



SWALLOWTAIL FARM

All the Food that's Fit to Eat

Week of December 2nd, 2009

THIS WEEKS BASKET



Sweet potato
Arugula
Salad mix
Baby carrots
Young turnips
D'avignon Radishes
Ruby red grapefruit
Chinese honey tangerine
Lemon
Rosemary
Jalapeño peppers



RECIPES:

Ginger-Glazed Young Turnips

1/2 tsp salt
1 bunch young turnips, sliced
1/3 cup sugar or honey
1/8 cup white vinegar
2 tsp grated ginger
2 tbs cornstarch
1/4 cup apple cider
1/2 cup raisins
2 tbs finely chopped parsley

1. Boil 2 quarts water in large pot. Add dash of salt and young turnips. Return to boil, cover and reduce heat. Simmer until tender but not mushy, 10-15 minutes. Remove turnips and set aside.

2. Transfer 1/2 cup of hot cooking water to medium pot. Stir in sugar or honey, vinegar, and ginger to taste. Add salt.

3. Combine cornstarch and cider in a small bowl, let stand until cornstarch dissolves.

4. Place pot with ginger mixture over medium heat. Stir in the cider mixture and let simmer, stirring constantly, until smooth and thickened, 2-3 minutes.

5. Remove from heat. Stir in raisins and sliced turnips, continue to stir for 2 minutes, until thick gravylike consistency. Let stand for 2 minutes. Serve over jasmine rice.

Scallion & Orange Salsa

1/2 bunch radishes
2 large oranges peeled, seeded, & diced
1 tbs grapefruit juice
1 tbs lemon juice
2 tbs fresh cilantro
1-2 tbs finely chopped chile pepper
1/4 tsp ground cumin

Stir all ingredients in a medium bowl.
Serve immediately or refrigerate up to 2 days.

It's supposed to thunderstorm tomorrow. It's supposed to rain and blow and crack and lightning should fissure and split the sky wide open. So we harvested today instead of tomorrow, so that we aren't out there drenched and cutting greens and pulling radishes in utter muck. We won't have any heads of lettuce this week, because the little cold snap that we had was just enough to nip the tops off of the buttercrunch heads the other night. And our collards got burned a smidge, so we'll wait another week for them as well. We covered about 18,000 square feet of ground with frost cloth during the cold, and the night before we covered, there was ice all over the broccoli and collards and cabbage, and frost all over the lettuces and arugula and covering the grass around the field. Scared the bejesus out of me when I walked out over the crunching grass Friday morning. I started spraying the plants with water to melt the ice before the sun hit, but it just iced up more. Even so, most everything is just fine. It's just that it's beginning to sink in how much of a cooperative exercise with Mama Nature this is. We do our best to mitigate risks, to plant with the moon, with the seasons, to work in the morning, to anticipate rain, to use the biodynamic calendar, to interpret the signs... And yet, it's still such a mystery, such a wonder to feel that no matter what steps we take to take care of the plants, we're still at the mercy of forces beyond our ken. Too little rain, the plants wither. Too much, they drown. Too hot, their seeds won't even germinate, and they wilt under the heat. Too cold, and they burn and wilt; their cells burst. Without wind, the air is stagnant, and doesn't stimulate growth. A good winter gale, and the top-heavy plants, the ones we've invested the most space and time in, blow over and uproot. Such a balance, such a fine line between blessing and bane...

That's one way to look at it. Another is this: you put a seed in the earth, and it grows. Miracle of miracles, the little fleck of brown, a little capsule of earth's wisdom manifest; the seed knows its des-

tiny, it will become itself because it is what it is. The carrot seed, though nearly identical to the fennel seed, or the caraway seed, or the dill seed, or easily mistaken for a robust celery seed, it knows only how to grow a fine bushy green mop, and a root as orange as fire and tasty as sin. (and usually quite straight, though this week

you'll see the consequence of transplanting carrots...) Anyhow, it grows. And we eat.

I wanted to talk about pet food for a moment. Because the USDA won't allow the sale of meat or eggs or dairy unless it has been produced at a facility that is licensed, it's made for this big running joke - we're eating pet food now. It is a bona fide chore to be certified by the USDA, and way beyond the means of most, so in essence this cuts out about 99% of local meat and dairy goods in any given locale. All of this food being produced locally and at a sustainable scale is no longer fit for human consumption, and is only saleable as pet food. This includes the organically produced eggs that our friend's hens are laying, and the pasture-raised bacon, ham and sausage that we offer from Cognito Farm, the milk and the goat cheese from Glades Ridge; all of this is, to the USDA, is pet food, and so we oblige them and label it such, and wink at each other, and enjoy it nonetheless. It's reached a point of absurdity, so that I think it approaches marijuana prohibition in its inflexibility: Who doesn't know someone who smokes herb? But it's illegal, and so is selling this good food as food, so we have to carry on as purveyors

of fine dog and cat treats... So until the day that the USDA begins to tailor its regulations to support the small, sustainable farms this country so desperately needs, instead of ConAgra and Monsanto and Tyson and ADM and the rest of that truly criminal lot, let's sit down with Fido and Garfield and enjoy the cuss out of this meal. Amen.

Noah Shitama
Swallowtail Farmer

ADEPTLY



ADAPTING

Food is more than a collection of vitamins and minerals; Food is a potential carrier for forces that build up our thinking, feeling, and willing. *Farmer John's Cookbook*