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Box #2
Even Box
5 July 2023

Contents
Nasturtium Plant
Cilantro
Beets: Red
Garlic Scapes
Kale
Lettuce: Green Romaine or Red Boston
Sugar Snap Peas

New Stuff: Nasturtium, cilantro, sugar snap peas
Choice Box: ?

Nasturtiums are a flower I've grown and loved for years. It's beautiful: the flowers have intense, vibrant colors that seem to glow from within, the leaves are round and green, but the best part is: it's all edible. Flowers, stems and leaves have a spicy, peppery flavor that makes your mouth say "Wow!" This cultivar, Alaska, grows to about 6"-8" high and spreads 8"-10" wide. The seeds were a mix of colors: yellow, orange, salmon and red. Plant it in sun to part sun, keep it watered and fertilize now and again. Your nasturtium will reward you with lots of gorgeous blooms that you can pick for bouquets, use as an edible garnish, or in salads for a gorgeous look and peppery kick. What color will your flower be?

Cilantro, also called Chinese parsley, is a native plant from southern Europe all the way to India. It's used in many cuisines, particularly Asian and Mexican. Americans have come to love it also. There's nothing like chopped cilantro in a good bowl of salsa.
In Chinese medicine, cilantro is one of the herbs, along with parsley, that helps cleanse the body of heavy metals.
Coriander is the name common to cilantro's round seeds and is a staple in the spice cupboard of Indian cooks.
Cilantro is the fruit fly of the herb world. Once it comes up, you can harvest for about 3 weeks before it flowers and goes to seed. To keep a continuous supply in your garden, plant it about every 3 weeks.
Cilantro grows close to the ground, so, altho we've given it an initial dunk, wash it again before using.
One method of storing cilantro is to wrap it in a damp paper towel, put in a plastic bag in your frig. Another is to clip the bottoms, stand the bunch in a glass with an inch of water, change the water every 2 days and keep in the frig. Cilantro will last about a week, properly stored. To keep it long-term, freeze the cleaned leaves in a zip-lock bag, and don't thaw them prior to using. Altho most herbs taste more intense when they're dried, cilantro loses flavor when dehydrated, tasting nothing like the fresh version.

Sugar snap peas are a real tribute to pea breeding—so sweet you can eat the whole thing, pod and all. To eat, pull off the "string" first: grab the stem and pull along the back towards the other end. Otherwise, that string is pretty fibrous. Store them in the fridge when you're not actively munching.
The trick with sugar snap peas is to pick them when the peas fill the pod and the pod is still smooth and green—this is when their flavor is best. They are great eaten raw, lightly steamed, in a stir-fry, or mixed with other vegetables. Store sugar snap peas in your refrigerator, in the plastic bag they came in.
I find that sautéing snap peas in a little butter with some salt and pepper is the best way to enjoy their delicious flavor.

And now it's time for **Terry's Favorite Way To Cook Any Vegetable**: Get out a 9"-10" skillet with a lid. Put it on a low flame and add **2 Tbsp. butter**. Add the vegetable(s) you want to the skillet, some **salt and freshly-ground pepper**. Stir, cover and cook until you reach the desired doneness, stirring a few times along the way.
I think this simple method brings out the purest flavor of the vegetable you're cooking. When you know what something really tastes like, you can make better choices when combining it with other vegetables.

You can always use another beet recipe. The original here is from a book called "Cooking for Madam" by Marta Sgubin, who was nanny to Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis's children, and later cook and companion to Jackie. Marta wrote this salad was a huge favorite of Ted Kennedy's.
Red Beet Salad
Vinaigrette: whisk together:
1 tsp. dry mustard
1 ½ tsp. Dijon or other brown mustard
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
salt and freshly-ground pepper to taste
Now whisk in: **¾ cup olive oil**
This makes enough for 2-3 salads.

Scrub 3-4 beets, cutting off the tops and root, and trimming off the brown skin around the top. Slice beets into julienne sticks and sauté on low heat, covered, in a few tablespoons of olive oil. When beets are folk-tender, dump the contents of the pan into a bowl, pour some of the vinaigrette dressing over them and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Toss to coat and allow beets to cool. Vegetables absorb much more flavoring when they're hot or warm than they do when they're cold.
Now add: **½ cup chopped parsley or cilantro**
Toss to distribute the parsley. Serve now or chill for later.

Kale Salad with Cheddar and Apple
in a large bowl whisk together:
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 small garlic clove, minced
5 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste
Add: **4 cups kale, stems removed, washed, finely chopped**
-toss kale with dressing and let sit for at least an hour. This softens and milds the kale as well as infusing some of the flavor of the dressing into the leaves.
When you're ready to serve the salad, add:
2-4 tablespoons coarsely chopped, toasted almonds
1 apple, grated
2 ounces sharp Cheddar cheese, grated
Garnish with: **freshly grated Parmesan**

Field Notes
The word is: dry.
The hope is: rain.
Some dark clouds built near us on Tuesday afternoon—we even heard thunder--but no rain. Wednesday is another day, and the possibility of rain is now at 77% according to the Weather Channel forecast. With fingers and toes crossed, we hope.
Chuck was able to get beds ready, and the pepper plants went into the ground late last week. They are mulched heavily with straw, and a line of drip tape runs beneath it. We are ready for an extended dry spell.
This week: tomatoes. It's late to get them into the ground, but we hope they catch up once there's good farm dirt and fertility around them.
The 2nd patch of sugar snap peas is tall enough to need support. We start by spacing T-posts (metal posts) about every 5-6 ft. Once the posts are in place, we weave twine in and out around the plants to hold them upright, going twice around the posts. When they grow about a foot more, we weave another line of twine. It's much easier to find ripe pods when you can see them.
Chuck has been spending more time than he likes fixing our 50's and 60's vintage Ford tractors. But he's good at that sort of thing, and we have one up and running. Our Farmall Super C cultivating tractor (same vintage) is also running and ready to kill some weeds.
When you're a vegetable farmer with a slender budget, these older tractors, built for exactly what we're doing, are a bargain. And, they're built like tanks, with parts still available. Amazing.
And now it's time to leave for our local fireworks. Chuck and I hope you enjoy yours.
Happy Eating,
Terry & Chuck