



From Far Afield

A newsletter of the Tolstoy Farms CSA - July 8 & 11, 2015

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A FEW NEW ITEMS IN your box this week. You have potatoes for the first time this season. The name of this variety is Red Norland. Red Norland is a good multi-purpose potato, especially great for roasting or boiling. These are new potatoes. They are much more delicate than the later storage potatoes, with especially fragile skins. They cook more quickly too, and have a delicate texture and delicious flavor. Most potatoes do not want to be stored in the fridge, but young new potatoes can be stored in the produce drawer in a closed bag. The amount of potatoes you have this week is small, but would be nice with a side salad or cooked up with the fava beans you got in your box.

You have your first summer squash of the season, zucchini. There will be plenty more from where that came from, I expect. Zucchini is rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as caro-

tenes, lutein and zeaxanthin. These compounds help scavenge harmful oxygen-derived free radicals and reactive oxygen species (ROS) from the body that play a role in aging and various disease processes. Zucchini is a relatively moderate source of folates, provides of 24 µg or 6% of RDA per 100 g. It is a very good source of potassium, an important intra-cellular electrolyte.

Fresh zucukes are rich in vitamin A, providing about 200 IU per 100 g, as well as a good source of vitamin-C. with 17.9 µg or 30% of daily-required levels per 100 g. In addition, they contain moderate levels of B-complex group of vitamins like thiamin, pyridoxine, riboflavin and minerals like iron, manganese, phosphorus, and zinc.

All squash have their ancestral roots in the Americas, but it is in Italy where varieties of squash which came to be known as zucchini were first developed. Zucchini have made their way into all sorts of world cuisine. In Italy zucchini are served in a variety of ways, especially breaded and pan-fried. In France zucchini are a key ingredient in *ratatouille*, or stuffed with meat with other sweet vegetables like tomatoes or bell peppers. In Turkey, zucchini is the main ingredient in the popular dish *mücver*, or "zucchini pancakes", made from shredded zucchini, flour and eggs, lightly fried in olive oil and eaten with yogurt. They are also often used in kebabs along with various meats. In the Levant, zucchini is stuffed with minced meat and rice plus herbs and spices and steamed. It is also used in various kinds of stew. In Greece, zucchini is

usually fried or boiled with other vegetables (often green chili peppers and eggplants), but is also often stuffed with minced meat, rice and herbs and served with egg-lemon sauce. In Bulgaria, zucchini are fried and then served with a dip, made from yogurt, garlic and dill. Another popular dish is oven-baked zucchini—sliced or grated—covered with a mixture of eggs, yogurt, flour and dill. In Egypt, zucchini are cooked with tomato sauce, garlic and onions.

Kohlrabi, also known as German Turnip is the same species as cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, and kale, selected over time for a swollen bulbous mid-stem. The stems flavor is sweet and slightly spicy, reminiscent of broccoli stem, but with a slight radish spice. The greens and bulb are both edible, but, as with broccoli stems, the outer skin is very tough and fibrous and should be peeled off prior to eating or cooking. Kohlrabi is one of the main vegetables eaten in Kashmir. Kohlrabi can be prepared in a number of ways. It can be shredded raw in slaws and salads, roasted or braised then pureed into soups, pickled, baked, or stir fried. Both the bulb and the greens make a delicious curry. Diced it makes a hearty addition to savory pies and casseroles. Dee, one of the fellows working on our farm this summer, says blending it up, leaves and bulb, till smooth then adding garlic, onion, and a little salt to the blender makes a wonderful dip.

Thyme is your herb; half-shares only got a sprig, so take care not to over look it. Enjoy.

In Your Box

- 1 pound potato
- 1 bunch carrots
- 1 bunch beets
- 2 fresh red onion
- 1 head fresh garlic
- 2 lettuce
- 3/4 lb fava beans
- 1 kohlrabi
- 1 pound zucchini
- 1 bunch kale
- 1 bunch thyme

Carrot Soufflé

- 1 pound carrots, coarsely chopped
 - 1/2 cup margarine
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 3 eggs
 - 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
 - 1 teaspoon baking powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 3/4 cup white sugar
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease a 2 quart casserole dish.
 2. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add carrots and cook until tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Drain and mash. Stir in margarine, vanilla extract and eggs; mix well. Sift together flour, baking powder, salt and sugar; stir into carrot mixture and blend until smooth. Transfer to prepared casserole dish.
 3. Bake for 45 minutes.

Thyme Herb of the Week

Described by the Grass Roots Herb Society Newsletter as “very nearly the perfect useful herb,” thyme has been used historically in a variety of ways: Medicinally, culinarily, for an aromatic and antiseptic, and even for psychological disorders. The plant represented style and elegance to the early Greeks, chivalry in the middle ages, and the republican spirit in France. Thyme tea is said to be good for gastrointestinal upset, sore throat, and congested lungs. A poultice made by mashing thyme leaves into a paste may soothe inflammation and sores, although some sensitive skins are irritated by thyme oils. It is antiseptic and stimulating when inhaled in baths.

Culinarily, thyme is one of the most important herbs in French cuisine, (the fines herb) and is important in Creole and Cajun dishes. It works well with meat, seafood, stuffing, pâtés, stews, soups, stocks, herb butters, flavored vinegar, mustard, and bean & lentil casseroles. It combines well with most vegetables, cheese, eggs, and rice. It's flavor also complements lemon, garlic, and basil. Lemon thyme is a different taste, with self-descriptive flavors; lemon thyme is good with fish or chicken, makes a nice tea, and is good used in deserts, fresh fruit salads, or in making applesauce with early summer apples.

Roasted Beets with Lemon & Thyme

5 large beets, rinsed
1 Tbs. olive oil
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
1 Tbs. chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 tsp. lemon zest
juice of 1 lemon
salt and pepper to taste
Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Trim stems off beets and place them onto the middle of a large piece of aluminum foil. Drizzle beets with 1 tablespoon olive oil and season them with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Wrap beets up in foil, making a tightly sealed but roomy package. Bake beets in foil package on a sheet pan for 45 minutes to an hour at 400 degrees F, until tender. Remove from oven and carefully open up foil package and let cool.

When cool to the touch, wrap one beet at a time in paper towels and rub skin off. Repeat with remaining beets. This may stain your hands red unless you wear gloves. Cut peeled beets into chunks and place in a mixing bowl. In a small container with a tight fitting lid, combine olive oil, thyme, lemon juice, lemon zest and some salt and pepper. Close container and shake vigorously. Pour dressing over beets and toss to coat. Serve immediately or cover and keep in fridge until ready to serve.

