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Kohlrabi

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USU STUDENT ORGANIC FARM Newsletter

July 11, 2011 Volume 2 Issue 9

Everyone working out in the field on a beautiful day

Conquering the Bounty

Article by: Brianne Sherwood

One great way to use a ton of kohlrabi all at once is to puree about four bulbs and make a dip! Pureeing also crams a ton of veggies in your day. Try the one found on this blog: *http://www.farmgirlfare.com/2007/11/recipe-what-to-do-with-kohlrabi-puree.html*

Other ways to use kohlrabi:

- Eat raw! Easy! Cut into wedges and crunch them for snacks in place of baby carrots
- Add raw to salads and slaws- slice thinly or shred
- Slice thick as a chip alternate and eat with a creamy dip
- Chop and add to soups or stews.
- Boil and add to mashed potatoes or other mashed root vegetables
- Cut into wedges or ½" dice, toss with a bit of oil, sprinkle with salt and roast at 450 degrees until brown at the edges and tender.
- Roast and put over pasta, sauced in lemon and butter. (see "Fabulous Flavors on pg 2)
- Pickle it with other vegetables for a snack.

Featured Vegetable: Kohlrabi

Article by: Brianne Sherwood

Kohlrabi may look like it's from another planet with the weird stems coming out of it's bulb and the unique flavor, but it's actually really, really tasty. Honestly, it's one of my personal favorites from the entire garden. Although kohlrabi is very popular in Eastern Europe, it's not very popular in the Western world YET, but will most likely gain popularity. It's being seen in more and more farmer's markets across the country. I would say the flavor is more of a mix between broccoli and cabbage with the texture of a radish. So really, it's like eating three vegetables in one. Delicious. Here are some interesting things about kohlrabi that most people don't know:

- Don't be fooled. The bulb of kohlrabi is not a root, although it may look like one. It is an enlargement of the stem just above the ground.
- The word "kohlrabi" is actually German for "cabbage-turnip", which gives a hint to kohlrabi's flavor.
- The leaves of kohlrabi are edible. Treat them as you would kale (kohlrabi chips!) or chard.

Storage and Preparation

Store in the refrigerator in a sealed plastic bag for the longest shelf life, which can be several weeks. The leaves will keep for only a couple of days so use those up quick.

To prepare for cooking, snap off the stems and leaves if they are still attached to the bulb and scrub the bulb clean. If the bulb is larger than a tennis ball, peel off the thick skin with a sharp knife. The stems can be chopped or sliced and the leaves can be used in any recipe using cooked greens.

Kohlrabi is actually a very versatile vegetable. You can substitute it for most recipes that call for broccoli, potatoes, radishes, or turnips to mix things up a bit. Eat raw for some crunch or cooked for a melt-in-your-mouth texture.

Kohlrabi Indian Stew

This is an Indian dish that you can't go wrong making. Who doesn't like olive oil, garlic powder, and dried chili flakes?

1 cup dry green split peas
3-4 large kohlrabi, peeled and cut into 2" cubes
1 ¼ tsp salt
4 Tbsp olive oil
1 Tbsp garlic powder
¼ tsp red dried chili flakes (or 1 Tbsp coarsely ground black pepper)

In a large nonstick pot, rinse split peas and add 3 cups of water. Cook until split peas are ¾ of the way cooked (about 30-40 minutes on medium-high heat, uncovered). Add ½ cup water if extra is needed. Add cubed kohlrabi and salt. Cook for 10 minutes on medium heat, covered, until kohlrabi is mostly cooked (but not mushy). Check occasionally to make sure ingredients are not sticking or burning; if they start to stick or look like they might burn, add ¼ cup water. Remove lid and sprinkle in olive oil, garlic powder, and chili flakes. Continue cooking 2-5 minutes on medium-high heat, stirring constantly, until no liquid is left (it should have the consistency of stew, but not be mushy). Serve with bread, plain soft tortillas, or rice.

Recipe courtesy: "The Worldwide Ward Cookbook"

ANNOUNCEMENTS

We're still giving out broccoli, kohlrabi, golden cherry tomatoes, and peppers as they grow! We're keeping track of who gets them to be sure everyone gets an equal share. Don't forget to eat the leaves on the broccoli! Cook them like any other greens.

Come pick strawberries anytime you would like for no extra charge! Come anytime during the volunteer hours.

Volunteer hours:
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 7am-2pm
Wednesday, Saturday: 10am-2pm

Organic Techniques: Composting

Article by: Bethany Heineman and Brianne Sherwood

Composting is the process of mixing yard and household organic waste in a pile or bin and providing it with the right conditions to encourage decomposition. Microbes break everything down and produce a rich organic fertilizer. Here are some things to consider when starting a compost pile:

- In order for your compost to perform well, you need to have a ratio of about 25-30 parts carbon to 1 part nitrogen.
- Organic matter high in carbon: sawdust, woodchips, newspaper, corn stalks, or straw. They are generally thought of as "brown" or "dry".
- Organic matter high in nitrogen: coffee grounds, grass clippings, veggie scraps, alfalfa, etc. They are things that are generally thought of as "green" or "wet".
- Add compost materials in layers, alternating moist nitrogen rich materials and dry carbon rich materials.
- Your compost pile needs to be kept about as moist as a wrung-out sponge for optimal results. Water occasionally.
- Compost also needs air and heat. To do this, mix every few weeks with a pitchfork.

For more information about the USU Student Organic Farm or CSA shares visit:
www.usu.edu/organicfarms

On the Farm News

The weather has just been awesome on the farm this week. Lately we've spent most of our day weeding, picking strawberries, and picking peas. We are constantly surprised at how many strawberries and peas there are EVERY day. It's quite amazing.

We've decided that we are getting too behind on our other farm work so we have retired from picking strawberries. But that doesn't mean that you can't! If you want strawberries, please come anytime during our volunteer hours (those are the hours we are at the farm and not harvesting) and pick some yourself! They are easy to find and pick and will probably only take you about 15 minutes to get as many as you would need. You can also see what else we have growing for you on the farm.

Squashes and cucumbers are just about ready to be harvested. Some of the magna summer squash are ripe already. Tomatoes are looking great! They're still green but are getting bigger and bigger every day. Get ready for the bounty! It will be here soon!

Veggies to expect next week: beets, lettuce, kale, chard, green onions, peas, some tomatoes, some squash, some kohlrabi, broccoli leaves, herbs

Article by: Brianne Sherwood

Fabulous Flavors: Tips & Techniques

Think you don't like vegetables? Try roasting them!

By: Tamara Steinitz Vitale, USU Dept of Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Sciences

Roasting caramelizes the sugars and intensifies the natural sweetness of vegetables. They become crisp on the outside and soft and savory inside.

Customize your vegetable combination according to the season's bounty. Try these ideas for starters, but let the season be your guide!

Spring: asparagus and snow peas
Summer: **KOHLRABI,** green beans and zucchini
Fall: red peppers & potatoes
Winter: parsnips, carrots, and onions

Tips for Perfect Roasted Vegetables:

Oil: Use 1 teaspoon of oil per cup of vegetables. Extra virgin olive oil is a heart-healthy choice that adds a nice flavor.

Shallow Pan: Use a large, shallow metal cookie sheet or roasting pan.

Single Layer: Arrange in one layer for even cooking and caramelization. Do not crowd vegetables, or they will "steam" instead of roast.

Size: Cut vegetables into medium -sized uniform pieces for increased surface area and maximum flavor. Peeling is not necessary if vegetables are scrubbed well.

Asparagus, Green Beans, or Mushrooms: Leave whole
Onions: 1 ½ inch wedges
Carrots or Parsnips: 1 ½ inch long thick "sticks"
Zucchini, Sweet Potatoes, Turnips, or Beets: 1-inch chunks
Cauliflower or Broccoli: 1 to 1 ½ inch diameter florets
Brussels Sprouts: cut in half
Peppers or Eggplant: 1 ½ inch chunks