

WINTER CSA VEGETABLE GUIDE



Welcome to the Rainshadow Organics Winter Vegetable CSA!

This document is a guide to most of the vegetables you will find in your winter CSA.

- Use the pictures to identify something you might not know.
- Get some ideas on how to prepare, prep, and store your CSA vegetables.
- Find some new recipe ideas.
- Discover tips and tricks for keeping your vegetables fresher longer.

We hope you enjoy it!



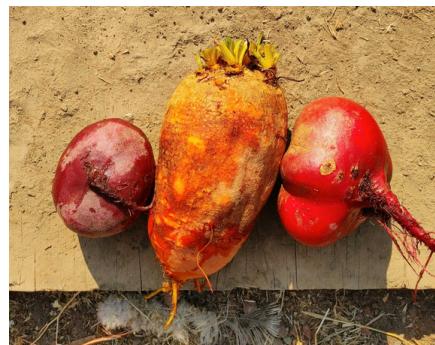
Beets

Beets come in many colors -- red, gold, pink and white. In the winter, you will receive storage beets. Their greens are removed, but that sweet and earthy taste remains.

To store: Store the beet roots, with the rootlets (or "tails") attached, unwashed, in a plastic bag in the crisper bin of your refrigerator. They will keep for several weeks.

To prep: Just before cooking, scrub beets well and remove any scraggly leaves and rootlets. If your recipe calls for raw beets, peel them with a knife or a veggie peeler, then grate or cut them according to the recipe. To remove the skins, you can roast them in foil or boil them, and the peels will slip right off.

To cook: Bake, boil or steam until done. Cool them in ice water or let them come to room temperature. Remove peels. Alternatively, you can chop into cubes and roast with other root vegetables, garlic, and olive oil.



Cabbage (Green)

To store: Place dry, unwashed cabbage heads in the refrigerator, preferably in the vegetable bin. The outer leaves may eventually get floppy or yellowish, but they can be removed and discarded to reveal fresh inner leaves. Store for up to 3 months!



To prep: Rinse the cabbage under cold water before use. Cut cabbage head first into quarters, then diagonally across the wedge. Be sure to remove the stem end and triangular core near the base.

To use: Eat raw in salads, steamed, braised or fried. Turn raw cabbage into coleslaw or sauerkraut. Roast cabbage steaks/slices at 400 F drizzled with olive oil and salt. Or try stir-frying shredded cabbage in olive oil until wilted with a little bit of minced garlic.

Carrots

Winter storage carrots have their greens removed and just get sweeter with time. They are often larger, bumpier, and harrier then what you might see in the summer growing season.



To store: Refrigerate these carrots in a plastic bag. You can also store them in a bin of water (like celery) to keep them crisp, changing out the water every few days.

To prep: Organic carrots don't need to be peeled! But storage carrots definitely improve with scrubbing. Boil 2-inch cubed carrots in rapidly boiling salt water, uncovered, for 7-10 minutes. Slice and sauté in stir fries. Chop and roast with other root vegetables

Celeriac

Celeriac, also known as celery root, has a flavor like celery. It is the same species as the celery you would put peanut butter on, but has been selected over time in the agriculture world to prioritize its bulb. It won't win any beauty contests, but, once peeled, celeriac will cook like a potato and add a taste of celery to whatever you are cooking.



To prep: Soak the root in warm water to loosen dirt and scrub with a brush. Peel skin with a sharp knife. You may need to remove the core if it appears pithy or hollow. Peeled celeriac will darken when exposed to air. To slow the darkening, toss with lemon juice or soak in water.

To use: Use in place of celery as a base for soups or casseroles. Add raw celeriac in grated beet, carrot, or apple salads. Or serve raw celeriac with a creamy dipping sauce. Combine celeriac with other winter roots in stews and gratins. Add cooked celeriac to mashed potatoes: peel and quarter celeriac, then boil until soft, 20-30 minutes, before mashing it into potatoes.

Chard

Swiss chard has expansive, pocketed leaves with stems in a spectrum of colors: red, white, green, yellow. It is actually in the beet family but doesn't develop a bulb. Its leaves are more tender and delicate than other greens. Eat small leaves raw in salads and blanch, steam, or sauté larger leaves.



To store: Keep dry, unwashed greens in a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator up to 2 weeks.

To prep: Wash leaves in basin of water to remove grit. Remove the thicker stems by folding the leaves down the center and cutting out the stem. Stack several leaves on top of each other and slice or dice into 1-inch wide ribbons or squares.

To use: Add uncooked greens to a mixed green salad. Steam stem pieces 8-10 minutes, and leaves 4-6 minutes. Or sauté greens until tender in a large sauté pan with olive oil, a pinch of salt, and garlic or onion. Watch for color to brighten as this signals they are done. Serve cooked chard alone as a side dish or use them in soup or with pasta, beans, rice, or potatoes. Chard also goes great in stir-fries or in any recipe calling for spinach.

Garlic

To store: Like onions, garlic can be eaten fresh or dried. Dried, cured garlic appears in August and can be kept for several months in a dark, dry, well-ventilated place at a cool room temperature. Warm temperatures will encourage the cured garlic to sprout.



To prep: Remove the papery skin and base. Mince or chop as desired.

To cook: For garlic aroma, try rubbing a cut clove around the rim of a baking dish. Try roasting garlic: cut tops off garlic to expose cloves, brush with olive oil, and bake for 1 hour at 350 degrees. Squeeze garlic out of its skins and spread on crusty bread.

Kale

Kale is a member of the brassica family. While we will grow different varieties of kale for the winter CSA, you will primarily see Siberian Kale: sweet, tender, delicious!



To store: Place kale unwashed, wrapped in a sealed plastic bag in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Best used very fresh, but may last for a week.

To prep: Wash leaves in basin of water to remove grit. If your greens have thick stems, remove them before chopping. Fold each leaf in half and slice out the stem. Then stack the leaves up and slice them diagonally into 1-inch-wide strips.

To use: Sauté in olive oil. Use in soups, spaghetti sauce, pesto, quiche, or kale chips. You can also eat the stems. Find a hot vinaigrette recipe and pour over kale for a lovely winter salad.

Kohlrabi

This plant was developed by crossing a cabbage with a turnip! The edible part of the plant is an enlarged section of the stem that develops just above the ground. It has a crisp interior like a potato.



To store: Store kohlrabi globe and leaves separately. The bulb will last for 2 weeks refrigerated in a plastic bag. Wrap leaves and stalks in a plastic bag and keep in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator.

To prep: Rinse under cold running water just before use. Cut the outer skin off with a knife. Trim off the remains of the stalks and root. Grate, slice, or chop as desired.

To cook: Cut raw kohlrabi bulb into sticks for a refreshing addition to a raw vegetable tray or grate it for salads. Try raw kohlrabi smeared with peanut butter. Lightly boil, steam or bake it, or add it to stews and stir-fries. Young kohlrabi leaves can be used in recipes calling for greens.

Leeks

To store: Cut off the green tops (save those greens and put them in your veggie freezer bag to make veggie stock). Loosely wrap unwashed leek bottoms (with roots attached) in a plastic bag and store them in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator where they will keep for 2 weeks.



To prep: Cut the leek about 1 inch above the white part, where the leaves begin changing from dark to light green. Save the unused greens; they'll give great flavor to your next vegetable stock. Slit the leek lengthwise and soak it in lukewarm water for 15 minutes. Fan the leaves under running water to dislodge dirt, then pat dry. chop the white part of the allium finely.

To use: Use leeks in salads, casseroles and soups or wherever you'd use onions. They can be braised, boiled grilled, or steamed.

Onions

You will get a variety of onions over the course of the winter: shallots, red, yellow, white. These delicious orbs will vary in perfection, but will always be full of onion flavor and goodness!



To store: Storage onions want to be kept in any cool, dark, dry place with adequate air circulation for several months. Do not store them next to potatoes.

To prep: Peel the onion's skin and cut off the roots and top. Save your papery onion skins in a bag in your freezer reserved for making vegetable stock. If you encounter a little rot in your onion, just cut away the bad sections. If there are a few black spots, rinse the whole onion in cool water and rub the spots off with your thumbs.

Parsnip

Parsnips have a nutty-sweet taste and a tender-hearty texture. They are like an earthy, tangy carrot.

To store: Trim off parsnip tops and refrigerate unwashed in a loosely-wrapped, or perforated plastic bag for 2 weeks in the crisper drawer.



To prep: Young parsnips don't need to be peeled. Simply scrub them under cold running water. Larger parsnips should be peeled, and you can cut out the core if it seems woody.

To use: Boil 1-inch chunks for 8 minutes until tender, then season with butter or oil, salt, and pepper for a side dish. Grate parsnips raw into salads or cut into sticks for dipping. Bake them in a cake or quick bread. Sauté them with butter and parsley, roast with whole cloves or unpeeled garlic, or puree well-boiled parsnips. Add them into soups. Bake or roast with other root veggies on a cookie sheet with olive oil.

Potato

To store: Keep unwashed potatoes in a cool, dark, dry place, such as a loosely closed paper bag in a cupboard. Light turns them green, and proximity to onions causes them to sprout. Don't put them in the refrigerator, as low temperatures convert the starch to sugars.



To prep: Scrub well and cut off any sprouts or green skin. Peeling is a matter of preference. In soups, the skins may separate from the flesh and float in the broth, but when baked, pan-fried or roasted, the skins acquire a crisp, crunchy texture.

To cook: Boil potatoes in water for 20-30 minutes until tender. If desired, mash them. Use potatoes in soups, hash browns, and salads. Roast sliced or whole small potatoes with fresh herbs, salt, and olive oil at 400 degrees until tender, about 20 minutes.

Radish

These won't make an appearance until early spring, but these zesty, crunchy red or purple globes will spice up any salad. Add the radish greens to sautés for a fresh greens option.

To store: Remove radish leaves if they are still attached. Store the unwashed greens in a loosely wrapped plastic bag in the crisper bin of your refrigerator. Store radish roots unwashed in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for 1 week.

To prep: Scrub radishes well. Trim off the stem and rootlets.



To use: Eat radishes raw with a sprinkle of salt. Grate radishes into slaws and salads. Try small young radish leaves in salads or scrambled eggs. Blanch whole radishes in boiling, salt water for 5-10 minutes, or steam them until just tender, 8-12 minutes. Top with butter, salt, and pepper or with a vinaigrette. They're also great grilled and pickled.

Scallion/Green Onions

To store: Chop off the top inch of the tender green tips and stand the green onions in an inch of water in a tall container covered loosely with a Ziplock bag, refreshing the water every 3 days.



To prep: Remove roots. Chop the leaves and stem before cooking.

To use: You can eat the entire scallion. Rinse scallions in cold water to remove anything that's floppy. Use chopped scallions as a garnish; they are less pungent. The minced greens of scallions are a good substitute for chives. Use them in stir-fry. Use scallions in almost any recipe calling for onions, raw or cooked. They are excellent in soups and stew.

Spinach

To store: Keep dry, unwashed greens in a sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator up to 2 weeks.

To prep: Wash leaves in basin of lukewarm water to remove grit. Spin dry.

To cook: Add uncooked spinach to a mixed green salad. Blanch spinach until it wilts, 2-4 minutes, or steam for 5-8 minutes. Saute greens until tender in a covered pot or large sauté pan with olive oil, a pinch of salt, and garlic or onion. Watch for color to brighten as this signals it is done.



Sweet potato

To store: Keep unwashed sweet potatoes in a cool, dark, place, such as a loosely closed paper bag in a cupboard, and use them within a few weeks. Do not store sweet potatoes in the refrigerator.

To prep: Scrub them well. The skin can be eaten, but peel them if you will be eating them raw. If you will be pureeing or mashing them, bake or boil them whole and then remove the skins.

To cook: To bake, place whole potatoes (poked with a few holes) each wrapped in foil in a pan and bake at 400 degrees for 45 minutes until the centers are soft. Boil whole sweet potatoes in salted water until very tender, 25-40 minutes. Then mash. Chop and add to soups or molé burritos. Try raw sweet potatoes cut into sticks for dipping, or grate them into salads.

To freeze: Place puree into ice cube containers and freeze. When frozen, put cubes in Ziplock freezer bags.



Salad Turnip

Turnips are a root vegetable, related to arugula and radishes, which are members of the mustard family. Large or old turnips can be unpleasantly "hot" if not cooked properly, but younger turnips add great zip to dishes. They are best in the fall or spring, when they are small and sweet.



To store: Remove the greens from the turnips and store in a plastic bag to use within 3 days. The turnip roots should be stored in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer of your fridge for up to a week.

To prep: Cut off the green tops (which can be eaten as well). Wash and cut the white roots into wedges or slices.

To cook: Serve raw with dip in a veggie tray. Or grate and add them to a salad. Turnips are delicious when roasted with other root vegetables (like carrot, potatoes, rutabaga, garlic). Add a turnip or two to your favorite mashed potato recipe. Or add them into soups and stews.

Winter Squash

We grow a variety of winter squash and you can expect to see different varieties in your CSA veggie share during the course of the winter.



To store: Store in a cool, dry, dark place at around 50 degrees, but make sure they do not freeze. Under the best conditions, they should keep for 3-4 months. They get sweeter in storage as the starch converts to sugar. Once cut, you can wrap them in plastic and store them in the refrigerator for 5 to 7 days.

To use: To bake, slice in half lengthwise, scoop out seeds, and place facedown on cookie sheet. Add 1/2 inch of water to pan. Bake at 400 degrees for 45 minutes to an hour until shells are soft and starting to collapse. Remove from shells, and fill with butter, brown sugar, maple syrup, seasoning or fillings.

To freeze: Simply cook squash and mash or puree it. Then pour it into ice cube trays and freeze. Pop the frozen cubes into freezer Ziplock bags.