organic vegetable farming really is an elaborate multivariable equation problem set. Just when I think that I have successfully solved for one variable, I realize that there are several more where that one came from. Most of the time we, as a farm crew, are up to the challenge of the equation, but occasionally we find ourselves unable to completely solve it. This year we will seed six different successions of broccoli in the greenhouse. This is a fancy way of saying that we plant broccoli many times throughout the season, in an attempt to have broccoli available most of the spring and most of the fall (broccoli does not flourish in the hot weather of summer).

Planting #1 languished in its flats for far too long, as the cold and wet spring kept us out of the field well past its targeted transplant date. By the time the plants finally got tucked in the ground, they were over-mature and stressed and ended up yielding very little. Broccoli 2 looked much better going in. We dutifully covered them all (like we always do) with a floating row cover, a thin polyester fabric that allows light and water to pass through but excludes flea beetles. Flea beetles are tiny hopping insects that love to gobble the leaves of anything in the brassica family and are the scourge of our farm. If left uncovered, a planting of spring broccoli would be devoured in a matter of days by these little buggers. When we uncovered them many weeks later, however, we realized that the mulch that we had used on the tomatoes (which grew on that same ground last year) had been riddled with weed seeds, and the broccoli plants had been completely engulfed by grass. We decided to till it in. Broccoli 3 happened to be planted in a low spot in the field and has spent a good deal of its life in standing water. Its yields have certainly been compromised, but what we managed to harvest is what you'll eat this week. Flea beetles managed to actually infiltrate our greenhouse and munch broccoli 4 to death before it even made it out of its flats, a phenomenon I have never before experienced. The good news, though, is that broccoli 5 looks beautiful so far in its greenhouse flats and broccoli 6 germinated well just last week. Maybe we'll solve the equation and we'll be rich in fall broccoli.

I often wondered, sitting there in the Van Wylen Library, how I would possibly find myself faced with multivariable equations in "the real world". Little did I know, at that point, that the answer was...broccoli.

-Jake

## Recipe

*I have a stickie note in my cookbook that says "Good! Interesting flavor" for this recipe. This is a habit that I inherited from my mother- that of obsessively documenting results on the recipe itself. It makes for a rich archive of trusted recipes. -Julie Engel*

### Gingered Fennel Toss

2 fennel bulbs with tops  
Fresh ginger  
1 T butter  
¼ t kosher salt  
2 T dry sherry  
½ t sugar  
2 T water

1. Trim off and reserve fennel tops. Cut off stalks and reserve for another use. Cut each bulb lengthwise into 4 equal pieces. Remove outer layer if necessary. Cut each quarter into very thin slices.
2. Using veggie peeler, first peel ginger then shave enough slivers to equal one generous tablespoon. Cut into very thin strips.
3. Melt butter in large heavy skillet over moderately low heat. Add fennel and toss to coat, then add salt. Toss frequently until fennel is somewhat tender but not cooked through, about 5 minutes.
4. Add 2 teaspoons ginger slivers, the sherry, sugar and water. Cover and cook 2 minutes. Uncover and toss until fennel is tender and lightly browned, 3-4 minutes, adding more ginger to taste.
5. Mince reserved tops as desired. Sprinkle over and serve hot.

### Classic Caesar Dressing

From Martha Steward Living

- 2 garlic cloves
- 4 anchovy fillets
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 1 large egg yolk
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 20 ounces romaine lettuce, outer leaves discarded, inner leaves washed and dried
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese or Romano cheese, or 2 1/2 ounces shaved with a vegetable peeler

Place the garlic, anchovy fillets, and salt in a wooden salad bowl. Using two dinner forks, mash the garlic and anchovies into a paste. Using one fork, whisk in the pepper, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, and egg yolk. Whisk in the olive oil.

(continued from "In the Share")  
¼" cubes and mix with diced kohlrabi, turnips, mushrooms, and parsley. Dress with a mixture of olive oil, balsamic, maple syrup and mustard. Slice a red onion thinly, soak in red wine vinegar, then once pickled, chop and mix in.

Fennel is decidedly *not* the quintessential vegetable. It has an anise flavor, but don't let that put you off. I know people that hate black licorice but still like fennel. Grate it and add to a salad of avocado and grapefruit, dressed with lime and cayenne. Or, try my latest endeavor, juice it. It doesn't yield much juice, but the intensity of the flavor makes me want to incorporate it into jell-o somehow. I haven't actually done that, but I love the idea of fennel jell-o with whipped cream and grated nutmeg.

Summer squash is aptly named, as it heralds the arrival of summer. To truly embrace the season, it seems, one must grill. Therefore, it follows that one must grill summer squash. Slice long-ways, toss in a little oil and salt, and then put in a veggie basket on the grill. Serve as a side, or place on a hoagie with grilled Batavian lettuce, Gruyere cheese cilantro, apple cider vinegar.

The Batavian lettuce is perfect on tacos, in sandwiches, as a bed for tuna or egg salad. The romaine calls to be dressed with Caesar salad dressing and topped with grilled chicken, or if you're me, grilled rabbit.

The collards look magnificent this week. We were discussing the significance of eating collards and black-eyed peas together. I heard it's supposed to bring good fortune! No one really knows why, but I bet that kale or chard might bring good fortune, too!

Herb choices: cilantro, dill, sage, chives, mint, parsley. Coming next week... more summer squash and fennel and the season's first scallions and peas.

## Troy Community Farm

Jake Hoeksema • 240-0409 • [jake@troygardens.org](mailto:jake@troygardens.org)