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Box #16
Even Box
11 October 2023

Contents
Brussels Sprout Stalk
Carrots
Eggplant
Garlic
Lettuce: Green Romaine or Red Leaf
Peppers: Anaheim, Jalapeño, Red Bell, Red Carmen
Potatoes: Red Norland and/or White Superior
Tomatoes: Mixed Types
Winter Squash: Chuck's Special

New Stuff: Brussels sprouts, potatoes
Choice Box: peppers, ??

Brussels sprouts are one of those fall vegetables that taste better after they've been thru several frosts. These have been thru several cold snaps, but no real frosts--yet. Brussels sprouts also require a long time to mature, so we plant them by mid-May at the latest. They are grown mainly for the edible buds, or "sprouts", but the leaves are good too. You may notice that the sprouts grow up the stalk in a spiral pattern. Most of the sprouts will be firm, but sprouts at the top and bottom of the stalk may be loosely formed. Nothing wrong with that, they're still edible and taste great.

Brussels sprouts (*Brassica oleracea*) are part of the cabbage family and native to the Mediterranean. They first appeared in northern Europe in the 5th century. European farmers cultivated them around the 13th century, and they became very popular in the Netherlands and Belgium, especially around Brussels, hence the name.

Brussels sprouts are high in vegetable proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins A, B_6, C and K, dietary fiber and minerals. Their flavor and nutritional value are best when used soon after harvest.

To store, cut or snap the sprouts from the stalk and place them in a plastic bag. They will keep for a week or longer in the crisper drawer in your fridge.

Before cooking Brussels sprouts, trim the bottom, then peel off and discard any yellowed or damaged outside leaves. You can cook them whole or halved (my preference). Despite some claims, they do not cook faster if you cut an X in the bottom—it just takes longer to get them into the pan. Because of their stronger flavor, I prefer Brussels sprouts cooked until they're tender all the way thru, but still retain a light green color. I use 2-3 tablespoons of butter, some salt and pepper, a skillet on low heat, covered. Stir them a few times, let the edges brown to caramelize their sugars, and cook them 10-15 minutes or so, until just soft. Or, try them roasted, just like beets. Brussels sprouts are also good in soups, stews and pot roast.

If you want to dress your sprouts up a bit, try this:

Kung Pao Brussels Sprouts

Heat oven to 425°F with racks in upper and lower thirds.

In a large bowl, put:

2 pounds Brussels sprouts (trimmed and halved)
3 tablespoons vegetable oil
¾ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon freshly-ground black pepper

Toss together until the Brussels sprouts are evenly coated. Turn out onto 1-2 rimmed baking sheets lined with aluminum foil. Save the bowl for later. You know those outer leaves that come loose when you cut the sprouts? Scoop 'em up and make sure they make it onto the sheet tray. In fact, the more, the better—they get extra charred and crunchy. Spread the Brussels sprouts out in a single layer so they're not overlapping (this will prevent them from steaming). Roast, tossing once and rotating top to bottom halfway through, until browned and tender, about 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan over medium heat, warm:

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Add**:** **4 chopped garlic cloves**
4 chopped scallions, the white and light green parts (save green parts for serving),
1 tablespoon peeled and finely chopped fresh ginger
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, or 1 Jalapeño pepper, minced

Cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 30 seconds.

Add: **¼ cup tamari or soy sauce**
3 tablespoons pure maple syrup
2 tablespoons rice vinegar

Increase heat to high, bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer until thickened, 2 to 3 minutes.

Pour the sauce over the sprouts and toss. Serve directly on the sheet tray, or transfer to a platter.

Top with: **reserved scallion greens,**
chopped salted roasted peanuts
crushed red pepper flakes, if desired

Serve immediately, or wait to toss the sprouts with the sauce until just before you're ready to eat.

Potatoes are one of the leading vegetables grown worldwide. They come in all shapes, sizes and colors, and thrive in areas below sea level, and those 14,000 feet above. Native to the Andean mountains of South America, they were brought to Europe by the Spaniards.

Potatoes are an excellent source of complex carbohydrates and minerals, especially potassium, providing you eat the skin since most of these nutrients are in or near the peel. Because you're getting organic potatoes, you don't have to worry about anything sprayed on them to prevent sprouting or greening.

Your potatoes have not been washed and have some soil on them. That soil protects them so they'll store longer. New potatoes have thin skins that are easily torn. To wash, cup a few in your hands under running water, and rub them lightly together. If you have a very soft brush and use it very gently, you may keep most of the skin intact.

Altho we sort thru our potatoes when we bag them, you may find one we missed with a green spot. This is due to exposure to sunlight: potatoes trying to make chlorophyll (so keep them away from sunlight, or any strong light). The green spot will taste bitter, so cut that off.

To keep potatoes fresh for the longest time, store them someplace that's between 45-55 degrees and has rather high humidity. Since few of us have such a specialized place, storing them in the refrigerator is a good choice. There is some research that says refrigerator storage encourages some of the starch to change to sugar resulting in browner potatoes when you bake or fry them. That doesn't sound so bad to me. There is some research that says onions and potatoes should not be stored close to each other or they spoil faster.

Roast potatoes using the same method we recommend for beets.

Chuck and I have three kinds of potatoes in the ground this year: Red Norland, a red-skinned, white-fleshed potato, Superior, a white-skinned, white-fleshed potato and Adirondack Blue, a blue skinned, blue fleshed potato. Superior is in the russet family, makes a good baking potato. The reds are more in the "waxy" style, supposed to be good for potato salad. There aren't very many Adirondack Blues—which are more purple than blue—we grew them mostly for ourselves. Some net bags of potatoes have a mixture of reds and whites, some are all one or the other.

Altho we covered our lettuce patch, the Romaine tops got a little too cold. We've broken off the part of the leaf that was damaged, but some heads will look a little ratty.

Lettuce is surprisingly resistant to light frosts, and usually sails through tasting even better than before. This Romaine is a special, summer variety, so is not as hardy.

I ran across this recipe a year or 2 ago, and thought it was perfect for this time of year.

Peperonata

In a large pot over medium heat put:

3 Tbsp. olive oil
2 onions, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped

-sauté until soft and lightly browned, stirring often, about 5 minutes.

Add: **4 potatoes, chopped**
5 tomatoes, chopped (about 3 cups)
4-6 sweet peppers, cut into ½" chunks—

using different-colored peppers makes the stew very pretty.

1 cup stock, if needed
1/3 cup capers, drained
¼ cup basil, chopped
salt and freshly-ground black pepper

Simmer until the potatoes are soft. Stir occasionally. Taste, and adjust seasoning as necessary.

Last week, the field crew came in with quite a haul of tomatoes—certainly compared with the week before. When you split it up between 120 Shares, it doesn't end up being a lot, but we're giving you all we have. Our tomato patch is well covered to protect it from these morning frosts. Hopefully, we'll get another, abundant harvest. Fingers crossed!

Field Notes

We spent a lot of time covering the peppers, tomatoes and butternut squash against the 5, possible, mornings of frost that were predicted last week: Saturday thru Wednesday. When nighttime temperatures go back up to the 40's, we'll probably uncover them if the weather is sunny. We'll certainly uncover them to harvest, but may pull the row cover back over the top afterwards. Row cover acts as a mini greenhouse at this time of year, helping to prolong the season.

When we harvested peppers Tuesday morning, we saw that the tops of some plants were dead: frost damage. But it was only the very tops—the rest of the plant was just fine.

Chuck and I plan to offer our Winter Storage Box, a single delivery in November, as we have in the past. We're working on the details, and will let you know more next week.

Stay Warm,

TERRY & CHUCK