



Urban Roots

Volume 4, Issue 2

9 June 2005

In the Box

Broccoli
Radish
Pac Choi
Kale
Spinach
Lettuce

I don't think we could have fit any more leafy things in the share this week! If you are a fan of greens, this is the time of year for you. If you are not a greens lover, I have a plan for you to use them all up easily and deliciously.

First the **kale**. This definitely one of my favorite vegetables. The easiest way to prepare it is to sauté some onion and garlic (your green garlic from last week will work perfectly) in olive oil. Add the washed, chopped kale and cover. The wash water still clinging to the leaves will steam the kale. Finally, add some tamari and red wine vinegar, stir and cover again. The kale is done when it is THOROUGHLY wilted, and a deep green (or purple) color. Be careful not to undercook this vegetable.

Next is the **pac choi**. The classic way to use this green is to put it in stir fry. Sauté onion and garlic in olive oil. Add bite-sized cubes of tofu and let them cook for a few minutes. Add chopped **broccoli** and pac choi, tamari, maybe some hot pepper oil. You can even throw some sliced **radish** into this dish. Serve with rice.

Now the **spinach**. Honestly, I don't really have much new to say about the spinach. I can never get enough of that salad with sautéed onions and garlic, feta cheese, and kalamata olives that I told you about last week. I eat it in a serving bowl size and hate to "waste" my spinach on anything else. The season is just too short. The heat will likely do this crop in after just one more delivery.

None of those ideas sound good? Take a look at the polenta pie recipe on the back. It's a really yummy way to use greens.

Claire's Comments

Off to a great start!

This week last year I wrote about all the trouble we were having in the field. It was raining and raining fit to wash us away. The man we hired to do the primary tillage couldn't finish the job before he started getting wet, so we had huge waves of soil in the field that took many hours of tilling by hand to smooth out. Then our tiller broke. Then the brakes on the truck went. It felt like we were dealing with one catastrophe after another, and we kept falling further and further behind.

While we have defiantly had a few things go wrong this year (including the hail storm a few weeks back that took out a third of our tomato crop), and we really could use a bit more rain than we are getting, overall we are off to a great start. Even the tomatoes are looking healthy and strong now that we replaced the dead ones and gave them all a little time to grow. And most importantly we are right on schedule with planting. All our major crops are in the ground: peppers, eggplant, summer and winter squash, even the CSA flower garden is planted and beginning to take off. The memory of last year's difficulties defiantly makes this smooth spring all the sweeter.

Part of the reason everything is going so smoothly this year is because of the great crew we have. Maggie Anderson is back for her second year as the Assistant Farm Manager, and her third year on the farm. She was originally an intern in 2003, so she has a lot of experience with Troy at this point and is doing a great job helping me lead the crew. Camilla Vargas is a graduate student at the UW doing her second year of cover crop research at the farm. She also spends a lot of time working with the regular crew. Cassie Wyss is doing a second internship with us, this year focusing on establishing our new wholesale herb business. Kevin Coleman and Emily Bernstein are new interns this year and have both been great additions to the team. Kevin has taken on getting all our hand tools sharpened and working smoothly. And Emily is doing the bulk of the work on an insect monitoring program for the WI Department of Agriculture we are newly part of this season. Most importantly we all work well together and enjoy learning from each other.

Our next challenge will be to get all the crops weeded before the quack grass, bindweed, and thistle take over. It's a good thing I (at least) love weeding. And with the new sharp edges Kevin is putting on our hoes, we should be in great shape.

Polenta Pie

Claire Strader

You can use one or all of the greens in this delivery in this dish (except the lettuce. Have that in a salad on the side.) While it is easy, it does use a few more pots than I really like. But the payoff is a delicious meal and plenty of leftovers that store and reheat easily.

Greens

1 bunch kale (and/or pac choi, spinach, chard) washed and chopped
1 medium onion or some scallions, chopped
2 cloves garlic or one stalk of green garlic, chopped
olive oil
tamari
cider vinegar

Sauté the onion and garlic in a few tablespoons of olive oil. Add the wet, chopped greens. Cover and let steam for several minutes. When the greens are quite limp, add a bit of tamari and quite a bit of cider vinegar. Let steam a little longer.

Sauce

Really any tomato sauce will do. Use your favorite or make this simple version.

1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic or one stalk of green garlic, chopped
1 red or green pepper, chopped
olive oil
Fresh or canned tomatoes, diced
Fresh or dried basil

Sauté the onion, garlic, and pepper in a few tablespoons of olive oil. Add the tomatoes and basil, and let the sauce bubble and reduce.

Polenta and Pie Assembly

2 cups polenta
6 cups water
1/2 pound garlic cheddar cheese, shredded

Boil the water. Add the polenta to the boiling water and keep stirring it while it cooks and thickens.

Now put it all together. You can use a rectangular cake pan, or a casserole dish, or even a large cast iron skillet to hold it all. First spoon half the polenta into the bottom of the casserole, and smooth it into an even layer. Then spoon in half the greens in a layer. On top of that, spoon in half the sauce. Finally spread half the shredded cheese. Repeat the layers with the other half of the ingredients, topping the whole thing with the second layer or cheese. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 20 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and the pie is bubbling. Remove, and let cool until the pie can be safely sliced. The cooler it is the easier it is to lift whole slices from the pan, but good luck waiting that long. Just writing about it makes me want to have this dish tonight!

Troy Community Farm

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Upcoming Events

Farm Volunteer Days

Fridays, 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

at Troy Community Farm

The farm has an open volunteer day every Friday afternoon. This time is for fun jobs like transplanting (early in the season), mulching, weeding (Claire honestly loves weeding!), and some harvesting of large crops like garlic, onions, and squash (later in the year). Everyone is welcome to join in whenever they can. While calling ahead is appreciated, (so Claire can plan), it is not required.

Savor the Summer Festival

Saturday, 6 August, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

at Troy Gardens

Mark your calendars now for this annual Troy Gardens event! We will start out in the morning at the farm harvesting fresh flowers for bouquets, and making dried flower swags for you to take home. In the afternoon there will be music and food, including huitlacoche (a corn mushroom grown at the farm). And the festival will close with a performance by the Young Shakespeare Players. There will be activities for kids throughout the day, a tour of the site, and plenty of fun and fresh air for everyone.



**Send newsletter comments,
suggestions, and recipe ideas to:
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