



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 727 ~ April 6, 2020 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Spring 2019

Harvest lists are online.

Back Page Recipes

- Beet and Walnut Dip
- Beet Sushi
- Nut and Fruit Slaw
- Rutabaga Fries

Find many more recipes on our website.

COVID-19 Updates

We are continuously adapting our protocol to make our CSA pickups as safe as possible for you and our volunteers. Please see the "Covid-19 Update" on the side bar of our website and read your weekly pickup email for the latest details on how we're adapting. We ask that you:

- Stay home if you or someone in your household is sick.
- Keep a distance of 6 feet between you and others.
- Try to only send one person to pick up your CSA share.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Wear a mask if you can.

Waitlist

There's a big demand for local food right now! We've capped CSA membership for the time being to ensure that we can prevent overcrowding and continue to serve our current members. We have a waitlist in place for those who want to join.

Rooting for Rutabagas



The rutabaga (*Brassica napobrassica*), a relatively newcomer in the world of cruciferous vegetables, is a root vegetable that looks very much like a turnip with yellow-orange flesh and ridges at its neck. It is thought to have evolved from a cross between a wild cabbage and a turnip. The earliest records of rutabaga's existence are from the seventeenth century in Southern Europe, where they were first eaten by humans as well as used for animal fodder. It's curious that throughout history, animals were often fed the healthiest food – food thought to be inappropriate for human consumption. In some European

countries, rutabagas are often a food of last resort because of their association with the food shortages of World Wars I and II. In America, rutabagas were first cultivated in the northern parts of the country in the early 1800s. Today, Canada and the northern states are the greatest producers of the rutabaga.

Because rutabagas thrive best in colder climates, they became popular in Scandinavia, and especially in Sweden, the country that earned them the name "*swedes*" and "*Swedish turnips*." In fact, the word rutabaga comes from the old Swedish word "*rotabagge*", although they are currently called "*kålrot*" in Sweden. In England, Wales and some other commonwealth nations, rutabagas are still called "*swedes*."

Although this beta carotene- rich vegetable has been grown and marketed in our country for nearly 200 years, the rutabaga remains an uncommon food in American dining. It's actually a great-tasting vegetable with a delicate sweetness and flavor that hints of the light freshness of cabbage and turnip. With its easy preparation and versatility, great nutrition, and excellent flavor, the rutabaga can easily become an endearing family favorite. Rutabagas can be used in any recipe that calls for root vegetables. Try roasting, steaming, and frying them, or use them as a flavor-enhancer in your soups, stews, and casseroles. They are also quite delicious raw: they can be sliced, diced, grated and included in salads and coleslaw. If all else fails, you can't go wrong boiling and mashing them with potatoes, milk, and butter.

Rutabaga roots store up to one month in the refrigerator. The greens are edible and flavorful but don't keep as long and should be stored separately.

If you haven't already joined the Tucson CSA Facebook Group, now is a great time to do so. It's a lovely way to connect with other Tucson CSA members while we shelter in place. facebook.com/groups/tucsoncsacommunity

RECIPES

Beet and Walnut Dip (Veg, GF)

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is a great dip or spread for bread or pita. Top with fresh herbs and chopped olives, if you like. For color, golden or red beets would be best here. Roasting them whole maintains the color and enhances the sweetness better than steaming. You can keep this dairy free by using soft tofu or cashew cream instead of the yogurt then add a splash of lemon or vinegar to add tartness.

1 bunch beets, roasted, peeled and roughly chopped
3 cloves green garlic
1 cup walnuts, toasted
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/4 cup plain yogurt or sour cream
Salt to taste

Process garlic and walnuts in a food processor or blender until finely ground. Add beets and olive oil and process until smooth. In a medium bowl, combine beet mixture with yogurt or sour cream. Salt to taste. Store in refrigerator covered with a layer of oil for up to one week.

Beet Sushi (Vegan, GF)

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

The vibrant color of cooked beets looks a lot like the raw tuna used in sushi rolls. Tossed with a little bit of vinegar and sugar, beets provide an unexpected but delicious vegetarian alternative to fish. You can make actual sushi rolls, which require a bit of manual dexterity and fancy chopping techniques, or you can toss all the ingredients together in a salad and simply garnish with crumbled nori.

2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
2 teaspoons sugar
2 ½ cups cooked short grain rice
4+ sheets nori (seaweed wrappers)
1 bunch beets, cooked, peeled and cut into ½ inch strips
2-3 baby carrots, sliced into matchsticks
½ bunch green onions, sliced in half lengthwise
½ bunch shingiku
2 teaspoons soy sauce
1 teaspoon wasabi paste

Mix the vinegar and sugar together, and stir until sugar is dissolved. Toss half of the mixture with the cooked rice and the other half with the cooked beets. Assemble rolls by spreading a thin layer of rice over the top ½ of a sheet of nori. Add the vegetables across the top half of the rice, then roll up, starting at the top end where the rice comes all the way to the edge of the nori. Ideally, you want the rice on the top of the roll to just meet the rice where it ends in the middle as you roll up your sushi. A sushi mat is helpful but not necessary. (There are more detailed instructions at various places on the web.) Seal the edge with water. Use a very sharp knife to cut into bite size pieces. Mix wasabi paste with soy sauce. If making a simple salad, use this for a dressing. If making rolls, use this mixture as a dipping sauce.

Nut and Fruit Slaw (Veg, GF)

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

One of our members recommended a different approach to making slaws, adding cheese, dried fruit and some sort of toasted nut to a slaw of cabbage or shredded root vegetables. Use whatever combination seems most appealing to you, and add fresh herbs if available. With a sturdy salad like this, you can make extra and keep it in the fridge to eat all week.

1 quart finely sliced cabbage or root vegetables
1 tablespoon sour citrus juice or apple cider vinegar
2 tablespoons good olive oil or nut oil
1/2 cup toasted nuts, chopped
1/2 cup crumbled feta
1/2 cup dried currants, cherries, cranberries or chopped dates
Salt and red chile flakes, to taste
Mixed fresh herbs, if available

Mix oil, vinegar, salt and chile flakes into veggies, tossing well to coat. Taste and adjust seasoning as needed. Let sit for at least 30 minutes. Add nuts, cheese, dried fruit and herbs and mix gently before serving.

Rutabaga Fries (Vegan, GF)

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Like other root vegetables, rutabaga is great baked. Try making fries with your share and you won't be disappointed. These fries will be more like sweet potato fries, in that they will never get perfectly crisp like a potato. To help them crisp better, switch them to broil right when they are almost tender. That will give them more color and a better texture than just baking.

1 share rutabaga, peeled and cut into French fry strips
Oil to coat
Salt and pepper
Pre blended curry powder, paprika, cayenne or any other spice mix you like

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Toss rutabaga with oil, salt and pepper and spices. Spread in a single layer on a baking sheet and place in oven. Cook about 10-20 minutes (depending on the thickness of your slice). Once almost tender, switch oven to broil and cook until nicely browned. Serve immediately.