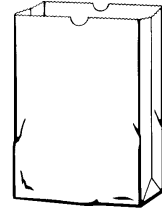


IN THE BAG
Potomac Vegetable Farms
June 22-24, 2004



These afternoon thunderstorms are so localized – in Vienna we have standing water in some of the gardens and in Loudoun they are making hay. But we all enjoyed the sparkling beautiful weekend, selling at the farmers markets, and working without sweating a bit.

Week #2 brings more springtime meals of salads, stir fry, and delicious fresh greens. This may be the time to restock your pantry with a trip to the Asian supermarket for sesame oil, Chinese hot oil, rice vinegar, red pepper flakes, and other sauces to diversify your greens menus. And remember, when in doubt, just about anything can be chopped and sautéed with olive oil and garlic and it will be absolutely delicious.

Leaf lettuce (just a few more weeks of this spring crop)

Fresh garlic – you got one of these last week, and we forgot to mention that they are juicy and the cloves are not yet fully developed. You can cut them like an onion, and they need to be refrigerated. You can just cut off most of the stem and put it in the compost. It is probably getting too tough to eat by now.

Zucchini, yellow squash, patty pan, sunburst summer squash

Cucumbers

Sweet basil -- the smell and taste of summer. Chop a few leaves and add it to your sautéed squash. Eat basil in a cheese sandwich. Obviously, it is delicious in any tomato sauce, or on pizza.

Turnips with or without tops -- turnip greens are edible. They have a strong flavor and are often sautéed with onions and garlic and cooked with bacon (or the fake vegetarian bacon). Or you can just cook them with olive oil and garlic: the universal combination. The turnips are quite mild and can be grated into salad, or steamed and eaten with butter and salt.

There are limited quantities of some of these items, so you may find a kohlrabi or sugar snap peas or Italian flat parsley or escarole in your bag, or you may not. We do keep track, so if you miss out this week, you'll get one of the limited items next time. (We distribute by group, not by person.)

About Kohlrabi:

“With stems branching out of purple or green globes, kohlrabi is a strange-looking vegetable...mild and sweet, like a young turnip...Keep stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator until ready to use...can be prepared any way turnips are. It's delicious sliced into thin wedges and sprinkled with sea salt or grated into salads. To cook, cut it in quarters, rounds, or matchsticks then steam or roast it. Goes well with butter, sour cream, dill, mustard and horseradish.” – Deborah Madison, Vegetarian Cooking For Everyone, p. 384

And about kohlrabi leaves:

“Blanched and sautéed, the leaves have a smooth, fleshy texture and deep-green spinach color; the flavor is much like Swiss chard or spinach with a dose of kale. Drop the trimmed leaves into a large pot of salted, boiling water. When water returns to a full boil, stir, then boil until barely tender, 2 – 3 minutes. Drain well. You can leave the ... leaves whole, or chop. The kohlrabi can be left for hours, at room temperature or refrigerated...To reheat, warm butter, bacon fat, or olive oil in a skillet and sauté the leaves until hot through. Season with salt and pepper...combine the cooked vegetable with sautéed mushrooms for a lovely earthy flavor. Or garnish with anchovies or olives of lemon or all of them.” -- Elizabeth Schneider, Uncommon Fruits and Vegetables, p. 264

About escarole: A broad-leaved, slightly bitter green from the chicory family that looks like lettuce, but with thicker leaves. Can be eaten raw in salads for an interesting contrast in taste and texture, but it is rather strong. It's excellent in soups, or braised with garlic and olive oil (surprise).