

Two Onion Farm

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Week of November 26th, 2006

Remaining deliveries. Biweekly members, if you are receiving a box this week (Nov 26-Dec 2), then this is your final delivery. Weekly members, after this week you will receive one more delivery in the week of Dec 10-16. Note that we skip a week before the final delivery.

Please return vegetables boxes.

Weekly members, please return any extra boxes you have at your next delivery.

Rutabaga. Reprinting this for biweeklies, who are receiving rutabagas for the first time this year: Rutabagas are oblong to round roots, varying in color from nearly white at the bottom to purplish at the top. The skin has a slightly waxy appearance – this is natural; we do not wax them. Rutabagas are sweet with a mustardy flavor. They are generally cooked. Peel them before preparing.

Rutabagas are excellent in soups and stews. Add the rutabagas early and allow them to cook until they become thoroughly soft and begin to dissolve. Cooked this way they contribute a wonderful creamy texture along with their flavor.

Rutabagas are also good when cooked quickly at high heat. Here's one way: peel them, slice them thinly into slices of uniform thickness, and spread the slices in a single layer on large baking sheets, each oiled with about 2 Tbsp olive oil. As you lay the slices on the sheet, first lay one side on the sheet and then turn the slice over – this ensures that both sides are oiled. Roast in a hot, 400-450 degree oven until the bottoms of the slices begin to brown, about 10-20 minutes. Turn each slice with tongs, and continue roasting until the bottoms begin to brown. Collect the slices in a bowl and toss

them with salt and balsamic vinegar.

Butternut Squash. As we described in recent newsletters, we experienced a crop failure with winter squash and we've purchased these butternut squash from an organic vegetable farmer in the Madison area.

As we asked around we found that this was a difficult squash year for many growers in the area. These butternut squash were the best we could find although we were not 100% satisfied with them. Many of the squash have minor blemishes and we recommend that you eat them fairly soon, because we anticipate that they will be susceptible to decay if kept around too long.

The simplest way to prepare squash is baking (or roasting). Cut the washed squash in half from top to bottom. Scoop out the seeds and stringy pulp from the center of the squash. Place the squash halves face down on a dish or tray and cook in a microwave or 350 degree oven until the flesh is very tender but not dried or charred. If baking in an oven, you can pour a little water in the bottom of the dish to keep the squash from drying out. Baked squash can be eaten straight from the shell with a fork. The flesh can also be scooped out and used in other recipes. If your squash is large, you can bake the entire squash, use a portion of it, and then scoop out the remaining flesh and refrigerate or freeze it. It freezes very well.

The butternut squash can be used in pumpkin pie, bread, or muffin recipes. Substitute the flesh from a baked squash in place of canned pumpkin puree. You may need to adjust the amount of liquid in the batter depending on how moist the squash is.

Storage. Beets, cabbage, carrots, and rutabaga – store for weeks or months in a

sealed bag in the refrigerator. Onions, garlic – store outside the fridge. Plan to use the garlic soon; the onions generally keep longer although their storage life varies with conditions. Winter squash –keep at room temperature or a bit cooler – a temperature around 55 degrees is actually ideal. Do not store the squash where it may freeze.

Recipes. Here are some relevant recipes from past newsletters which can be viewed on our website: Roasted root vegetables (10/31/05 newsletter); Beet salad with pecans (10/31/05 newsletter); Beets in raspberry vinaigrette (7/18/05 – the original recipe calls for Chioggia beets, but any beet will work fine); Rutabaga hash (11/12/06 – easy side dish of rutabaga and onion); Indian squash pea soup (10/17/05)

Wine Cooked Cabbage and Onions

Nice side dish for pork or beef. Can be made ahead and refrigerated.

3 Tblsp unsalted butter
2 medium onions, minced
1 small head of cabbage, shredded
1 cup wine
1 cup water
2 Tblsp red wine vinegar
2 Tblsp balsamic vinegar
½ sweet apple, peeled and grated
2 tsp sugar
½ tsp salt
Black pepper
1 bay leaf
¼ tsp ground cloves

Sauté onion and cabbage in butter over medium-high heat until slightly browned, about 20 minutes. Add remaining ingredients and simmer covered until cabbage is very tender, at least an hour.

Borscht

One of our members sent us this recipe:

3 or 4 beets, grated
1/3 head cabbage, grated
1-2 onions, minced
3-4 carrots, grated
Ketchup

Vinegar & Sugar in tiny amounts
Salt, Pepper
Vegetable Oil

Sauté the vegetables in 2-3 Tblsp oil until soft (This takes a good while). Add enough ketchup to make the mixture into a paste. Cook a bit to slightly caramelize the mixture. Add water to soup consistency. (You can substitute pork broth (from a pork roast) for water) Add sugar, vinegar, salt, and pepper, to taste. Bring to a boil. Serve with sour cream and boiled potatoes.

White Bean Soup with Carrot and Rutabaga

A dense, creamy soup with a slightly sweet taste. Can be made ahead, refrigerated, and then reheated.

2 Tblsp unsalted butter
2 medium onions, chopped
2-3 carrots, thinly sliced
1 ½ cups peeled and cubed rutabaga
1 ½ tsp salt (start with less than this if you are using canned salty beans)
Black pepper
¼ - ½ tsp nutmeg
½ tsp dry mustard
2 cups dry navy beans, soaked in water overnight; or 4 cups canned beans, drained

Sauté onions, carrots, rutabaga, and seasonings in butter over medium heat in a large pot until the onions are translucent.

If using dry beans: add the beans and enough water to cover everything. Simmer lightly for several hours, until the beans are completely soft and the rutabaga has softened so much that it has largely dissolved. Add more water as needed during cooking, but not too much – the soup should remain fairly dense.

If using canned beans: Add water to cover the vegetables, and simmer until rutabagas are fork tender. Add beans and enough water to just cover them, and continue simmering until beans are warmed and rutabaga has dissolved.

Adjust the salt when you are done. It's important to cook the soup until the rutabagas have completely softened and mostly melted down; this yields a nice creamy base.