

Journey School Food Community CSA
Week 5: December 9, 2006

The baby greens made it and so did the garlic and onions! How impressed I am by the resiliency of plants. How glad I am for all your good thoughts! We definitely need to have a party next summer when we harvest the garlic. And a barbeque with onion rings!

In your share this week are fuzzy KIWI grown by Carolina Nurik on Maury Island. She harvested 227 pounds of kiwi from her Tahoma View Farm. Kiwi is one of those season-benders for me – how this strawberry/melon/berry tasting treat ripens in the cold and wet is amazing. The link below contains huge amounts of information about the health benefits of kiwi, recipes, and storage tips. I wanted to include in the newsletter the very interesting, and recent, tale of kiwi in America. If you'd like more kiwi, you may contact Carolina at 463-7216.

Our next pick up is December 23rd. If you cannot make this day, please let us know. I'd very much like to give you fresh produce (and treats!) before the holidays – we can arrange pickups earlier in the week if you need. I hope you are all well and riding the waves of holiday energy with grace and glad tidings. Lisa, Jeff, Zoe and Rae

www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=41

History of Kiwi

The kiwifruit is a fruit with a very interesting history and whose recent rise in popularity reflects a combination of an appreciation for its taste, nutritional value, unique appearance and, surprisingly, its changing name.

Native to China, kiwifruits were originally known as Yang Tao. They were brought to New Zealand from China by missionaries in the early 20th century with the first commercial plantings occurring several decades later. In 1960, they were renamed Chinese Gooseberries.

In 1961, Chinese Gooseberries made their first appearance at a restaurant in the United States and were subsequently "discovered" by an American produce distributor who felt that the U.S. market would be very receptive to this uniquely exotic fruit. She initiated the import of these fruits into the United States in 1962, but to meet what was felt to be burgeoning demand, changed its name from Chinese Gooseberry to kiwifruit, in honor of the native bird of New Zealand, the kiwi, whose brown fuzzy coat resembled the skin of this unique fruit. Currently, Italy, New Zealand, Chile, France, Japan and the United States are among the leading commercial producers of kiwifruit.

How to Select and Store Kiwi

When selecting kiwifruits, hold them between your thumb and forefinger and gently apply pressure; those that have the sweetest taste will yield gently to pressure. Avoid those that are very soft, shriveled or have bruised or damp spots. As size is not related to the fruit's quality, choose a kiwifruit based upon your personal preference or recipe need. Kiwifruits are usually available throughout most of the year.

If kiwifruits do not yield when you gently apply pressure with your thumb and forefinger, they are not yet ready to be consumed since they will not have reached the peak of their sweetness. Kiwifruits can be left to ripen for a few days to a week at room temperature, away from exposure to sunlight or heat. Placing the fruits in a paper bag with an apple, banana or pear will help to speed their ripening process. Ripe kiwifruits can be stored either at room temperature or in the refrigerator.

Alice's Moroccan Carrots

- 1 bag carrots
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- pinch of salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon paprika, hot or mild
- pinch of cayenne
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 ½ tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley leaves

Julienne carrots in quarters, about 2-3 inches long. Combine the carrots, garlic, and pinch of salt in a large sauté pan. Add water to cover, bring to a boil, and simmer briskly over medium heat until tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Drain and cool to room temperature. Transfer the carrots to a nonreactive dish large enough to hold them without overlapping too much. Toss with the cumin, paprika, cinnamon, and cayenne. Add the lemon juice, oil, and parsley, toss again, and set aside to marinate for at least 1 hour. May be refrigerated for up to 3 days, holding out the parsley until just before serving.

Lemon Cayenne Throat Soother

Mix 1 tsp honey with 1 tsp lemon juice and dash of cayenne pepper. Take like cough syrup. This does not prevent cough, but does relieve throat pain in two ways. First, the honey and lemon coat the throat. Second, the cayenne pepper brings blood cells needed to fight off infection to the throat area.

Contributed by Beth, designsbyfisher@inteliport.com

Sweet Potato, Caramelized Onion, and Butternut Squash Lasagna

1 pound lasagna noodles
extra olive oil for coating the pasta, brushing the potatoes, and greasing the dish
2 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced into ½ inch thick rounds
2 Tablespoons butter
2 Tablespoons olive oil
3 medium Spanish or other sweet onion, sliced into ¼ thick rings
1 teaspoon sugar
1 large egg, lightly beaten
3 Tablespoons chopped fresh basil leaves or 2 teaspoons dried basil
1 Tablespoon chopped fresh oregano leaves or 1 teaspoon dried oregano
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon salt
3 cups ricotta cheese
½ cup mixed grated Parmesan and Romano cheeses
½ pound butternut squash, cooked and mashed
1 pound mozzarella cheese
Freshly ground black pepper

1. Cook the pasta until al dente, drain, and coat with enough oil to keep the noodles from sticking. Set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 475 degrees.
3. Spread the sweet potatoes in one layer on a baking sheet. Drizzle a little oil (about ¼ teaspoon) over the potatoes and turn to coat both sides. Bake for 15 minutes, until cooked and lightly golden. Remove and set aside, Reduce the oven heat to 375 degrees.
4. Melt the butter along with the 2 tablespoons oil in a large skillet. Stir in the onions and sugar and sauté over medium heat for 20 minutes, until soft and beginning to turn golden. Set aside.
5. Place the egg, basil, oregano, garlic, and salt in a large bowl and whisk together. Add the ricotta and grated cheeses and whisk to smooth. Add the squash and mix to blend well. Set aside.
6. To assemble the lasagna, lightly oil a 13 x 9 inch deep baking pan. Line the bottom with a layer of noodles. Spread some of the cheese and squash mixture over the noodles. Add a layer of sweet potatoes, then a layer of the onions. Top with a layer of mozzarella and sprinkle with black pepper to taste. Continue until all the ingredients are used and the top is a layer of onions lightly covered with mozzarella.
7. Bake for 1 ½ hours, or until bubbly and golden across the top. Remove and cool for 5 minutes. Cut into squares and serve.