

Wise Acres Farm CSA Newsletter

Week 13 – September 27, 2017

Wowee, it is HOT! Bangor has seen three straight days of record-breaking heat. Joy and I spent the middle of Sunday in the Abbot Square parking lot trying to drink enough water between farmers' market customers to avoid full-on dehydration. It was a busy day, though, and we enjoyed seeing several of you shareholders! Monday and today, Laura and I have needed to tackle a few tasks in the hot sun (irrigation and getting the last of the winter squash out of the field and into the basement), but otherwise we've tried to take it easy by focusing on tractor work and cleaning garlic and onions in the shade of the packing shed.

This is shaping up to be the warmest September on record for this part of Maine. Our fall storage crops, planted with the assumption that we'd be getting cooler days by now, are coming to maturity a little earlier than expected and are struggling somewhat at full size in this hot dry weather, so we will be beginning to harvest them this week, even though it feels strange to do so when frost is not imminent. The most urgent is our storage cabbage, which has fully headed up and is at risk of cracking if we suddenly get a heavy rain. So, thanks for taking some off of our hands this week via your boxes...if you want more, we have humongous heads for sale at our farmers' markets!

-Brittany

Recipes and Veggie Notes

Keep your **tomatoes** in open air at cool room temperature. Keep everything else in a sealed bag in the fridge.

Cabbage

We've got cabbage on the brain this week! This cabbage variety has the unglamorous name "Storage #4" and it is our go-to, old-faithful fall cabbage variety. The heads are very solid and heavy and will store in a bag in the fridge for months (we're not kidding!). You can also cut a chunk off of it and the remaining portion will keep fine in the fridge for a couple of weeks; just trim off the exposed edge when you're ready to use it. Or blow through it all at once with one or both of this week's recipes!

Cabbage Stuffed with Lentils and Rice

Adapted from [How to Cook Everything Vegetarian](#) by Mark Bittman

Note: you will need a steamer pot or basket for this recipe!

2 T extra virgin olive oil
½ onion, chopped (sweet is OK)
1-2 cups diced vegetables (eggplant, carrots, tomatoes...optional)
2 t minced garlic
2 cups vegetable stock or water
½ cup white, brown, or basmati rice
½ cup dried lentils
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 medium head green cabbage
Gruyere, fontina, Gouda, or mozzarella cheese slices or butter (optional)
Chopped parsley leaves or chives for garnish (optional)

Heat oil in medium pot over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 5 minutes. Add garlic, cook for another minute, then add stock/water and bring to a boil. If using brown rice, add to the pot along with lentils. If using white or basmati rice, add lentils first and cook for 5 minutes and then add

What's in the box?

Ailsa Craig Sweet
Onions

Carrots

Green Cabbage

Eggplant

Lettuce

Salad Mix

Saladette Tomatoes

***Remember to return
your box next week!***

rice. Simmer on medium-low and cook until lentils and rice are tender and the liquid is mostly absorbed (not completely dry), about 25 to 30 minutes. If using any diced vegetables, add them to the pot about 10 minutes after starting the lentil/rice mixture.

Meanwhile, use a sharp knife to cut a cone-shaped wedge out of the bottom of the cabbage, removing its core. Pull off 8 to 12 large, untorn leaves and steam above a couple inches of salted water until just flexible enough to bend. Make a V-cut to remove the central stem of each leaf. To stuff, place each leaf curved side up and add about ¼ cup of filling in the center of the leaf. Fold over the sides and then roll up from the stem end into a little package. Don't roll too tightly; the mixture will expand as it cooks. Put the rolls in the steamer basket and cook until tender, about 10-15 minutes. Top with a slice of cheese and put under the broiler until bubbly if you like, or drizzle with olive oil or melt butter over the top. Sprinkle with herbs and serve.

Sauerkraut

Adapted from Wild Fermentation by Sandor Ellix Katz

Ever tried fermenting? It's a little more involved than our average newsletter recipe, but it's fun and the microbes in a live fermented food like homemade sauerkraut are great for your digestion and overall health. Sandor Ellix Katz's book and website, wildfermentation.com, have a wealth of information about different fermented foods you can make at home.

Equipment:

Ceramic crock or food-grade plastic bucket (1 gal or greater capacity)

Plate that fits inside crock or bucket

Clean 1-gallon jug filled with water

Cloth cover (such as a pillowcase or towel)

OR

4 or more quart canning jars with lids and bands

Ingredients:

1 large head cabbage (about 5 lbs.)

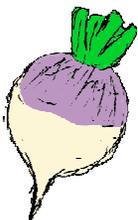
About 3 tablespoons sea salt

Chop or grate cabbage as finely as you want. Sprinkle salt on the cabbage as you go (3 tablespoons is a guideline; you may want to use somewhat more if your fermenting spot is warm). Add other vegetables (carrots, onions, garlic, turnips, beets, etc.) and spices (caraway, dill or celery seeds, etc.) if you like. Mix ingredients together and pack a handful at a time into the crock or canning jars, tamping down using your fists or another sturdy kitchen implement. The tamping down eliminates air and helps release water from the cabbage.

Cover the crock with the plate and place the gallon jug on top of the plate as weight, and cover with cloth to keep dust and flies out (or place lids and bands loosely on the canning jars). Press down on the weight (or the cabbage in the jars) periodically until the brine rises above the cabbage; this can take about 24 hours. If the brine does not rise above the cabbage, add salt water (1 T salt dissolved in each cup of water) to cover.

Let the crock (or jars) ferment in a corner of the kitchen or someplace you will remember to check it every day or two. Some mold may appear on the surface, but it can be skimmed off and does not make the cabbage underneath the brine unsafe to eat. Just make sure the brine level stays above the cabbage and add more salt water as needed. (If you're using jars, loosen them occasionally to allow the carbon dioxide produced by fermentation to escape).

Begin tasting the cabbage after it has been fermenting for a week or so. When it has gotten tangy enough for your taste, move it into the fridge. Re-pack and level the cabbage each time you take some out. Enjoy the brine, too; it has lots of the good microbes in it and can be used in place of vinegar/lemon juice in a salad dressing!



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