



Hendrick House Farm: A Field Guide for Chefs

Written and Compiled with Personal Photography and Recipes

by

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For Jeff Kindhart

"Pipe dreams" - The Guide You Always Talked About Writing

From the Field

Banana Pepper

Banana peppers get their name from their curved shape and yellowish color, which looks like a banana. They have a tangy taste which is mild. Banana peppers are usually green but can be red or orange as they mature on the plant. They can be sweet or hot and the hot varieties are called wax or Hungarian peppers.



Sweet Banana Pepper

Sweet banana peppers, like the name, are a sweeter variety and can be easily substituted for a bell pepper. They can range from yellow to orange to red as the plant matures.

Hot Banana Pepper

Hot banana peppers have a mild heat and the skin has a waxier texture than that of a sweet banana pepper. These peppers are often referred to as wax peppers.

Inferno Hot Banana Pepper

Inferno hot banana peppers are spicier than hot banana peppers with the Scoville units reaching up to 4,000. These peppers are still considered mild when compared to jalapenos or other chili peppers.



How Banana Peppers Affect Your Health

Banana peppers are very low in sodium, fat and calories, therefore they are good for weight loss. They are also a good source of fiber, potassium and vitamins A and C. People add them in salads to make it more filling.



Proper Storage

Banana peppers are best stored unwashed in a paper bag in the refrigerator. To freeze: wash peppers thoroughly and make sure they are completely dry. Cut down to desired size and put them in freezer bags or wrap them tightly in foil or plastic wrap. Put in the freezer.



Why Grow This Crop?

Banana peppers are a large producing crop during the late summer and early fall. They are most commonly pickled allowing the product to be used all year long.



A Bit of History

Banana peppers are members of the chili pepper family. They originated from South America.



Pickled banana peppers are one of the most common ways to eat this pepper. Once pickled they can be used for Philly cheesesteaks, burgers, taco bar, salad bar, pasta salads and many other ways. You can pickle them whole or slice them. Because this is a mild pepper, leave the seeds in. Prepare your pickling solution in a pot by adding; equal parts white vinegar and water, two whole garlic cloves, fresh dill (or celery salt/mustard seeds), a small amount of crushed red pepper and a tiny bit of salt. Bring pickling liquid to a boil and pour over top of banana peppers. Cool in an ice bath in the refrigerator. Store in an airtight container.



Like most peppers, banana peppers are also great stuffed. There are many different ways to stuff these peppers. Before stuffing them cut off the top and scoop out the inner core with seeds. You can either slice them down the middle, spreading open face, or leave them whole and stuff them from the top. If the skin is waxy, roast them on a stove and peel the skin off. You can be as simple or creative as you desire when making your stuffing. Banana peppers can be stuffed by simply using seasoned meat (I prefer ground pork) or you can add potatoes, beans, cheese and/or salsa. These peppers are also great bacon wrapped.

From the Field

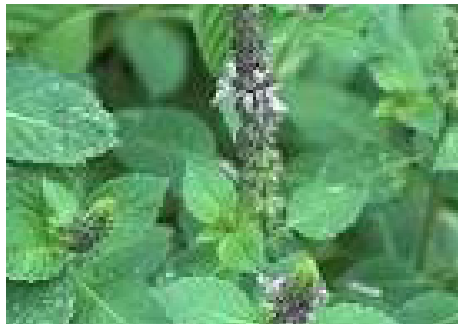
Basil

Basil, also known as the “king of herbs”, is used in many types of cooking. Depending on the variety, the leaves can have a range of flavors from licorice (anise) to sweet. There are many types of basil: Genovese, lemon, Thai, purple, cinnamon and holy basil, just to name a few. The flowers of the plant are also edible and are often times used for garnish.



Genovese Basil

Genovese basil is one of the most commonly used varieties. It has a sweet flavor and is particularly used in spreads and pesto sauces.



Thai Basil

Thai basil is thought to originate in Southeast Asia and is a common ingredient in Thai and other Southeast Asian cuisine. Thai basil leaves have a strong licorice (anise) flavor and is slightly spicy.



Holy Basil

Holy basil is primarily used for medicinal purposes. It is commonly referred to as an “elixir of life”. The plant is used for herbal tea.



How Basil Affects Your Health

Basil has been known to clear up breakouts. The oil from the herb's leaves helps to fight bacteria that causes pimples. Holy basil has antianxiety effects due to its lowering levels of cortisol, which is a hormone secreted from your body when you are stressed.



Proper Storage

If you have basil with the leaves still attached to the stem, stick the stem in a vase of water. If you only have the leaves, wrap them in a damp-paper towel and place them in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.



Why Grow This Crop?

Basil is a hardy, annual plant, which means it does not go dormant in the winter and comes back in the spring. It is one of the most commonly used herbs, mostly used in Italian cuisine. It is easy to harvest and you can get multiple harvests off one plant.



A Bit of History

Basil is believed to have been around for almost 5,000 years. Historians believe basil originated in India. It is most used in Italian and Southeastern cuisines.



How To Chiffonade Basil



From the Field

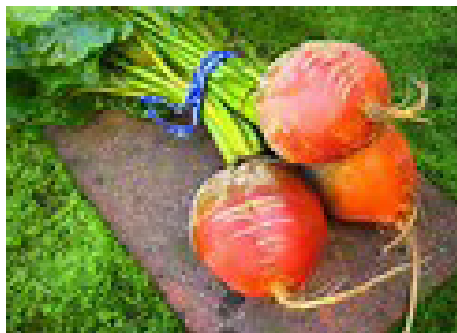
Beets

Both the top and bottom of the beet are edible. The main part of the beet grows underground and is considered the root. Other names for the beet include: table beet, garden beet, red beet and golden beet. Their leaves are called beet greens and are similar to Swiss chard and spinach.



Red Beet

Beets are very common and easy to grow. Red beets have a deep red color on the inside and a purplish outer skin. Red beets have a very earthy flavor.



Golden Beet

Golden beets have a higher sugar content and are therefore sweeter. Golden beet flavor can be compared to a carrot. Like their name, golden beets are yellowish gold on the inside with a deep golden/orange skin.



Sugar Beet

Table sugar and other refined sugars mainly come from this variety of beet. Sugar beets became popular because they can be grown in many different climates, unlike sugarcane.



How Beets Affect Your Health

Beets are considered a “Super Food”. They are rich in antioxidants and the juice can be used to reduce blood pressure. History has also shown the beet root was used for a variety of conditions regarding blood and digestive issues.



Proper Storage

Storing beets: store beets in the refrigerator without washing. To freeze: wash beets then remove the tops, leaving at least ½ inch stem. Cook the beets until tender, peel and cut down to liking. FYI, beets are much easier to peel when they are hot! Place beets in airtight container and put in freezer.



There are many ways to eat beets besides braising, roasting, salt roasting and boiling. Toss shaved raw beets on a salad with potatoes and goat cheese. Make a beet vinaigrette by pureeing beets with honey, red wine vinegar, garlic, salt and pepper. Emulsify with olive oil and pour over salad.



Why Grow This Crop?

Beets are a root vegetable (meaning the root is the main part that is consumed). They are grown in the early spring or fall and store well for winter.



Did You Know?

Wine was frequently colored with beet juice during the middle of the 19th century. A component from the roots, called betanin, is used industrially as red food coloring.



Beet fries and beet chips can also make a great snack or side dish. Cut raw beets into matchstick shapes or slice thinly. Dust with cornstarch and fry at 340/350 degrees F. Look for crispy on the outside and tender on the inside.

From the Field

Broccoli

Broccoli is a member of the cabbage family that has similar flavors. The most common variety of broccoli has big hearty heads, thick stems and is surrounded by large leaves. Broccoli can be eaten raw or cooked.



Calabrese Broccoli

Calabrese broccoli is the most common type of broccoli. It is named for Calabria, Italy. Like most broccoli it grows in the cooler seasons of spring and fall. This broccoli has thick stems and hearty heads.



Sprouting Broccoli

Sprouting broccoli is more similar to rapini and has many smaller heads with thin stalks. The heads are sweet, and if purple, turn green when you cook them.



Purple Cauliflower

Purple cauliflower gets its name from its rich purple head. Although called cauliflower, it is a variety of broccoli grown in southern Italy. The purple color comes from an antioxidant called anthocyanin, which can also be found in red wine.



How Broccoli Affects Your Health

Broccoli is not only low in calories but also rich in essential vitamins and nutrients. It is known to reduce the risk of cancer, improve bone health and fight skin damage.



Proper Storage

Fresh broccoli likes moisture and air flow when stored, so wrap the heads with damp paper towels and put into the refrigerator. Do not put a lid on the container. Wash before use.



Why Grow This Crop?

Broccoli is an easy crop to grow and requires very little maintenance. It is also widely recognizable to both the chefs and students, putting it in high demand.



A Bit of History

Although the broccoli plant was native to eastern Mediterranean, it wasn't introduced to England until around 1720 and America during the colonial times.



Broccoli puree is a healthy, flavorful sauce that pairs well with roasted chicken. Start by blanching the broccoli in boiling water until tender, then transfer to an ice bath until cool. Sauté shallots and garlic and set aside to cool. Combine the broccoli, shallots and garlic in a blender, pureeing until smooth. Blend ingredients adding lemon juice and a small amount of chicken stock. Emulsify with olive oil.

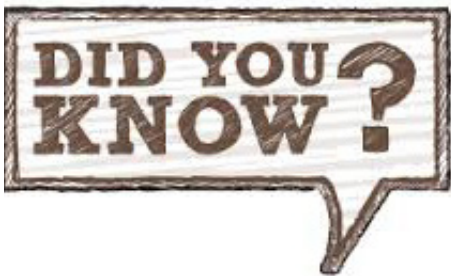


Looking for something to do with all of that beautiful farm produce?? Put it in a stir fry. This is a simple dish and a crowd favorite with the students. I marinate my meat in equal parts soy sauce and sugar with apple slices. Let sit for two hours. Combine garlic, ginger, carrots, peppers, onions and broccoli. Cook the meat on a flat top and then cook vegetables to soak up extra flavor and marinade from the grill. Top with green or spring onions and serve with rice.

From the Field

Broccoli Raab

Broccoli Raab is the American word for Rapini. The leaves, flowers, buds and stems are edible. Broccoli raab buds share a resemblance to broccoli but they are smaller and not as thick or firm. This crop has a unique flavor with hints of cabbage and horseradish.



Did You Know?

Broccoli raab is classified in the genus called Brassica, which is the mustard family. Other plants in this family include: turnips, rutabagas, cabbage, kale mustard greens and kohlrabi.



Spring Raab

There are two main types of broccoli raab. One of the types is called spring raab, which is grown typically in the spring and produces small yellow edible flowers.



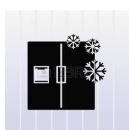
Fall Raab

Fall raab is the other main type of broccoli raab, which like its name, is grown in the fall. Both varieties grow well in cooler temperatures but the fall raab is heartier.



How Broccoli Raab Affects Your Health

Broccoli raab is considered to be one of the most nutrient dense foods in the world. It contains high amounts of iron, potassium, calcium and fiber. It also contains an antioxidant called lutein that promotes healthy vision. It has been linked to preventing cancer and heart disease.



Proper Storage

Store broccoli raab in the refrigerator and do not wash until ready to use. To freeze: wash broccoli raab and cut off stems. Blanch in boiling water and transfer to an ice bath. Make sure the broccoli raab is completely dry before storing it in freezer bags.



Broccoli raab is very delicious simply sautéed. Quickly blanch the vegetable in boiling water (remembering you will be cooking it again) and transfer to an ice bath. Sauté the blanched broccoli raab with thinly sliced garlic. Add salt and crushed red pepper for seasoning. Squeeze a fresh lemon over top to enhance and brighten the flavors before serving. This dish is also good with shredded Parmesan cheese on top.



Why Grow This Crop?

Broccoli raab has the most amazing, pungent and unique flavor. It is by far my favorite tasting crop that comes off the farm. It is a luscious plant and can be seen in the spring as well as the fall.



Where in the World?

Broccoli raab was thought to originate in China due to the fact that this vegetable is more closely related to the turnip than broccoli.

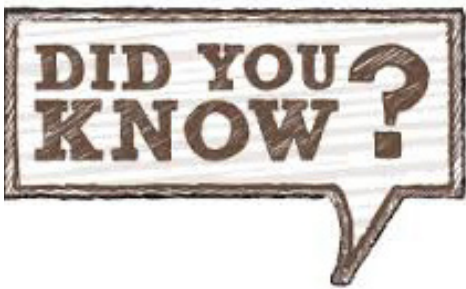


Pizza is another great way to incorporate broccoli raab into your menus. Who doesn't love pizza? Take the sautéed recipe from this page and add it to any pizza for nice color and delicious flavor. This pairs well with sausage, goat cheese and pickled red onions.

From the Field

Carrot

Carrots, like onions, are considered one of the healthiest foods in the world. They have a sweet flavor that can be a natural sweetener to many dishes. The edible root part of the carrot is grown underground. More than 37.2 million carrots are grown each year and they are used in many cuisines.



Consuming carrots to increase night time vision is a myth. The British developed this during WW II to confuse the enemy about their capabilities to fight after the sun went down.

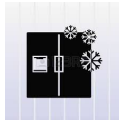


Carrots come in all shapes and sizes. There are varieties that can be as small as your thumb or as big as your forearm. The latter of the the varieties are great for stocks and juicing. Carrots can also have a wide array of colors ranging from purple, red, orange and yellow. The more they are exposed to cold temperatures the sweeter they get. Sweet carrots often referred to as candy carrots.



How Carrots Affect Your Health

Carrots are considered one of the world's healthiest foods, due to the amount of beta-carotene they contain. Beta-carotene is an antioxidant and nutrient that helps damaged cells in the body. Carrots are also known to reduce cholesterol, prevent heart attacks and prevent cancer.



Proper Storage

Store carrots unwashed in a refrigerator. Remove the greens before storing. They should keep for a long period of time. Wash before serving.



Why Grow This Crop?

Carrots are a very common ingredient used on a daily basis by chefs. This vegetable is versatile due to the fact that it can be eaten raw on a salad bar or cooked. Carrots are another crop that can be stored and used throughout the winter.



A Bit of History

The carrot originated in Persia (Iran) where carrots still grow wild to this day. The carrot was primarily used to cut out bitterness and increase sweetness in food. The carrot was not introduced to North America until the 17th century, when European settlers arrived.



Mirepoix is a ratio of two parts onions, one part carrot and one part celery. It is the base element for most classic French cooking. Other countries have different variations of the mirepoix, changing one or two of the ingredients that are key elements to their cuisine. Want to make a soup and not sure where to start?? Start with mirepoix!



Carrot salad makes a great side dish or topping to BBQ, burgers and wraps. Shred your carrots on a mandolin or box grater. Add sliced red onion, dried cranberries, toasted almonds, garlic and parsley. In a separate bowl mix your sauce using Dijon, lemon juice and olive oil. Pour over the top of your carrots and mix well. Season with salt and sugar.

From the Field

Cauliflower

Although cauliflower and broccoli are in the same genus called Brassica, the cauliflower only produces one head. The head is the only part of the plant that is edible. Cauliflower has large leaves that protect the head from too much sunlight. Cauliflower has a mild flavor similar to broccoli. It also has a nutty component that tastes like butternut squash.



White Cauliflower

White cauliflower is the most common type of cauliflower seen in grocery stores and in different cuisines.



Orange Cauliflower

Orange cauliflower is a mutated version of white cauliflower said to have originated in Canada. It contains many more vitamins than white cauliflower.



Green Cauliflower

Green cauliflower is the most beautiful of the varieties having a spiral shaped head. It can also be referred to as Romanesco broccoli.



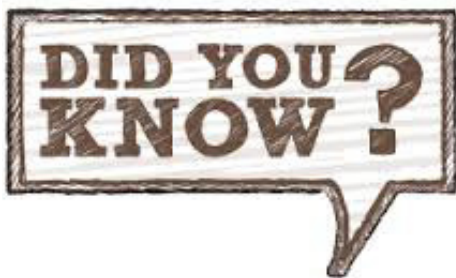
How Cauliflower Affects Your Health

Cauliflower contains 77% of the recommended daily vitamin C. It is also rich in many nutrients. Cauliflower is used as the go-to vegetable to cut down on fat and gluten in modern cooking. Cauliflower is a source of sulforaphane, a compound that attacks cancer cells and slows the growth of tumors. Unfortunately cooking kills those enzymes so better start eating it raw!



Proper Storage

Cauliflower doesn't like a lot of moisture as it causes the head to mold. When refrigerating, store the cauliflower with the stem facing down and do not wash until serving. To freeze: wash the cauliflower head and cut down to desired size. Blanch in boiling water and transfer to an ice bath. Drain any excess liquid and store in a freezer bag in the freezer.



Green Cauliflower heads have a fractal pattern that is repeated many times, getting smaller and smaller towards the tip of the head. The surface of the cone shaped head is made of spiral cone shapes and each shape repeats itself. It has a beautiful ornamental appearance and makes you question the limits of nature.



Why Grow This Crop?

Cauliflower is an easy crop to produce, although it takes a very long time to reach maturity. It can be eaten raw or cooked and is a popular salad bar item.



A Bit of History

Cauliflower has been around for a long time dating back to 6th century BC. It was thought to have originated in Syria.



The most delicious way to eat cauliflower, no matter the variety, is basted in a sauté pan. Take the whole head and sit it up, stem down, in a deep round cookie cutter. Add about an inch of oil and a couple cubes of butter to the pan. Get the oil and butter hot then turn the temperature down so the fat is hot, but not smoking or boiling. Ladle the fat over the cauliflower head until the head becomes tender and golden brown color. This will take about 30-45 mins.

From the Field

Cherry Tomatoes

A cherry tomato is small and round. The size can range from a thumb tip to a golf ball. Cherry tomatoes can be a range of colors from red to yellow, green and black. The cherry tomatoes that are more oblong than round are called grape tomatoes and have the same characteristics as plum tomatoes.



Jasper

Jasper cherry tomatoes are one of the biggest producing cherry tomato varieties. They are small with a red color and are low in acidity.



Sungold

Sungold cherry tomatoes are one of the most popular varieties. The flavor is sweet and fruity. It has a bright orange color and is one of the best tasting orange cherry tomatoes on the market.



Black Cherry

Black cherry tomatoes are another big producer, meaning they produce a lot of fruit during one season. They get their name from the color of their fruit, which has a deep purplish black color. The flavor is juicy, sweet and rich.



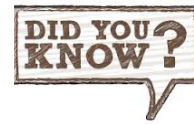
How Cherry Tomatoes Affect Your Health

The tomato has been referred to as a “functional food” because it not only provides basic nutrition but also can be linked to preventing chronic disease.



Proper Storage

Underripe tomatoes should be left out at room temperature until they become fully ripened. They should then be moved to refrigeration. Ripe tomatoes should be stored in the refrigerator.



Did You Know?

Originally people thought the tomato to be a poisonous plant because it is in the same family as nightshade, which is poisonous.



A Bit of History

Cherry tomatoes date back to 15th century Aztec Mexico. Cherry tomatoes weren't seen in the U.S. until 1919.



Cherry tomatoes have a wide variety of uses. They are small and commonly used as a salad bar item. They are also a great snack, bursting with flavor when they are popped in your mouth.



Grilled cherry tomatoes are simply delicious. You can put them on a (soaked) skewer whole or they can be sliced in half. Brush with olive oil and grill until marks form. Flip the skewers and repeat. Finish with salt and pepper.

From the Field

Chives

Chives are part of the onion family but have a milder flavor than other members of this family. They are most commonly served fresh and are used in a variety of ways, especially for garnishes and finishing flavors in dips, soups and sauces. The three most commonly used varieties are Common Chives, Giant Siberian Chives and Garlic Chives.



Common Chives

Common chives taste like a mild version of onion and can be eaten raw or cooked. They are commonly found in soups and salads.



Giant Siberian Chives

Giant Siberian chives have a more potent garlicky flavor than Common Chives. They also grow much taller and have a flatter appearance.



Garlic Chives

Garlic chives are most commonly used in Asian cooking. They have an oniony, garlicky flavor and edible white flowers.



How Chives Affect Your Health

Chives, like onions are full of antioxidants. They can increase heart health, help with vision and improve bone strength.



Proper Storage

Store fresh chives in a refrigerator wrapped in a damp paper towel.



Why Grow This Crop?

Chives are popular with chefs because of their variety of uses. For a farmer, their strong garlicky-onion smell keeps away damaging bugs while their flowers attract bees, which are great for pollination and health of the farm.



Did You Know?

Romans believed chives were a pain remedy for sunburns and sore throats. Chives were also used by Romanian Gypsies for fortune telling and to keep away evil.



Compound butter is an excellent way to use excess herbs, especially chives. Leave butter out until it reaches room temperature. Stir in chopped chives and mix well. Lay out on top of parchment and roll into a log, securing the ends. Put into the freezer for later use. When using simply slice off what you need then put the rest back into the freezer. Compound butter is great on meat freshly out of the oven. (This recipe is also good with honey and lemon zest mixed in with the butter before freezing.)



Chive yogurt is a delicious tasting sauce that can be used for a vegetable dip, on fish (salmon) or used as a sauce for gyros. Take yogurt and add a small amount of sour cream (to thicken). Mix in chopped chives, honey, garlic powder and salt. This recipe is also great with dill and diced cucumbers.

From the Field

Cilantro

Cilantro is also known as coriander or Chinese parsley. Both the leaf and stem are edible. The leaves have a citrusy taste, which people either love or hate. The taste of cilantro can come off to some as soapy flavor. Cilantro is most commonly eaten fresh and the seeds (coriander) are used whole or ground.



Leaf Cilantro

Leaf cilantro has bright green, flat leaves and is often confused with parsley. However, parsley and cilantro have very different flavors. Cilantro is pungent with a distinct citrusy flavor to some and soapy flavor to others.



Coriander

The seed coriander comes from the same plant that is used for leaves. The seeds are collected from the plant once the plant bolts. The seeds have a lemony citrus flavor and are commonly used in Asian and Mexican cuisine.



Vietnamese Cilantro

Vietnamese cilantro has a very different appearance than leaf cilantro but they have similar flavors. Vietnamese cilantro has a longer skinnier leaf with darker coloring in the center. This is not a variety you would want to use for coriander because it does not bolt as quickly as leaf cilantro.



How Cilantro Affects Your Health

Cilantro has very high amounts of antioxidants, vitamins, fiber and essential oils. The juice of cilantro has been used as a detox agent, reducing heavy metals in urine.



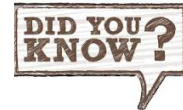
Proper Storage

Fresh cilantro is best stored right-side-up in a glass of water in the refrigerator. The tops of the leaves should be covered with a plastic bag.



Why Grow This Crop?

Cilantro is widely used throughout the country for many types of cuisine. It is the most popular herb in demand and therefore makes it a valuable crop to both the chefs and the farm.



Did You Know?

Did you know that people react to the smell and taste of cilantro differently? People who dislike the taste are very sensitive to a chemical cilantro produces called aldehydes. People who like the smell and taste are less sensitive to this chemical.



Want to make an easy meal that is popular with the students?? Try making a BBQ chicken pizza on pitas with fresh cilantro. Cover the top of the pita with BBQ sauce. Add shredded chicken and top with cheese. Bake at 400F until the cheese melts. Top with hand cut pico de gallo and fresh cilantro. (one small pita pizza will feed one fraternity boy...completely full!)



Another interesting way to eat cilantro is to incorporate it into a spread for sandwiches. Combine fresh cilantro (leaves and stems), feta cheese, a jalapeno (deseeded and chopped) and juice of one lemon into a food processor. Add a small amount sour cream to get the food processor spinning. Season with salt remembering that the feta will be salty. This spread is great with turkey, cheese and tomato on a hoagie or sourdough baquette.

From the Field

Green Beans

Green beans grow in a pod and the seeds inside are usually unripe when they are harvested. This is the defining characteristic of the green bean which can also be called French beans, string beans and snap beans.



Types of Green Beans

Provider bush beans can be planted earlier than other beans because they germinate well in cool soils. They grow very quickly, which adds to the ease of growing. These beans have a great texture and mild flavor.



Purple Teepee Beans

Purple Teepee Beans are another type of bush bean, which means they grow big and bushy and do not need a trellis. This plant resembles a teepee when grown. The beans are a deep purple color and have a great flavor.



Kentucky Blue Beans

Unlike the other beans, Kentucky Blue Beans are pole beans meaning they grow vertically and require trellising. These beans have big meaty pods and are a national favorite.



How Green Beans Affect Your Health

Green beans contain large amounts of vitamins, minerals, fiber and protein. Studies have shown that eating green beans lowers your risk of heart disease, diabetes and obesity. It is also linked to healthy complexions and increased energy.

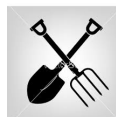


Proper Storage

Storing fresh beans: keep the beans unwashed and uncut. Store them in a reusable container or plastic bag in the refrigerator. They should keep for seven days. Freezing green beans: before cutting the ends off the beans, rinse the beans in cool water and drain excess water. Once the beans are cut, then cut again to the preferred length. Put them in a plastic bag and into the freezer.



Green beans are delicious and can be prepared many different ways, besides simply blanching them. Add some cooked bacon, sautéed onions and garlic. Squeeze a fresh lemon over the top, as it will brighten all of the flavors.



Why Grow This Crop?

Bush beans have quick germination, which means the time the seed is planted in the ground to the time the plant has green beans (aka fruit) is only 4 weeks. You can get up to 3 good looking harvests off the same plant.



Did You Know?

There are two main types of green beans, “bush beans” and “pole beans”. Bush beans are short plants and produce all of their fruit in a short time. Pole beans grow tall and require a trellis to support them.



Looking for a healthier option? Make a green bean salad by blanching the green beans then cooling them in ice water. Combine feta or goat cheese, tomatoes, red onion and a little chopped garlic. This salad would also be good with toasted nuts. Make a simple red wine dressing by whisking red wine vinegar, olive oil, fresh basil, salt and pepper. Pour the dressing over the green beans and let marinate an hour before serving.

From the Field

Hot Peppers

Hot peppers, also known as chili peppers, have a substance called capsaicin that gives these peppers their intense heat. These peppers are used in both food and medicine and are grown across the world.



Habanero Pepper

Habanero peppers are very hot and their heat, floral aroma and flavor have made it a popular pepper. Habaneros are green when unripe but change to yellow and deep orange when they reach maturity. They are originally from the Amazon region and spread to Mexico. They are largely produced on the Yucatan Peninsula.



Cayenne Pepper

Cayenne peppers are long meaty peppers that are red when mature. They are often dried and made into powder form. The cayenne pepper is named for the city of Cayenne in French Guiana. It is commonly used in a variety of hot sauces.



Thai Pepper

Thai peppers are similar to the cayenne pepper. Thai peppers are slightly smaller in shape and are hotter. Despite this pepper's heat, they can have a floral flavor if they are immature (green).



How Hot Peppers Affect Your Health

Capsaicin (the heat causing ingredient in hot peppers) is commonly used to treat many illnesses including; herpes related pain, arthritis and headaches. Capsaicin from the chili pepper is also the primary ingredient in pepper spray.



Proper Storage

Dried peppers: hang the peppers by a string from their stem in a place with good air circulation. Allow 2-3 weeks to dry. Fresh storage: store unwashed peppers in a paper bag in the refrigerator. Wash before using. To freeze: wash the peppers thoroughly and dry. Cut the peppers to desired length and place them on a baking sheet in the freezer until firm. Transfer them to a freezer bag and return to the freezer.



Where in the World?

Chili peppers have been around a very long time, dating back to 7500 BC. Christopher Columbus brought the first chili peppers to Spain in 1493 as he returned from an expedition to the West Indies. Chili peppers were distributed throughout Asia by Portuguese traders and they became the national spice (paprika) in Hungary.



Why Grow This Crop?

Hot peppers are used so many different ways and are in high demand with chefs. They are not labor intensive to grow and are able to be processed down into hot sauce and powder to be used throughout the winter.



Did You Know?

The chili pepper originated in Mexico but is widely used across the world in food and medicine. 9.4 million acres of land is used to produce 33 million tons of chili peppers, with India being the largest producer and exporter.



Hot peppers make for a great hot sauce and the vinegar is a good preserving agent. Take 12 farm jalapenos and 10 orange habaneros. Put them in a blender with 4 smashed garlic cloves, 2 Tbs of salt and blend. Add 2 cups of distilled white vinegar, slowly while the blender is still running. Put the mixture into a sauce pan SLOWLY, bring to a boil. Boil for 1 minute. Pour mixture into jars with tight fitting lids. Cover with a cool cloth and let sit in a dark place for four days. Pour the sauce through a fine mesh strainer, pressing on solids to get as much liquid out as possible. Pour into a clean glass jar and store in refrigerator. Hot sauce will last up to six mos.

From the Field

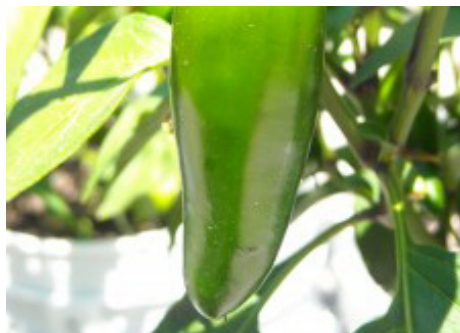
Jalapenos

Jalapenos are a mild form of the chili pepper. They range from 1,000 to 20,000 units on the Scoville scale (a measurement of heat for peppers) depending on the variety. It is most commonly harvested green but can be yellow, red or orange.



TAM Jalapeno

TAM jalapenos have very little heat. Although they are mild in heat, they have a great flavor. They are most commonly eaten either green or red.



Mucho Nacho Jalapeno

Mucho Nacho is great for stuffing because it is one of the larger varieties of jalapenos. This pepper is extremely hot at both the green and red stages.



Purple Jalapeno

Purple jalapeno plants are beautiful with purple flowers and almost black leaves. These peppers are twice as hot as a regular jalapeno and can be eaten green, purple or red.



How Jalapenos Affect Your Health

The spice or heat in jalapenos comes from a chemical known as capsaicin. Jalapenos have been known to help with high blood pressure, cancer, ulcers, headaches, arthritis and nasal congestion.



Proper Storage

Storing fresh jalapenos: jalapenos should be stored in a paper bag in the refrigerator. Freezing jalapenos: slice or chop peppers after deseeding. Place in a freezer bag or wrap tightly in plastic wrap.



Why Grow This Crop?

Jalapenos are warm weather crops, mostly grown in the summer months. This crop is an overproducer in the sense that each plant can produce up to 30 peppers over a long period of time.



A Bit of History

Prior to the Spanish Conquest, jalapenos were used by the Aztecs. Dating back 1,000 years, America started using jalapenos and smoked them as a way to preserve them.



Tip: If you love the flavor of jalapenos but do not like the heat, you can easily remove the seeds and innards (also known as the placenta) from the cut pepper to reduce the heat. Despite the common myth of the capsaicin (heat) residing in the seeds, it is actually located in the placenta.



To remove the seeds and veins, cut the pepper in half with a paring knife. Then just cut away the veins and seeds. You can cut the peppers into strips or fine dice (also known as the brunoise cut).

From the Field

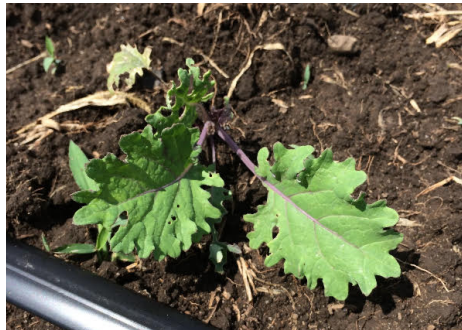
Kale

Kale is the vegetable genus Brassica. Other commonly known vegetables in this genus are: cabbage, brussel sprouts, broccoli, cauliflower and turnips. Unlike other vegetables in the genus, the center leaves of kale do not form a head. Kale is considered wild cabbage.



Curly Kale

Curly kale is a common variety of kale. The name comes from how the leaves are shaped, with a curl on the edges. Curly kale is both heat tolerant and flourishes in cold weather.



Red Russian Kale

Red Russian kale is one of the nicest looking varieties. It has flat leaves and purple stems. It does well in the spring but can be susceptible to blackrot later in the season.



Rape Kale

Rape kale is a winter hardy crop and loves cold weather. It can also be referred to as “Hungry Gap”, during the winter months when not much else can be harvested.



How Kale Affects Your Health

Kale is rich in many vitamins, particularly A, C, and K. It also has high amounts of iron, calcium, potassium and phosphorus. FYI, boiling kale reduces the nutrient content.



Proper Storage

Refrigerate kale before it is washed and do not wash until ready to use. To freeze: wash kale and remove the stems. Blanch the kale, chill and remove excess water. Freeze immediately.



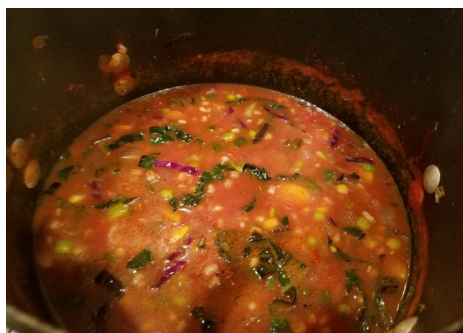
Why Grow This Crop?

There are many different types of kale to choose from. Kale is a crop that can be harvested from spring to fall. It also freezes well and tastes sweeter after a frost.



A Bit of History

Kale has been recorded to have been around over 2,000 years. Kale was the most commonly eaten vegetable until the Middle Ages when cabbages became more popular.



There are many different ways to eat kale. Kale chips, kale salad and braised kale, just a few to name. Try putting kale in an August or September fall soup with onion, poblano, carrots and tomatoes from the farm. Add barley, cabbage, lima beans, thyme and oregano with chicken stock.



Did you know you can blanch and puree kale to mix with water and corn masa flour to make your own delicious kale tortillas??!

From the Field

Mint

There are many different varieties of mint each having different flavors. The leaf color can range from dark green to purple, blue and yellow. Mint usually has a sweet very aromatic flavor which makes it applicable in many culinary uses.



Peppermint

Peppermint has a large amount of menthol which makes it have a stronger flavor that can sometimes be overpowering.



Spearmint

Spearmint looks like peppermint but is more mild and has a sweeter flavor. Spearmint is my go-to mint when adding mint flavor to food.



Chocolate Mint

Chocolate mint has green leaves and purple stems. It has a mild sweet taste like spearmint but also has a chocolaty flavor.



How Mint Affects Your Health

Mint is commonly served after dinner at fine dining restaurants to not only freshen your breath but also because it is a great palate cleanser and promotes digestion. It can also help with headaches and nausea.



Proper Storage

Like most herbs, store fresh mint in a damp paper towel in the refrigerator until use. Wash and dry before using.



Why Grow This Crop?

There are so many uses for mint and it is always in high demand with the chefs. Mint grows very easily, so easily in fact that if you don't prune it it could take over your entire bed.

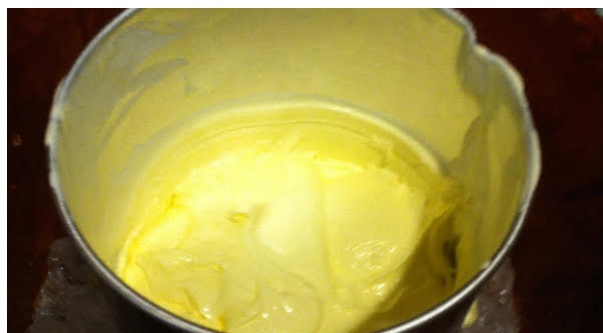


Did You Know?

Mint has been around for centuries and was used as money and associated with beauty.



Mint simple syrup is a great way to flavor drinks such as tea and it can also be used in sauces and baking. Bring 1 cup of water to a boil and reduce heat. Add sugar and mint and simmer for 2 mins. Cool with the mint still in the liquid. After the mixture is cool, pour through a strainer and store in the refrigerator.



Mint ice cream is an all time favorite by many and making it homemade is easy. You will need an old school bucket ice cream maker (\$50 Farm & Fleet) or borrow mine. Bring 1.5 qts of cream, 1.5 qts of milk and a lot of fresh spearmint to a slow boil on the stove. In a mixing bowl crack 30 egg yolks and 30 oz of sugar. Mix well. Strain the mint out of the liquid and slowly pour the liquid over the eggs and sugar making sure to stir while doing so. Completely cool the base before putting it in the ice cream maker. This recipe is also great plain or with HH farm strawberries!!

From the Field

Onion

Onions are in the genus called Allium, which also includes garlic, chives, scallion and shallot. There are many different varieties of onions and they can be cooked or eaten raw.



Yellow, Red and White Onion

Yellow onions are very common and can be used for cooking almost anything. Compared to other varieties they are mild. Red onions are traditionally used raw due to their pretty color. These onions have a stronger potency than yellow onions. White onions are the traditional onion for Mexican Cuisine. They have a sweet flavor when cooked.



Spring Onion

Spring onions have a much smaller bulb than the yellow, red and white onion. They are harvested when the bulb is immature and the hollow leaves are green. They have a mild flavor and an amazing smell.



Shallot

Shallots are a smaller variety of the Allium genus, with a purplish flesh. They are milder than the common variety of onion and are slightly sweet.



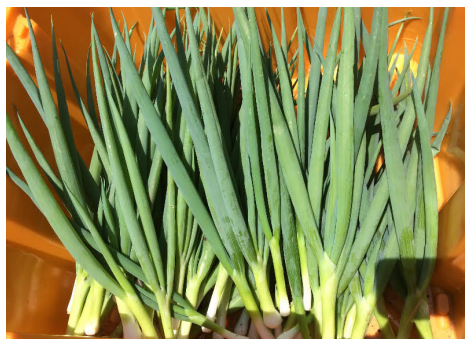
How Onions Affect Your Health

Onions are considered to be one of the healthiest foods you can consume. Onions contain chromium, which regulates blood sugar. It also has high amounts of vitamin C, which helps toward immunity. Onions have been used for centuries to heal infections and reduce swelling.



Proper Storage

Onions should be stored in their skin in a cool dry place, not in refrigeration. They require good air circulation so as not to mold.



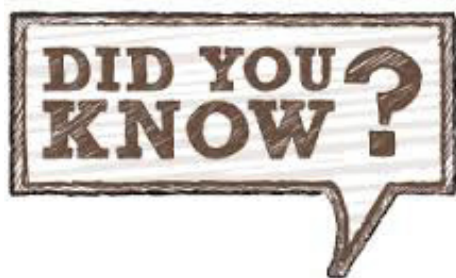
Why Grow This Crop?

Onions are not only healthy but they are one of three components that make up the base to most sauces. Onions are one of the most frequently used vegetables by chefs. They are relatively easy to grow and can be stored and used during the winter.



A Bit of History

Onions are one of the oldest vegetables. They were said to have originated in Asia. People became very dependent on the onion due to its ease of growing in many different types of climates and their storage capabilities in order have food during the winter.



Onions were not only a large food source in 3,500 BC but they also prevented thirst, were a source of energy, and were easily preserved to prevent starvation. Because of all of these benefits the onion carried, they were highly treasured among many cultures. In Egypt, the onion was the symbol of endless life and eternity. The symbol for the onion was painted on many Egyptian tombs.



Mirepoix is a ratio of two parts onions, one part carrot and one part celery. It is the base element for most classic French cooking. Other countries have different variations of the mirepoix, changing one or two of the ingredients that are key elements to their cuisine. Want to make a soup and not sure where to start?? Start with mirepoix!

From the Field

(Italian) Oregano

Oregano is one of the most popular used herbs. It is most commonly found in Italian cooking, used in marinara and pizza sauces due to its sweet, bitter and somewhat spicy flavor. Oregano can be used dry or fresh, but is sometimes considered to have a more powerful flavor when dried. The oregano plant has dark green, small leaves, which is where the flavor comes from.



Cuban Oregano

Cuban oregano is a member of the mint family and is also referred to as Mexican mint. It originated in Africa. It has tender green leaves and a flavor similar to Italian oregano but the flavor is slightly more robust.



Mexican Oregano

Unlike Cuban and Italian oregano, Mexican oregano is not a member of the mint family. It is in the same family as lemon verbena. This type of oregano is most commonly used in Mexican cuisine because its floral notes pair well with other spices commonly used such as cumin, chili peppers and chorizo.



How Oregano Affects Your Health

Oregano is full of vitamins and minerals and therefore has many health benefits. It is commonly used to treat menstrual cramps, urinary tract disorders, gastrointestinal disorders and respiratory tract disorders.



Proper Storage

The best way to store fresh herbs is to wrap them in a damp paper towel and put them in the refrigerator.



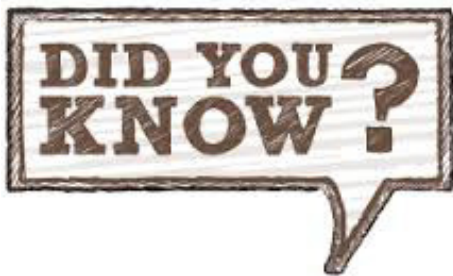
Why Grow This Crop?

Oregano is a common herb used by chefs. It is primarily used to season pizza which is a popular dish amongst students. Oregano is a perennial plant that can be grown all year long. It also can be dried to be used as a storage herb.



A Bit of History

Oregano was introduced to the United States after WWII soldiers developed a taste for the herb while being stationed in Italy. They referred to it as the “pizza herb”.



Did you know that oregano is actually part of the mint family??? Also, oregano is more flavorful once it is dried. To dry oregano: wash the fresh oregano and dry the stems in order to prevent mold. Collect the herb by the stems and tie with a string so the leaves and top are pointing down. Hang in a dry, well-ventilated area. You can cover the herbs with a paper bag with slits cut into it, in order to prevent dust from collecting.



Oregano can be used for many things and most commonly pizza. However, a simple way to add flavorful aromatics to a dish is to use them while roasting. Take chicken leg quarters season with salt and sear them in a roasting pan, skin side down. Once they have a golden brown color remove excess oil and deglaze the pan with white wine. Add vegetables (potatoes and carrots). Add sliced lemons and oregano and put into a 325F oven for approximately 45 mins. Baste the chicken and vegetables with the wine and oil periodically while cooking. Chicken should reach internal temp of 165F.

From the Field

Poblano Pepper

Poblano peppers are in the chili pepper family but have a mild flavor. Every so often there can be a poblano on a plant that is extremely hot and it is unpredictable which pepper that can be. Poblano peppers are usually a dark green color but can also ripen red. The red poblano is hotter than the green one.



Poblano Pepper

Poblano peppers are a dark green pepper that is commonly used in Mexican cuisine. They are a warm weather crop and like a lot of heat. They are commonly harvested before ripening, which means they are harvested green before turning to red.



Ancho Chili Pepper

Ancho chili peppers are a dried version of the mature (red) poblano pepper. When they turn red, they become sweeter which adds a nice balance to the mild heat. They are referred to as ancho, which translates to wide in Mexico, due to their wide shape for a chili pepper. Ancho peppers are created for the purpose of preserving the poblano pepper.



Mulato Pepper

Mulato peppers are often confused with the poblano due to their appearance, although they are closely related, they are not the same. Mulato peppers are a mild to medium chili pepper and are the key component in mole sauce.



How Poblano Peppers Affect Your Health

Poblano peppers are high in vitamins A and B2. Vitamin A is good for skin and bone health and promotes eyesight. Vitamin B2 helps with energy and body growth.



Proper Storage

Storing fresh poblanos: keep the peppers unwashed and uncut. Store them in a reusable container or plastic bag in the refrigerator. They should keep for seven days. Freezing poblanos: before cutting the ends off the poblanos, rinse the pepper in cool water and drain excess water. Once the peppers are cut, then cut again to the preferred length. Put them in a plastic bag and into the freezer.



To roast poblanos start by washing the peppers thoroughly and dry with a paper towel. If roasting on gas stove top burners, simply place the peppers directly on the burners, flipping as the sides become charred. Transfer peppers to a mixing bowl and wrap tightly with plastic wrap so they steam. Peel while still warm. If roasting in the oven, preheat the oven to 425 F before washing the peppers. Coat the dry peppers with olive oil and place on a baking sheet. Bake 30-45 minutes, turning the peppers so they get a dark color on all sides. Following the steaming and peeling method above. Roasted poblanos are a delicious component to many salsas, sauces and stuffed peppers.



Why Grow This Crop?

Although poblanos produce fruit later than other pepper varieties they are an overproducer, meaning one plant can produce a lot of fruit. The poblano is also a common pepper used mostly in Tex-Mex and traditional Mexican cuisine.



A Bit of History

The poblano pepper originated in Puebla, Mexico. It is one of the most popular peppers grown there. Puebla is also home of the mole poblano, which is a traditional Mexican dish.



Ancho chilis are easy to make at home and can also be made into a powdered spice to deliciously season many types of meats and sauces. Start by drying the poblano by hanging it by a string in a place that has good air circulation. This will take 2-3 weeks. Once the pepper is dry, remove the seeds and stems with a knife. Cut the dried pepper into large pieces and dehydrate by putting them in a dry pot over low heat. Put the dried dehydrated peppers into a blender or food processor until they are powder form. Store in air tight container, labeled with the rest of your spices.

From the Field

Potato

The potato is a crop that is tuberous, meaning the actual potato grows underground and sprouts from tubers. Potatoes have been around for about four centuries. They are among the largest produced food in the world behind maize, rice and wheat. There are many types of potatoes with over 1,000 different varieties.



Yukon Gold Potato

The Yukon Gold potato was developed in the 1960's in Ontario, Canada. It's a smaller variety of potato with golden insides. The Yukon Gold potatoes are one of the favorite varieties due to its buttery flavor.



Strawberry Paw Paw Potato

The Strawberry Paw Paw potato is a pretty crop with its skin being a redish color and the insides being pink. It has a similar flavor to Yukon Golds with its buttery notes.



Idaho Potato

Idaho Potatoes are one of the most common varieties. They get their name from the variety that is most commonly grown in Idaho. The Idaho potato is a larger variety with an oblong shape. It has an earthy flavor.



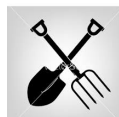
How Potatoes Affect Your Health

If the potato is baked, as opposed to fried, it can be a low calorie and high fiber food that can protect against heart disease. They are also known to lower blood pressure.



Proper Storage

Store potatoes unwashed and uncut in a cool place with good air circulation. Do not store in the refrigerator. Wash before using.



Why Grow This Crop?

Potatoes are a relatively easy crop to grow and aren't labor intensive until the harvest. They are a common used food source and easy for chefs to incorporate into their menus and prepare.



Did You Know?

When stored in colder temperatures, like a refrigerator, the starch from the potato starts to convert to sugar which can cause the color to become abnormal when cooking.



Roasting potatoes can be a quick and easy side dish. Simply cut the potatoes into bite size pieces and toss with olive oil and salt and pepper. Roast in a 400 F oven until golden brown. Squeeze a fresh lemon over top to brighten the flavor. Also, add HH farm chopped herbs to pair with the main course.



Potatoes are also great in a cold smoked potato salad. Start by roasting the potatoes as directed in the previous recipe. While the potatoes are roasting, put two day soaked hickory chips in a hotel pan and turn on high heat until they start smoking. Transfer the roasted potatoes to a perforated pan, cover with foil and place inside the hotel pan with the smoking chips. Leave on high heat for two minutes then turn off the heat and transfer to the freezer to finish the the smoking process. From here you can make traditional potato salad or I like to add HH farm roasted red peppers, and fresh HH farm spinach with a little garlic. Toss the potato salad with a lemon aioli and finish with HH farm spring onions. This salad is also great with bacon to add an extra smokey flavor.

From the Field

Radishes

Although the greens of the radish can be consumed and are traditional in Asian cuisine, the root of the radish is primarily what is consumed through out the world. Radishes can have an array of colors and are crunchy with a spicy flavor.



French Breakfast Radish

The French breakfast radish has a long cylindrical shape and is most often pink with white tops. The inside of this radish is white and has a mildly pungent flavor.



Black Radish

The black radish is a shorter, fatter variety of radish. It has a black outside skin and a white flesh. The black radish is a bitter, spicier variety.



Easter Egg Radish

Easter egg radishes are colorful and can be red, purple or white. They are small and round and have a mild flavor.



How Radishes Affect Your Health

Radishes are full of vitamin B6 and many other important nutrients that promote health. They also contain a lot of fiber, which is good for the digestive system and can relieve constipation.



Proper Storage

Remove radish tops and store the radishes in a refrigerator. They should stay fresh up to 5 days.



Why Grow This Crop?

Radishes are a quick growing crop which is great for farmers because you can do multiple plantings in the same area and have a continuous crop. Radishes are also versatile in the culinary world, eaten raw or cooked.



A Bit of History

The radish originated in southeast Asia where it still grows wild today. The radish was one of the first European crops to be brought to America.



Radishes are delicious when pickled. The spicy, sour combination hits the right flavor notes and pairs well with meat, BBQ and sandwiches. Leave the radishes as intact as possible, simply slicing them in $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ s. Combine 2c of red wine vinegar, $\frac{1}{2}$ c of sugar, 1t whole coriander seed, 2 bay leaves and 1t of black peppercorns. Bring mixture up to a boil and pour over the radishes. Store in the refrigerator.



One of the best ways to eat radishes is raw. If you are tired of showcasing them in salad, cut the radish into julienne strips and add them to sandwiches, tacos and salsas. They give the dish bright color and add a mildly spicy flare.

From the Field

Romaine

Romaine Lettuce is a crop that can be grown year round. Many varieties can be heat and cold tolerant. Romaine has thick ribs, most commonly on the outer leaves. When harvested or cut it releases a milky fluid which is predominantly where the bitter herb taste resides.



Cos Romaine Lettuce

Cos (Romaine) lettuce form heads that stand vertical and are open at the top. The thick ribs, more prominent on the outer leaves, are crunchy. This lettuce has a stronger flavor than loose leaf lettuce varieties.



Butterhead Lettuce

Butterhead lettuce gets its name due to its buttery texture and flavor. It forms open heads with loose leaves that are attached at the base. Butterhead is usually not heat tolerant and most commonly grown in the spring and fall.



Loose leaf Lettuce

Loose leaf lettuce grows very quickly and has colorful leaves. You can harvest this crop a few leaves at a time or the whole head. You can also get multiple cuttings off the same bed.



How Romaine Lettuce Affects Your Health

Romaine lettuce contains many antioxidants that are high in Vitamins A and C. The antioxidants contained in this crop are also believed to prevent cancer.



Proper Storage

Unwashed lettuce should be stored in a loosely closed bag in the refrigerator. If washing the lettuce dry it thoroughly with paper towels or a salad spinner and refrigerate in a tightly sealed container. All lettuce must be washed before serving.



Why Grow This Crop?

Romaine is both heat and cold tolerant, which makes it a perfect crop available anytime of year. The leaves form a tight head which deters pests from eating the inner leaves.



A Bit of History

Romaine lettuce is commonly known as Cos lettuce in other parts of the world. The name Romaine is typically used in America. Cos is thought to be named from the Greek island of Cos, where historians believe it was originally grown.



Tired of eating Romaine in a salad?? Try adding it to your stir fry. It is also delicious grilled with light olive oil and salt.

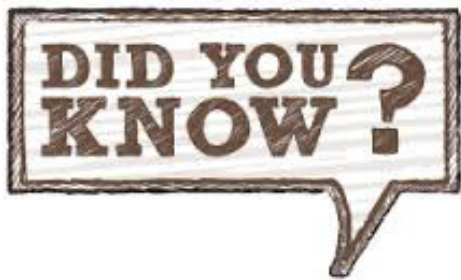


Another great way to eat romaine is by replacing bread with lettuce leaves and turning it into lettuce boats or wraps.

From the Field

Rosemary

Rosemary is a very fragrant herb most commonly used to flavor meat. The plant is a small evergreen shrub, which makes it also great for decorations during the holidays. The leaves are green with needles, which is the edible part and the stems are woody (not edible). It is a member of the mint family, related to basil, oregano and marjoram.



Did You Know?

Rosemary is used for many other things besides in food. It is just as commonly used for its fragrance in perfumes, incense, shampoo and cleaning products.



Where in the World?

Rosemary is most commonly found in the Mediterranean area due to its temperate climates. It is usually found growing by the ocean which correlates with the Latin definition of rosemary, which is “dew of the sea”.



How Rosemary Affects Your Health

Rosemary has antibacterial and antioxidant rosmarinic acid. Its health benefits include: increasing memory, relieving pain, improving mood, protecting the immune system, detoxifying the body, preventing premature aging and healing skin conditions.



Proper Storage

Rosemary can be stored fresh or dried to use at a later time. To store fresh: wrap the sprigs in a damp paper towel and store in the refrigerator. To dry: hang the sprigs by string upside down and store in a cool room with good air circulation. Once dry, remove leaves from stems and grind.



Rosemary is great in marinades. For a great pork loin marinade, clean the loins and set them in a bus tub or hotel pan. Combine lemon zest, lemon juice, garlic, rosemary, thyme, olive oil, mustard and salt in a mixing bowl and mix well. Pour the marinade over the pork loins and let sit over night. Remove the pork from the marinade (you want the herbs to stay on the pork) and roast at 400F.



Why Grow This Crop?

Rosemary is a valuable herb to farmers. It grows easily with very little maintenance. It also is a natural pest repellant and keeps many unwanted pests away from your garden.



A Bit of History

Historically, rosemary was associated with both funerals and weddings for remembrance. During the Middle Ages both the bride and groom would wear rosemary and it was considered to be a love charm.

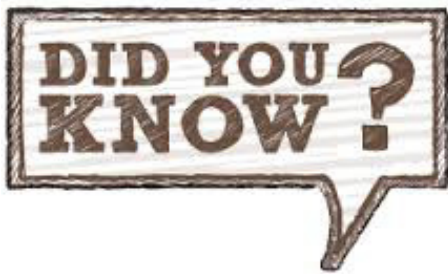


Rosemary is great in a hearty stew, such as beef stew. Take cheap cuts of beef or beef scraps, season them with salt and pepper and sear in a pot with hot oil. Add in ½ dollar sized chopped onions, carrots, celery and minced garlic. Once the vegetables brown, deglaze with a hearty amount of red wine. Add beef stock until the stew is the desired level. Let simmer for two hours, checking the level of liquid periodically. Thicken with a slurry (cornstarch and water) and season with sherry vinegar and salt to taste. Great served in a bread bowl!

From the Field

Sage

Sage is part of the mint family and is a close cousin to rosemary. It has small fuzzy leaves that can be green, purple or gray. Sage has a fragrant aroma and a warm flavor that is astringent. It can be used to flavor meats and cheese.



Did You Know?

Sage was used in ancient times to ward off evil, snakebites and increase women's fertility. There is no record of whether it really worked or not.



A Bit of History

Sage was used for its healing properties during the Middle Ages and was also one of the main ingredients in Four Thieves vinegar which was used to treat the plague.



How Sage Affects Your Health

Sage is an excellent source of fiber and is rich in minerals and vitamins. It has been linked to improving cognition in Alzheimer's treatment.



Proper Storage

Sage can be stored fresh or dried to use at a later time. To store fresh: wrap the stems and leaves in a damp paper towel and store in the refrigerator. To dry: hang sage by string upside down and store in a cool room with good air circulation. Once dry, remove leaves from stems and grind.



Why Grow This Crop?

Sage is a commonly used herb used to season many different kinds of meats and fish. For this reason, it is popular with the chefs.



Where in the World?

Although sage is very popular in America, it is commonly used in British and Italian cuisine. In Britain it is used with parsley, rosemary and thyme... like the song Scarborough Fair. Sage is used in a common Italian dish called Saltimbocca.



Saltimbocca is a popular Italian dish that is easy to make. Pan sear chicken breasts after seasoning with salt and pepper. Add diced shallots or onions, lemon slices and tarragon. Deglaze the pan with white wine. Add lemon juice and chicken stock. Transfer to 400F oven to finish chicken. Add HH farm spinach leaves to the top of the chicken breasts, prosciutto slices and a slice of mozzarella. Put back in the oven to melt the cheese and wilt the spinach. Remove the chicken from the pan and finish reducing the sauce, adding butter to thicken. Pour over the chicken and serve.



We always think about sage during the holidays to season our turkeys and stuffing. A great way to add extra seasoning is to make a sage compound butter and baste it over the top of the roasted bird. Start with room temperature butter and mix in finely chopped tarragon. Put on parchment paper and roll into a log securing the ends. Put in freezer until ready to use.

From the Field

Spinach

Spinach is a type of leafy green known as a “super food” due to its high nutritional value. Although it can be cooked, it is most commonly eaten in salads. Spinach is cold tolerant and is a crop that can be grown year round with mulching or a covering to protect it from the coldest parts of the season. There are three basic types of spinach which are: Savoy, Flat or Smooth leaf and Semi-Savoy.



Savoy Spinach

Savoy spinach is a larger variety that is usually sold by the bunch, like kale. It has a dark green color and is distinguished not only by its size but also by its curly leaves. Savoy spinach is a heartier plant and has a more substantial flavor than other types of spinach.



Flat or Smooth Leaf Spinach

Flat or Smooth leaf spinach is one of the more delicate varieties. The leaves are smooth and easier to clean, but the plant is not as hardy. This type of spinach is commonly used for processing.



Semi-Savoy Spinach

Semi-Savoy spinach is hardy like the Savoy but does not have as much wrinkle to its leaves, therefore making it easier to clean.



How Spinach Affects Your Health

Spinach is considered a “super food” because of its high amount of vitamins and nutrients. Not only is it a great source of fiber but it also has low calories. Like many other leafy greens, spinach is important for skin, hair and bone health.



Proper Storage

Spinach likes to be stored in a dry cool environment so do not wash before storing and line the container with a dry paper towel before putting it in the refrigerator. Spinach is a long lasting crop and can store up to three weeks if unwashed and uncut. Wash spinach before serving.



Spinach can be eaten in a variety of different ways and is a healthy component that can be easily added to many meals. Try using spinach in breakfast for dinner option like frittatas or omelets. You can replace lettuce with spinach on many types of sandwiches. Try making a chicken wrap with roasted chicken, feta cheese, spinach and HH farm strawberries.



Why Grow This Crop?

Spinach is a common leafy green that the chefs use in a variety of different ways. It is a great and nutritious alternative to lettuce. It grows quickly and is a crop that is going to be available during the winter months.



A Bit of History

Spinach has been around a long time and was first written about in 827 AD, although it was thought to originate in ancient Persia long before that. From Persia, the plant was then taken to China. It was not introduced to France and England until the 14th century.



Spinach can also be easily folded in to any side dish to make it healthier and add color. Next time you roast HH farm potatoes fold in some fresh spinach. It will slightly wilt which will add texture while still having a crunch. Squeeze fresh lemon over the top to brighten the flavors.

From the Field

Strawberry

The strawberry is a widely popular fruit that is grown all over the world. It has an attractive bright red color, juicy texture and is sweet. It can be eaten either fresh or preserved.



Where in the World?

Before the 18th century, strawberries grew wild in France. The French found them in the forest and brought them back to their gardens, thus becoming a popular fruit harvested by many. The popularity of this berry spread and reached Chile in 1712 where the plant was introduced with female flowers which developed the traditional strawberry we see today.



Hydroponic Strawberries

Strawberries that are grown in hydroponic systems are larger and juicier than if they were grown in soil. Growing hydroponically simply means growing without soil. In place of soil you use a growing medium that is geared towards good drainage. Three times a day water and nutrients (heavy calcium) run through the pots, draining down to the plants underneath in tower system.



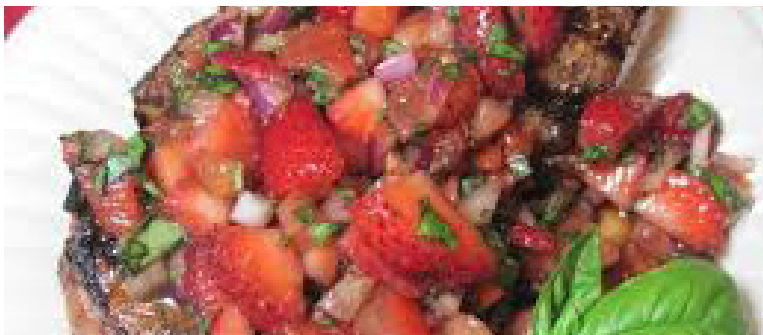
How Strawberries Affect Your Health

It was said in ancient Roman literature that they used strawberries for medicinal purposes. Strawberries are thought to lower rates of hypertension, cancer and inflammation. It has also been used to treat depression.



Proper Storage

The key to storing fresh berries is to keep them dry so they do not mold. Put the fresh berries on a tray, trying to keep them from touching each other. Cover the tray with plastic wrap and store in the refrigerator, unwashed. Wash before eating.



Strawberries can be used so many different ways. They can be eaten raw, preserved, eaten with dessert, eaten in dessert and they can also be savory. One of my favorite ways to prepare strawberries is with a spicy dish. The sweetness of the strawberry mellows out the spice and gives it a nice balance. Make a strawberry relish by using the exact method you would make fresh salsa, replacing the tomato component with strawberries. Leave the strawberries raw. This can be great with spiced fish, pork, black bean burgers, spicy sandwiches etc. The red from the strawberry also adds a great color to the top of the dish. Don't forget to drizzle a little honey on top to take out the bite of the acid from the lime juice while making your salsa.



Why Grow This Crop?

Strawberries are a very popular fruit which puts them in great demand with the chefs. They are perennials, which means they overwinter well and come back in the spring. This saves the farm seed and plant cost each year. Because they are not grown in soil, and instead hydroponically, it eliminates the risk of soil born diseases.



Did You Know?

Strawberries are used for many other things besides consumption. They are commonly used for lip gloss, candy, hand sanitizer, perfume and were even found in German and Italian art dating back to the 15th century.



Strawberry salad is a quick and easy dish that is always a crowd favorite. Simply mix sliced strawberries with spinach or arugula. Add small diced red onion and feta cheese. Mix in a mixing bowl. Make a strawberry vinaigrette to enhance the flavor of the strawberry. Put a cup of sliced strawberries into a blender. Add ½ cup of sherry vinegar. (you can substitute red wine vinegar). Slowly emulsify 3 cups of oil, while the blender is still running. Add honey and salt to taste. This salad is also great with basil, mint and/or toasted pecans.

From the Field

Summer Squash

Summer squash is most commonly harvested when the fruit is not fully ripe. This practice is done to allow the rind to be tender and edible. The main differences between summer squash and winter squash is that summer squash is not a vining plant and it also has a short storage life once harvested.



Straightneck Squash

Straightneck squash is a type of summer squash that is usually yellow. It is also known as yellow summer squash.



Crookneck Squash

Just like its name, crookneck squash has a crooked neck. The skins are tender and edible while the inside has a mildly sweet flavor.



Zucchini

Zucchini, although commonly mistaken for its own family of crop, is also a variety of summer squash and can be different shades of green.



How Squash Affects Your Health

Summer squash contains high amounts of manganese, which helps the body process glucose, carbohydrates and fats. It is also rich in Vitamins A and C.



Proper Storage

Summer squash bruises easily so keep that in mind while handling it. Wash any soil that might be on the outside and store in the refrigerator. To freeze: summer squash must be blanched before putting it in the freezer.



Why Grow This Crop?

Summer squash is relatively easy to grow and not very labor intensive to break down and clean, unlike other varieties of squash. Despite its name, summer squash likes mild temperatures, not too hot or cold.



A Bit of History

It was found in the journals of Lewis and Clark, October 12, 1804, that a tribe called Arikara grew large amounts of summer squash, also called simlin because it looked like simnel cake.



Summer squash is a very versatile vegetable, meaning it can be eaten many different ways. It can be shaved thin and eaten raw, put in pasta, roasted, served as a baked gratin (in place of potatoes). Try chickpea (garbanzo bean) salad with thinly shaved squash, mint, feta and tossed in a lemon vinaigrette. This dish is also great with quinoa or barley.



Baked summer squash pairs well with eggs or in spreads like zucchini, mint and yogurt. You can also use it for zucchini bread. Slice squash thinly and season with salt. Let drain. Sauté with garlic and shallots (or onion). Put in baking dish, season with salt and crack eggs on top. Bake at 350 for 10 mins.

From the Field

Sweet Peppers

Bell peppers are often grouped in the category of sweet peppers along with Carmens and Lunchbox due to the lack of heat. The whole pepper is edible but the ribs and seeds are often removed when cooking due to their bitter flavor.



Green Bell Peppers

Bell peppers get their name from their bell shape. They grow in warm drier summer months and are very susceptible to disease if there is dramatic temperature change or too much moisture in the ground. These peppers can be green, red, yellow, and sometimes brown, and purple. Bell peppers are a main component to many sauces, soups, salsas and many other dishes.



Carmen Peppers

Carmen peppers are a sweet Italian pepper that elongated and shaped like a bull's horn. They are very sweet when they are fully mature and red, but they can also be eaten at the immature stage of green. Carmen peppers are very versatile and can be used in place of bell peppers when cooking.



Lunchbox Peppers

Lunchbox peppers are a smaller variety of sweet peppers. They have a sweet flavor similar to a piece of fruit. They can also be known as snack peppers or mini peppers due to their shape and size. Lunchbox peppers can be red, yellow or orange.



How Sweet Peppers Affect Your Health

Sweet peppers are high in vitamins and nutrients and increase the levels of vitamin C the more they ripen. They have also been shown to reduce the risks of gastric cancer and esophageal cancer.



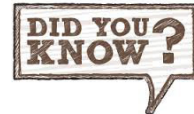
Proper Storage

Green peppers will usually store longer than yellow, red or orange. They need to be stored unwashed in the refrigerator. Wash right before use. To freeze: wash peppers and make sure they are completely dry. Chop to desired length, spread them out on a tray and put into the freezer. Once frozen put them into an airtight smaller container and back into the freezer.



Why Grow This Crop?

Sweet peppers are widely used in many many different types of cooking. They are easy to identify and break down, making them a more marketable product to chefs.



Did You Know?

Sweet peppers are the only members of their family which do not produce capsaicin, which is where the heat comes from in hot peppers. Christopher Columbus named the pepper when he brought it back to Europe, due to the popularity of black pepper which came from India. Although known in culinary terms as a vegetable, sweet peppers are actually a fruit.



Sweet peppers are so versatile and can be made in so many different ways. You can stuff them, turn them into pepper aioli to spread on sandwiches, use them as a base for soup and sauces, the list goes on. Peppers are in season at the same time as tomatoes and sweet corn so they make a great sweet corn salsa. Put sweet corn in a mixing bowl with farm sliced cherry tomatoes, diced red onion, diced farm sweet peppers (carmens, bells or lunchbox) and squeeze two limes over the top. Add honey to sweeten, cilantro and salt and pepper to finish. This makes for a great side dish or topping on burgers, tacos, quesadillas and stuffed peppers.



Green bell peppers are one of three components in what's called the "holy trinity". The holy trinity, which also consists of celery and onions, is the base to many creole or Louisiana style dishes, such as gumbo, jambalaya and etouffe.

From the Field

Tarragon

Tarragon is a member of the sunflower family. It has long thin green leaves and grows wild across Europe, Asia and North America. Tarragon has a bitter sweet flavor and it smells like anise (licorice). It is most commonly used in egg, fish and steak dishes.



French Tarragon

French tarragon is the most common of the varieties and is used in classic French cuisine. It has a bitter sweet flavor.



Mexican Tarragon

Mexican tarragon can be substituted for French Tarragon because they are very similar in flavor and appearance. It can be distinguished by its marigold type flowers.



Russian Tarragon

Russian tarragon does not have as much flavor as the other two varieties. It is a hardy plant and produces more leaves than French Tarragon. It is most commonly served in salads.



How Tarragon Affects Your Health

Tarragon contains high amounts of vitamins and minerals. It helps the digestive system and also can increase appetite. Because it increases appetite, it is known to help with anorexia.



Proper Storage

Tarragon is best stored fresh, wrapped in a damp paper towel and put in the refrigerator. To dry: hang tarragon upside down with string in a cool room with good air circulation. Once dry, remove the leaves from the stem and grind.



Fines Herbes is a main seasoning component in French cuisine. It is made up of chopped tarragon, chives, parsley and chervil. Fines Herbes can be eaten raw on salads or cooked for a short period of time in a dish. It is most commonly used as a finishing seasoning when the dish is served.



Why Grow This Crop?

Although tarragon is a less popular herb with the chefs, it adds a diversity to the herb garden and is very easy to grow.



Did You Know?

Tarragon is used to flavor a popular soft drink called Tarhun. It is most popular in Russia and Armenia. It is a bright green color and like most sodas, it is made out of a sugary concentrate.



Bernaise is a classic French sauce great with steak and fish. It is a derivative of hollandaise, which is one of the seven mother sauces of cooking. To make bernaise start by making your traditional hollandaise. In a separate pot sauté shallots and tarragon. Add white wine, reducing by $\frac{1}{2}$. Temper that into your finished hollandaise and hold warm in a double broiler so the sauce doesn't separate.

From the Field

Thyme

Thyme is a very common herb used for both culinary and medicinal purposes. It is a member of the mint family and closely related to oregano. Thyme can be used both fresh and dry and it is available year round. The plant has a woody stem with clustered small green leaves and flowers. There are many varieties of thyme with English Thyme being the most common.



English Thyme

English thyme is the most commonly used variety of thyme. It originated in western Europe and Italy. English thyme grows wild in New York. It has dark gray-green leaves that are small. English thyme pairs well with meat, fish, soups, sauces, stews, vegetables, eggs and rice.



French Thyme

French thyme tastes similar to English thyme but is a little sweeter. It is one of the main herbs in Fines Herbes, which is a classic component in French cuisine and made up of chopped thyme, chopped chervil, chopped parsley and chopped tarragon.



Lemon Thyme

Lemon thyme looks and grows like French and English thyme but has an intense lemony flavor. This variety of thyme is best used in dishes that call for lemon or lemon juice.



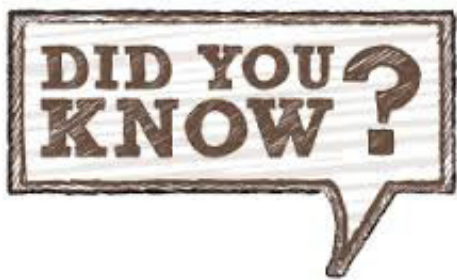
How Thyme Affects Your Health

The oils from the leaves of the thyme plant have been used to treat coughs, diarrhea, stomach aches, diuretics and also to treat bedwetting.



Proper Storage

Storing thyme fresh: wrap in a damp paper towel and keep in the refrigerator. Drying thyme: take the leaves off the stem and put them on a plate in a cool dry place for several days.



The oil from thyme has high amounts of a compound called thymol. Thymol is a key ingredient in mouthwash and hand sanitizer.



Why Grow This Crop?

Thyme is one of the most essential herbs used in kitchens due to its variety of uses. Not only is it in popular demand with the chefs but it is also easy to grow and you can get multiple cuttings off one plant. The plant grows quickly which makes it available for an extended period of time.



A Bit of History

Thyme has been around for a long time and was used frequently by many cultures. Ancient Egyptians used it for embalming, ancient Greeks used it for incense in their temples, Romans used it to give their wine and cheese more flavor and it was used during the Middle Ages to help keep away nightmares.



Thyme is one of the main components for bouquet garni. Bouquet garni is a bundle of herbs placed in cheese cloth and tied together with string. It is mainly used to prepare soups and sauces. It is a great way to incorporate aromatics into your dishes while keeping away the mouth feel of the small leaves. Simply tie the string to your pot handle and treat the bouquet garni like a tea bag, removing from the liquid once you have your desired flavor.

From the Field

Tomatillo

Like the tomato, the tomatillo is a member of the poisonous nightshade family. This fruit is commonly known as the husk tomato due to the husks that surround the fruit when grown and harvested. The tomatillo was originally from Mexico and is eaten both raw and cooked.



Toma Verde

Toma Verde tomatillos are small round fruits that are a green color when harvested. Like all tomatillos, they are surrounded by an inedible husk that is removed before eating. Toma Verde tomatillos have a sweet tangy flavor.



Purple Tomatillos

Purple tomatillos are rare. They are the same shape and size of the Toma Verde but have a purplish skin color and are sweeter to the taste.



Yellow Tomatillos

Like the Toma Verde and purple tomatillos the yellow tomatillo has small round fruit. The skin is a yellowish purple color and it has a sweet tangy flavor.



How Tomatillos Affect Your Health

Tomatillos are a great source of nutrition and contain fiber, manganese and potassium. They also contain high levels of vitamins C and K, copper and iron.



Proper Storage

Store tomatillos in their husks, without washing. They can last up to 2 months. If you peel the husks, store them in the refrigerator. Wash before using. To freeze: remove the husk and wash. Either chop to desired size or keep whole. Put in a freezer bag and place in the freezer.



Salsa verde is one of the most common ways to eat tomatillos. Take the husks off and wash thoroughly. Toss the whole tomatillos in a mixing bowl with chopped onions. Roast in a 425 F oven for 20-30 minutes or until the tomatillos have color. Puree in a food processor with garlic and cilantro.



Why Grow This Crop?

Tomatillos are a versatile fruit that are traditionally used in Spanish and Mexican cuisine. They grow much like a tomato but produce longer throughout the season and produce an abundance of fruit from each plant. Like tomatoes, they can be processed down and stored for use during the winter. This is also a very easy crop to grow because it is less susceptible to disease unlike tomatoes and peppers.



Did You Know?

Tomatillos played a larger part in Mayan and Aztec culture than tomatoes. They originated in Central America and were later distributed around the world.



Tomatillos can make a great salad dressing that can be used on the salad bar or poured over meat and tomato or corn salads. Put raw or roasted tomatillos in a blender with a small amount of onion and garlic. Make your own aioli by using raw egg and emulsifying oil into it or you can also use mayonnaise. You can use plain yogurt as a healthier option. Finish by adding chopped cilantro and season with honey and salt.

From the Field

Tomatoes

Tomato plants bear edible, often times red fruit called the tomato. There are many different varieties of tomatoes grown across the world. They are commonly grown in greenhouses making them available year round. Tomato plants are classified into two categories: determinate and indeterminate. Determinate tomatoes are short and bushy. They produce their fruit all at once. Indeterminate tomatoes can grow vertically up to 10ft tall. They produce fruit over several months during the growing season.



Beefsteak Tomato

Beefsteak tomatoes are one of the largest varieties of tomatoes. It is most commonly considered the “slicing tomato” due to its large round shape and red color, making it ideal for sandwiches.



Heirloom Tomato

Heirloom tomatoes get their name from the age and heritage of their seeds. They are by far the most flavorful of all the tomato varieties and can be many different colors ranging from yellow, pink, green, red, purple and black.



Roma Tomato

Roma tomatoes are a plum tomato primarily used for canning and making tomato paste. They are skinnier than beefsteak tomatoes and are firm and meaty on the inside.



How Tomatos Affect Your Health

Tomatoes are a great source of vitamin C. They also have a large amount of antioxidants and a high amount of lycopene. Lycopene is thought to help with bone cancer.



Proper Storage

If tomatoes are underripe, store them at room temperature until fully ripened. Once ripened, put them unwashed in a refrigerator. Wash before using.



Why Grow This Crop?

Tomatoes are the most valuable crop to HH due to the commonality and high usage by HH chefs. Not only are tomatoes frequently used fresh but they are also a crop that can be processed down into purees and pastes to be used throughout the winter.



A Bit of History

Tomatoes have been around a long time dating back to 500 BC. The tomato plant was first thought to be poisonous by Europeans who were scared of their bright shiny fruit. The leaves are actually poisonous but the fruit is not. Tomatoes were first used by the Aztecs and brought to Spain by Hernan Cortez after he captured Mexico City in 1521.



Tomatoes can be eaten many different ways. One of the most common ways to consume them is salsa. Rough chop tomatoes, onions, jalapenos and sweet peppers. Toss with olive oil and roast on a sheet pan in a 425 F oven for approximately 20-25 mins or until you see color. Cool the roasted vegetables to room temperature. Puree in a blender with cilantro and garlic, adding red wine vinegar and salt to taste.



One of the best ways to celebrate the tomato, especially heirloom varieties, is to make tomato sandwiches. Use sourdough bread for extra tang and most importantly do not forget the Dukes mayonnaise! Season with salt and pepper.

From the Field

Watermelon

Watermelon is grown for its large fruit. It is a vining plant and requires a lot of space for growing. The watermelon has a hard rind and is usually green with dark green stripes. The fruit can be seeded or seedless. It has a sweet, juicy flavor. The rind can be cooked and the melon can be eaten raw or pickled.



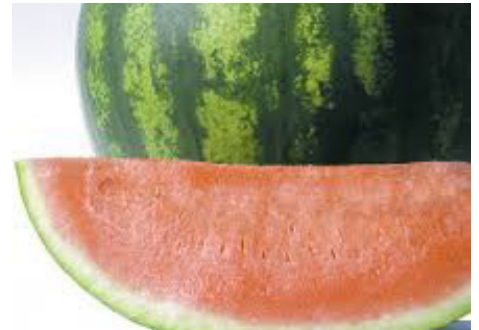
Yellow Doll

Yellow Doll watermelon is a round variety that is fairly small. They are the earliest of all the melons. Yellow doll watermelons have a bright yellow flesh and are very sweet. This variety is seeded.



Orange Crisp

Orange Crisps watermelons are seedless which means they require a pollinator in order to produce fruit. Orange Crisps have a semi-sweet flavor.



Farmer's Wonderful

Farmer's Wonderful is also a seedless watermelon and therefore requires a pollinator. It has a pinkish-red flesh and is one of the best flavors of all the varieties.



How Watermelon Affects Your Health

Although watermelons are 92% water, they are full of many nutrients. Watermelons have a high amount of antioxidants and can help fight off the formation of free radicals which are known to cause cancer.



Proper Storage

When whole watermelon is under refrigeration it can be stored for up to two to three weeks. If the watermelon is cut, wrap the melon in plastic wrap and put in the refrigerator. The plastic will prevent the watermelon from absorbing other flavors in the fridge and will also help to keep the fruit moist on the inside. Cut watermelon stored properly should last approximately three days.



Watermelon is a very versatile fruit and can be eaten many different ways. Not only is it fantastic sliced and raw, but it is also great in salad. Try adding arugula or spinach, with feta to cubed fresh watermelon. Make your own watermelon vinaigrette by pureeing watermelon and red wine vinegar. Slowly emulsify olive oil into it and season with honey and salt to taste.



Why Grow This Crop?

Watermelons have reproductive components and require a pollinator if you are growing seedless melons. You must plant a pollinator (seeded melon) every five plants to ensure the flowers of the seedless melons are able reproduce fruit.



A Bit of History

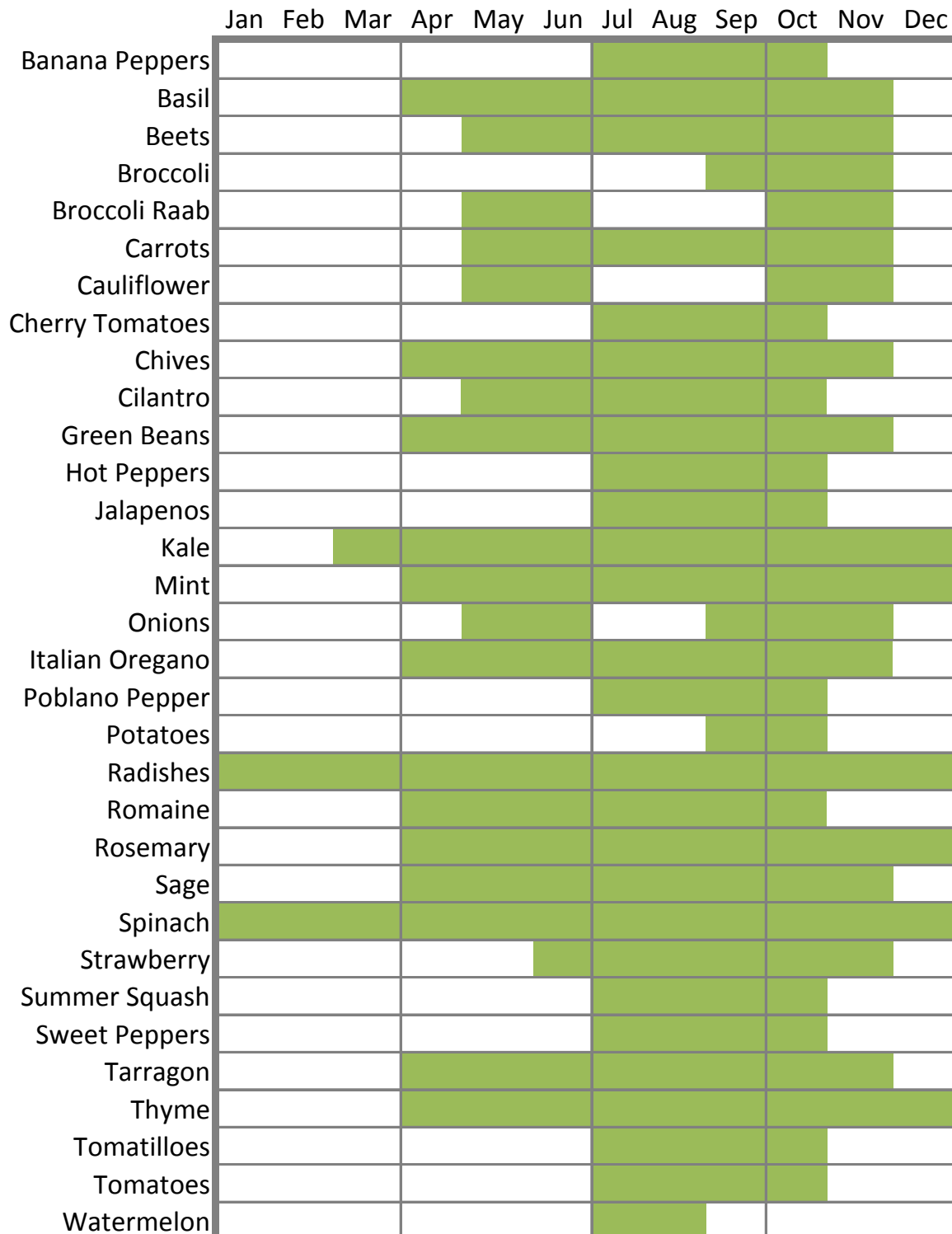
Watermelons were first discovered in southern Africa growing wild. Seeds of watermelons were found in Tutankhamun's tomb. European colonists and slaves from Africa introduced watermelons to North America.



Watermelon pico de gallo is a refreshing twist on a classic salsa. Simply replace the tomato ingredients with watermelon. This makes for a great topping on many things but especially tacos, tortas, quesadillas, fajitas and BBQ pizzas.

Seasonal Harvest Guide

Cooking seasonally has many benefits. Not only does it reduce cost, it also ensures the best tasting, highest quality produce. This chart illustrates the optimal harvest times of many standard crops grown in Central Illinois. Some crops (eg. carrots, beets, onions, potatoes) are storage crops that once harvested, can be stored for availability in the off-season.



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