



HIGH GROUND ORGANICS

GROWING EXCEPTIONAL FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Winter CSA

December 14th and 15th 2011

This Week

tokyo market turnips

butternut squash

green cabbage

leeks

red potatoes (romanze or sangre)

collards or red russian kale

red oak leaf or green butter lettuce

baby/juvenile chantenay carrots
(bunched)

Reminder: Winter CSA Deliveries are Every Other Week

Next delivery will be December 28th and 29th

Managing the amount of chill that the plants receive is critical for organic growers. Because we don't use the high analysis, highly soluble synthetic fertilizers that conventional growers use, finding other ways to give the plants vigor is critical. Most conventional growers get their plants out after they have only been in the cooler 1-2 weeks, but this year we gave our plants a full month of additional chill. And as strange as it sounds, a field that has been planted in early December can come into production earlier in spring than one planted in early November—because the plants have accumulated more chill hours sitting in the cooler.

Preparing for strawberry planting requires a lot of field prep. It needs a special tractor set-up to raise the beds and lay down mulch. Some years early rains can wreak havoc with this time-critical field work. But this year all has gone smoothly and the field has been dry enough to work when we needed to get in. If all goes as it should, this means the first scrumptious spring berries should appear in your boxes by early April.

Veggie Notes: This is a new planting of carrots -- the mokums we've had for awhile from our sandier Lewis Rd. soil are finished for the year. These chantenays are still small, but they're the same type we grow that get really large later on. The butternuts have been getting sweeter by the week. I recommend making cabbage soup this week!

Gift Certificates Available

Spread some holiday cheer with the perfect gift for the vegetable lover in your life--fresh vegetables from the farm! Send us a check for \$88 for 4 weeks or \$198 for 9 weeks of CSA vegetables and we'll e-mail you a gift certificate as a pdf that you can print out (or we can send it directly to the receiver). Or call us to do it quickly by credit card. You can also add flowers (\$120 for 4 weeks vegetables + flowers; \$270 for 9 weeks veg + flowers).

Checks should be sent to: High Ground Organics
PO Box 2601
Watsonville, CA 95077

Call Jeanne at 831-254-4918 to pay by credit card.

Planting Strawberries from Steve

Yesterday we planted the last of our strawberry plants for next year's patch. Unlike last year, when there was a shortage of plants available, this year there were plenty and they are some of the nicest plants we have gotten in a long time. The two varieties we planted were Seascape, which was introduced in the early 90's and isn't widely grown any more because it is considered too soft to ship, and Albion, a more recent introduction that we first started growing a few years ago and love because of its amazing flavor. Albions are firmer than Seascapes, and while both types are really delicious, they are noticeably different to the discerning strawberry palate. We like to grow both varieties when we can.

The "plants" that we use are actually runners that are dug and trimmed off of mother plants that were grown at high elevation nurseries in the far Northern part of the state. After the plants have accumulated many hours of "chill", including 3-4 additional weeks in the cooler after they have been dug, they are essentially fooled into thinking (if a plant can do such a thing) that they have already gone through winter. By the time we plant them here at our more temperate coastal location, they grow vigorously through the heart of winter and start setting fruit as early as April.

Everything in your box is certified organic and was grown by High Ground Organics.

Notes from Chef Andrew

My new love in the kitchen is the recipe for Roasted **Leeks en Papillote** (Leeks cooked in an envelope). These are just so good, even my kids really went for them. They are quick to assemble and easy to make- I grab a single leek and throw this together as a snack while writing or as part of lunch-and would be a great addition to a festive holiday meal. Another festive looking dish is the Honey Roasted **Butternut** squash discs. This is dish that is good as a side or as a building block, and is quite flexible as far as seasoning it goes. I love **Tokyo turnips** caramelized, but I have been playing with “slaws” of late and will use the **turnips** for one of my experiments. Either grated or cut into strips on the Ben-Riner, I might dress them with a Japanese style dressing or with a sprightly lemon based vinaigrette. Grated, I would use the lettuce with them, And for the Japanese style slaw I might add some **carrots** and/or **cabbages**. The **potatoes** and **turnips** might find themselves roasted together with **carrots**, or the Double Cooked **potatoes** may make an appearance. The **Russian kale** or **collards** will go into a one pot dish with mushrooms, carrots, and some whole grains, probably with nuts and dried cherries or cranberries. This is a pretty quick dish to assemble, and is filling without being heavy. The chewiness of the greens and grains seems to appeal to kids as well adults, and the little spikes of sweetness from the dried fruit add a pleasant contrast to an earthy dish.

Honey Roasted Butternut Squash, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

This dish is great as a side or as a base to stack things like cooked greens and grains on. I like to use a rack to cook these on so they can crisp on both sides, but if you don't have a rack, just use a well oiled piece of foil on a sheet pan.

1 large or 2 medium butternut squash, bulbous end removed and reserved for another use, peeled, and sliced into ½ inch discs	¼ cup neutral flavored oil such as grapeseed or canola
¼ cup fragrant honey	1 garlic clove, peeled and split
1 pinch powdered cinnamon or a 2 inch sprig of fresh rosemary, crushed with the flat of a knife	Salt and pepper to taste

Heat the oven to 400°F. Place the squash into a large bowl. Warm the oil in a small pan over low heat. You just want to warm the oil enough to liquefy the honey and extract flavor from the aromatics. When the oil is warm, pour in the honey, and stir to incorporate it into the oil. Add the garlic clove and the cinnamon or rosemary, and stir to mix in. Allow to heat up until fragrant. Remove from the heat and let cool down for a couple minutes. Strain the mixture over the squash, tossing to thoroughly coat the discs. Season with salt and pepper, again tossing to evenly coat. Place the discs on a lightly oiled rack over a sheet pan, or directly onto a well oiled sheet pan, and place in the middle of the oven for 20 to 30 minutes. Cook until golden and tender. If you have cooked the squash directly on the sheet pan, you might need to flip the discs part way through to ensure browning on both sides. Serve hot or at room temperature as part of a starter salad or in a sandwich.

Chef's Notes and Tips: This dish lends itself to many variations. You could add butter to the honey/oil mix for a richer flavor, and the honey you choose will of course make a

difference. The seasonings, too, will change the dish. I frequently like to use cumin and coriander with cinnamon and garlic with a little oregano for a Southwestern flair. Lavender, cardamom, and black pepper are a nice combination with winter squashes also. This method could be applied to cubes of squash as well. That way, you can use the entire squash. Just prep the whole squash and cut it into ½ inch cubes. Proceed as in the instructions, but adjust to cooking time to accommodate the smaller size bits by shaving off around 10 minutes. Of course, unless you have a very tight meshed rack, you will be cooking these directly on the sheet pan. Serves: 4

Roasted Leeks en Papillote, from Chef Andrew E Cohen (after Elizabeth Schneider)

This is a riff on a dish I found in “Vegetables A to Z” by Elizabeth Schneider. The result is sublime. I find it interesting to note the changes in flavor as I eat the different colors of the leek, from the white to the palest green to the more uniform green. Try these as a starter or have as a side with roast chicken, salmon, or braised beef.

4 medium leeks, trimmed of most of the greens, split lengthwise, cleaned, and cut into 1 inch lengths	2 medium carrots, peeled and cut diagonally into ¼ inch slices
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves	Olive oil as needed
Salt (such as Maldon or other coarse grained salt) and pepper	

Heat the oven to 425°F. Lay an 18 inch piece of parchment paper out on a sheet pan and lightly oil it. Place the leek pieces onto the middle of one half of the paper, then scatter the carrots over that. Try to fit them into a single layer. Drizzle or spritz with a little more oil, then scatter the herbs over the vegetables and season with salt and pepper. Fold the paper over and crimp the edges starting at one corner next to the fold, tightly sealing the packet all the way around. Shake the packet to flatten out the contents. Place in the middle of the hot oven and cook for 20 minutes. This should be sufficient to cook the leeks until they are entirely tender, but open the packet carefully to check so you can re-seal it for further cooking if need be. (Once you have done this and know the recipe/your oven, this step probably won't be necessary.) Once the leeks are done, open the packet and serve hot.

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