

Monroe Family Organics

CSA Newsletter

JULY 7, 2013

Farm Update

Hello everyone! We are in that transition time between the spring and summer season, and the shares will start to reflect this transition over the next couple weeks. The crops have continued to grow well although the fields are starting to get a little dry for one of the first times this season. We have not seen any tomatoes turning colors yet, but we expect to pull off our first ripe tomato sometime very soon (although it will be 2-3 weeks before we get enough to put in the shares). The green beans and wax beans are just about ripe and we will be offering a lot of beans about a week from now. There have been some cucumber beetle problems, but the cucumber and squash plants are starting to grow fast and the beetles are becoming fewer in number. The potato beetles have come in larger numbers although the plants only have about two more weeks of growth before they start dying down for the season. Expect some great tasting potatoes in about another week, as they are enlarging very fast with a combination of heat and our irrigation.

Also, here is a tip for keeping your veggies fresh for a long time! When you get your share, put anything that isn't bagged into a plastic zipper bag or tied-up grocery bag in your refrigerator. Some things, such as cilantro or kale, will start to look limp a lot sooner when they are out uncovered in the fridge, but if you put them in a bag, they will last a really long time.



These carrots have just been harvested and are ready to be bagged up for the CSA drop-off. There will be plenty of carrots in the shares this week!



What to Expect in This Week's Share

- ❖ Bok choy, kale, or beets
- ❖ Carrots
- ❖ Lettuce, salad mix, or spinach
- ❖ Summer squash, leeks, or cooking greens
- ❖ Cabbage, fennel, or more summer squash
- ❖ Cilantro, kohlrabi, or edible nasturtiums
- ❖ Surprise veggie! (Possibilities include snap peas, basil, strawberries, potatoes, broccoli, green beans, and yellow wax beans.)

Have questions or comments? Email us at mforganics@yahoo.com or call Michele at

517-896-6884.

Vegetable Spotlight: Kohlrabi

When people see kohlrabi at the CSA drop-offs, they usually react in one of two ways. We either hear “What the heck is this thing?” or “Oooh, kohlrabi! I love kohlrabi!” So what is this alien looking vegetable? The name kohlrabi comes from German and literally translates to “cabbage turnip”. Kohlrabi is thought to have originated in Europe, although where is very much in question. It was mentioned as early as the 4th or 5th century in Roman writings but became more of a common crop in Germany and Eastern Europe about 1000 years later. The kohlrabi is in the same family as broccoli, cabbage, and turnips. It was selected over time for its enlarged stem which yielded us the rounder kohlrabi that we have today. If you think of the taste and texture of a broccoli stem it is easy to see how they are so closely related, though they look much different.

The kohlrabi that you are getting this spring goes through the following life cycle on our farm. We first seed flats in the greenhouse, putting about three seeds into every cell. Then when the plants were large enough (about four weeks later), we took them out of the greenhouse and planted them in beds that had plastic mulch and drip irrigation already laid. These beds had our fertility mix of chicken manure pellets, compost, and other micronutrient sources tilled into the soil a few weeks previous. Then as the plants grew this spring they were damaged by a freeze in mid-May. (Continued on next page.)



Above: Kohlrabi growing in the field.

Below: Kohlrabi topped and ready for the CSA drop-off.





This Creamy Kohlrabi Slaw is delicious, and it includes a lot of the vegetables that are in your shares this week!

There were some flea beetles that chewed on the outer portion of some of the leaves, but they did not stay around long since they migrated over to the nearby bok choy which the beetles prefer. The kohlrabi matured quickly once we got into the month of June, and when they were ready there were clumps of three kohlrabi each that we harvested to bring to you.

Kohlrabi tastes great fresh by just taking the outer tougher skin off and eating the white/green crisp flesh inside. This is probably the most common way it is consumed.

However, it is good in stir fry or cut into thin slices and fried in olive oil until the edges are crisp. We make a really nice pasta with chicken, kohlrabi, and alfredo sauce, and there are coleslaw recipes where it is either included with cabbage or replaces cabbage.

Despite its somewhat odd appearance, kohlrabi is pretty versatile and completely delicious. We hope you enjoy it as much as we do!

Recipe: Creamy Kohlrabi Slaw

This recipe comes from www.allrecipes.com.



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups chopped cabbage
- 4 kohlrabi bulbs, peeled and grated
- 2 stalks celery, sliced thin
- 2 carrots, sliced thin
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh onion or leeks
- 1/3 cup white sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon celery seed
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 4 1/2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar

DIRECTIONS:

1. Toss the cabbage, kohlrabi, celery, carrot, and onion together in a large bowl.
2. Whisk the sugar, salt, pepper, celery seed, mayonnaise, and vinegar together in a separate bowl until smooth; pour over the cabbage mixture and stir to coat evenly. Chill in refrigerator 1 hour before serving.



Another yummy way to eat kohlrabi is to peel it and eat it raw, like Jane is doing here.