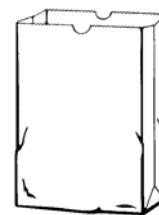


IN THE BAG
Potomac Vegetable Farms
June 6 - 8, 2006



Here are some explanations and descriptions of some of the items you might find in your bag this week. You may not find all of these today, but eventually you will. For the first few weeks, we are putting labels on the greens that you may not know by name, in case you want to look for other recipes. You can find recipes and vegetable identification help on our website at www.potomacvegetablefarms.com.



About Lettuce

The best way to wash lettuce is to break up the head and float it in a sink full of cold water. We have already washed it once in a big sink, and sometimes it's clean enough to eat after one washing, but in general it's best to float it once more. Shake the leaves dry and store them in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. You are much less likely to waste lettuce if you wash it as soon as you get it, and make it easy to use throughout the week.

How to clean and store your greens

Store greens unwashed in plastic bags in the refrigerator crisper. Any added moisture will cause them to spoil more rapidly. Use within five days, not washing until you are ready to use them.

To remove grit from greens, dunk them in a large bowl or sink filled with cold water (simply rinsing under running water won't do it). The dirt will sink to the bottom while the greens rise to the top. Remove the greens by hand, and repeat procedure to make sure all grit and dirt are gone. If using greens raw, cut or tear them to the desired size and spin them in a salad spinner. If cooking, cook them with the water that clings to them.

Garlic curls (or "scapes") are the tender flower stalks that grow out of the middle of hardneck garlic, before the garlic below is full grown. We break them off so that the plant can devote its growing energy into the storage bulb and not into making flowers and seeds. The garlic curl season is about three weeks long, so if you like the pesto (see recipe below), you could freeze some in ice cube trays, and store the cubes in a freezer bag to enjoy later in the season.

Swiss chard is in the spinach family, but it grows all summer (spinach can't take the heat). That's the bunch of large, dark green leaves with a long stem. The crunchy stem is delicious, so don't throw any part of the chard away. The red and yellow stems are rainbow chard, and the one with the broad white stem is called Argentata. They don't taste very different from each other. The simplest way to prepare Swiss chard is to chop it into 1" pieces and sauté in a hot frying pan with onions and garlic in olive oil. You'll have many opportunities to expand your horizons with chard this year – the plants are thriving.

Salad Turnips -- These perfectly round, white, mild turnips are best eaten raw in salads and sandwiches. You can also steam or roast them or add them to a clear soup.

Escarole -- Its coarse, mildly bitter and sweet leaves are commonly used in Italian salads. Like other greens, it can be sautéed lightly in garlic and olive oil, seasoned and served as a vegetable with a vinaigrette dressing.

Endive -- Also called "frisee." It looks like lettuce but it's very frizzy and you eat it like escarole. Much stronger flavored than lettuce and not really suitable as a solo salad ingredient.

Kale and Collards -- They're both from the cabbage family and packed with vitamins and flavor. The simplest solution is to remove the stems and chop the leaves, steam or sauté. Good with butter and salt or vinegar or salad dressing. Do not overcook; kale tastes best when it is still dark green.

Lamb's Quarters – packed with Vitamin C, eat raw in salad or steam like spinach.

Spring Greens Pie (Cooking Light Magazine)

(Serves 4)

Note: although specific greens are called for in this recipe, you can use just about any dark green leafy vegetable.

1 c. thinly sliced green onions	½ c. fresh parsley, coarsely chopped
½ c. sliced shallots (about 5)	1/4 c. fresh dill, chopped
10 c. baby spinach, washed	½ tsp. salt
5 c. arugula, trimmed	½ tsp. fennel seeds
4 c. chopped beet greens	½ tsp. black pepper
½ c. part skim ricotta cheese	8 sheets frozen phyllo dough, thawed
½ c. part skim mozzarella cheese, shredded	Cooking Spray

1. Pre-heat oven to 375.
2. Heat large, non-stick skillet over medium heat. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add onions and shallots; cook 4 min. or until golden, then remove onion mixture from pan and set aside. Add spinach to pan, cook (stirring) until wilted. Drain spinach in colander. Put arugula and beet greens in pan, cook (stirring) until wilted. Place mixture on top of spinach in colander and drain, pressing until barely moist.
3. Combine onion mixture, spinach mixture, and cheeses in large bowl. Stir in parsley, dill, salt, fennel, and pepper.
4. Place one sheet phyllo on cutting board or work surface (cover remaining dough to keep moist), lightly coat with cooking spray. Place sheet in 10" deep dish pie plate coated with cooking spray, gently forming to shape of plate with ends of phyllo overlapping top. Repeat process with remaining phyllo, in a crisscross pattern. Spoon spinach mixture evenly over phyllo; fold overlapping end of phyllo toward center of pie pan (they will not meet). Coat ends with cooking spray and gently press to hold shape.
5. Bake at 375 for 40 min. or until phyllo is golden. Cool 15 min. on wire rack, and then cut into serving wedges.

Garlic Curl Pesto

1 bunch garlic curls
¼ cup dry roasted peanuts or walnuts or pine nuts
¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup parmesan cheese

Chop garlic, puree in food processor or blender. Add nuts and puree. Add oil and cheese and puree. Use as a dip, pasta sauce, pizza topping (after thinning with more oil) or on bagels. Also delicious in scrambled eggs! Appropriate for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.