

# Two Onion Farm

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## Week of October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005

**Brussels Sprouts.** These cabbage relatives thrive in the cold weather of fall. The plants often survive until early or mid December, and exposure to cold weather actually sweetens the sprouts. While they are not universally relished, we've found some nice ways to prepare them. In general, mustardy, sweet flavors complement them well.

Sometimes we steam the sprouts and marinate them in the refrigerator with a dressing of 6 Tbsp olive oil, 2 Tbsp good mustard, 4 Tbsp red wine vinegar, 2 tsp maple syrup, salt and pepper. (We've mentioned this dressing before – it also makes a good marinade for steamed broccoli and cauliflower).

Another method to prepare Brussels sprouts is to cook them with chopped onion, crushed garlic, and olive oil over low heat, covered, until the Brussels sprouts are nearly tender. Then stir in a good generous amount of mustard – enough to coat every sprout. Continue cooking a few more minutes until the sprouts are done. This is simple but very, very good.

Store Brussels sprouts bagged in the refrigerator. They'll last 1-2 weeks.

**Rutabaga.** This is the large root with tan-purple skin. Rutabagas are a classic winter root vegetable and they have many uses in soups and stews. They're often peeled, cubed, boiled, mashed together with salt, pepper, potatoes and/or sautéed onions, and served with butter.

We generally prepare rutabagas this way: peel them and slice them thinly. 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. We use the highest and lowest shelves in our oven, where the temperatures are hottest. Roast 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. This recipe is fantastic; it changed the way we think about rutabagas.

Rutabaga will store for months in the refrigerator with little or no decline in flavor. Keep it in a sealed bag.

**Spinach.** Spinach salads can be delicious. Try a salad of spinach leaves, sliced pears (yes, pears), creamy goat cheese, sliced red onion, and chopped walnuts. It's wonderful. A good simple dressing for this and most spinach salads is 1 cup olive oil, 5 Tbsp balsamic vinegar, 1/2 tsp salt. That's a lot of dressing – either store it in the fridge or reduce the recipe.

Like any green, spinach is fairly perishable and should be used within a week or so. Store it bagged in the fridge.

**Squash.** Sunshine squash. This squash is scarlet on the outside and has orange, moist, sweet flesh. Like any squash, it can be baked and eaten plain or with butter. It also excels in soups, breads, pies, and so forth. We've included a good recipe for an Indian Squash Pea Soup. We use Sunshine squash, and other similar squash, in any "pumpkin" pie or bread recipe. We simply bake the squash and then scoop the flesh out of the rind and use it in place of canned pumpkin puree. Since Sunshine has smooth, stringless flesh, we've never found a need to actually puree the flesh before mixing it into batter. However you

may need to adjust the amount of liquid in the batter slightly depending on how moist the squash is.

The squash is fairly large. If eating it all at once is not feasible, you can bake the entire squash, use a portion of it, and then scoop out the remaining flesh and refrigerate or freeze it. Frozen, it stores very well.

Sunshine squash will generally store well for 1-3 months. Store all squash in a dry place, outside the refrigerator. The ideal temperature for storing squash is cool - 50-55 degrees. But don't store them where they could freeze.

**Broccoli or Cauliflower.** See the discussion of Brussels sprouts for a dressing which makes a good marinade for steamed, chilled broccoli or cauliflower florets. Although not as perishable as some leafy greens, broccoli and cauliflower don't store very well and should be eaten within 7-10 days.

**Carrots.** These will store for months in the fridge, and will actually become sweeter.

**Leek.** For a nice side dish, try slicing 1 large leek and 2-4 carrots. Fry them in butter, salt, and pepper until they are tender and then add ¼ cup sliced or slivered almonds. Bagged leeks can store for several weeks, or even over a month in the fridge. With long storage the outer layer or two can become slimy. Just peel them off.

**Onion.** Yellow cooking onions. These can store for several months if kept in a dry, cool place.

**Beets.** Beet roots (without the greens) are another vegetable that will store for months in the fridge, although the sweetness tends to decline with long storage. The greens are perishable and should be eaten within a week or so.

**Special Offers.** **Beets** – Round Red or Golden: 5 lbs. for \$3.75. **Cabbage** – Green or Red: 50¢ / lb., minimum order of 10 lbs. (A cabbage head typically weighs 2 to 5 lbs.)

**Carrots:** 10 lbs. for \$7.50. **Celeriac:** 55¢ / lb.,

minimum order 5 lbs. (Each celeriac root typically weighs 1 to 1½ lbs.) **Yellow Onions:** 10 lbs. for \$7.50. **Radish** – Daikon or Black Spanish: 5 lbs. for \$3.75. **Winter Squash** – Acorn, Buttercup, Butternut, Delicata, Kabocha, Sugarloaf, Sunshine, Sweet Dumpling, and others: 50¢ / lb, minimum order of 20 lbs. (Types of squash differ greatly in weight and storage life. We can discuss the best types for you)

## Indian Squash Pea Soup

1 cup dry yellow split peas  
pinch turmeric  
3 bay leaves  
1 yellow onion, minced  
4 star anise sections  
2 pounds sunshine, buttercup, or butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1" cubes  
1 ½ tsp salt  
4 Tbsp unsalted butter – you can substitute a mild vegetable oil such as canola oil for a portion of this.  
1 ½ tsp whole cumin seeds  
2 tsp dry ginger  
1/3 cup packed basil leaves, cut into thin strips  
OR 4 tsp dry basil

To soften the peas and keep the rest of the cooking time short, we like to pre boil the peas: place them in about a quart of water, bring to a rolling boil, and remove from heat for a few hours. Then continue with the rest of the recipe. You can skip this pre-boiling but the actual cooking time will then be a bit longer.

Add turmeric, bay leaves, onion, and star anise to the pot of water and peas. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer 20-30 minutes. Add squash and salt and cook until peas and squash are both soft. During cooking add water as needed to prevent sticking. Set soup aside.

Heat butter in a small frying pan until it is hot. Add cumin seeds and cook until seeds turn a darker brown (about 20 seconds). Add ginger and basil, reduce heat, and cook for 30-45 seconds. Pour butter and spice mixture over soup and stir once or twice to streak spice mixture into soup. Serve warm.