



High Ground Organics Community Supported Agriculture

August 10th and 11th, 2011

How I'd Store It, from Chef Andrew Cohen

When it comes to storing your produce, one thing that is really helpful to know is which parts of your refrigerator maintain what temperatures. Every refrigerator is a little different. Most units have drawers for vegetables (I know them as "crispers". Since having kids, no drawers have been large enough to hold my weekly vegetable haul.). Outside of the drawers the internal temps will vary from place to place, with the lower parts of the refrigerator being the coldest. You may also find that one side is much colder than the other side. I have two drawers at the bottom of the refrigerator, and I use the next two shelves above these for produce. The bottom drawer is the coldest, with the left side of the refrigerator being significantly colder- as in delicate leafy greens freeze to death on the bottom left. This is the perfect place for things like broccoli and other cold storing vegetables. If you are not sure of the temperatures inside your refrigerator, get a thermometer and leave it in different places in there and check it out. You can also learn by trial and error.

For lettuces, I break down the heads and wash them and dry them, being sure they are well dried. Then I load the whole leaves into a large Rubbermaid tub lined with paper towels, and cover the lettuce with a paper towel as well. Put the tight fitting top on and put the tub in an area that is not too cold. Really cold temps expand the water in the cells and rupture the cell walls, and excess water encourages the leaves to break down and get slimy. Too much circulating cold air will rob the leaves of moisture and leave your lettuce limp. This method of storage will keep lettuce fresh at least 1 week, oftentimes more.

Broccoli needs it cold, so put it in a loose plastic bag and seal it, then put it in the coldest part of the refrigerator, typically the bottom. Cauliflower, another brassica, should be there right next to the broccoli. If the inside of the bag gets wet, the outside of the cauliflower is liable to discolor more quickly. Turnips, beets, and other roots go here as well. I always trim any stems from the vegetables, although with beets it is best to leave at least an inch so they don't dehydrate in storage or cooking. If you wish to cook the greens of beets or turnips, cut them off and wrap in paper towelling, and use as soon as possible as they tend to break down rapidly. Brussels sprouts are another one that want the coldest part of the refrigerator. Stored in the coldest area of the 'frig, things like watermelon radish, black radish, celeriac, turnips and rutabagas can last a very long time-up to a couple weeks or more. Fresh potatoes go here as well, but they should be in a paper sack or a towel. Once potatoes are cured, they should be stored in a cool dry place in the dark. Carrots are

another vegetable that can take the cold, but truthfully, as long as they are kept cool they seem to be fine. Remember to take off the greens of carrots or all the energy in the carrot itself will go to feeding the growing tops. I keep carrots in a box with paper towels over them, along with my little Tokyo turnips. Air is more the foe of carrots than temperature, and left uncovered carrots can dehydrate and shrivel.

For vegetables such as peppers, summer squash, and eggplant, wrap them in plastic and keep them cool and dry. Leeks and scallions I wrap in paper towels to absorb moisture and then plastic, being sure to keep them sealed, and keep them with the aforementioned. For greens such as kales and collards, store in plastic and keep anywhere in the refrigerator. I usually trim the stems shorter so they take up less room. For collards, I will sometimes cut the stems away and roll the

leaves and wrap in a paper towel and then plastic. Chard is more sensitive to temperature and moisture, so wrap with paper if you are going to keep it a longer time, otherwise just wrap in plastic and keep cool. Things like mei quin and rapini I keep in the colder parts of the refrigerator. Rapini is not fond of moisture inside the bag, so consider a paper towel if you be eating it later in the week. Celery, as it is mostly water, should not go into the coldest part of the refrigerator lest the cells break. And if the celery gets limp, just cut off the bottom and immerse the bottom in water and you will have nice crisp celery in a short time. For fennel, take off the fronds and wrap in paper towels, and store the heads in the medium zone in plastic. For green beans, store cool in plastic, as you would favas. Don't shell the favas unless you intend to use them right away. Cabbage gets stored in plastic, and can take colder temps, but not the coldest. If the outside of the cabbage looks spotty, just peel away the outer leaves-- chances are good the inside is fine.

For strawberries, I will leave out on the counter overnight if the house is cool. Otherwise I put them in a plastic tub lined with paper towels. Excess moisture and moving air are foes of fresh strawberries. Blueberries seem more forgiving and are okay with just a plastic bag over the box they come in.

For herbs, I roll the bunches in towelling after taking off the twist-tie, and store in tubs or a plastic bag all together. Basil gets paper towelling and then a loose plastic bag. I have tried the method of leaving it in a jar of water like a flower bouquet, but find I have more success storing it in the refrigerator.

For tomatoes, I leave them on the counter with enough space so air can circulate. I find that tomatoes that have been refrigerated lose some of the brightness to their flavor and sometimes develop a grainy/mealy texture.

However you store your vegetables, check for open bags and internal water droplets that can lead to quick decay.

This Week

Strawberries

Red and Green Butter
Lettuce

Red Cabbage

Red Beets

Potatoes

Mixed summer squash

Mixed Cherry Tomatoes *

Flowers: Zinnias

Notes and Recipes from Chrissi

Andrew is out on vacation this week, so you will need to make do with the recipes of Chrissi. I'm seeing a lot of red in this box. When my kids were small, we would sometimes have monochromatic meals, where we would try and make a meal out of fruits and veggies of one color. At times it would get a little bizarre and my credentials as providing my family with healthy meals were questioned when I ruled that Hostess Snoballs could be included in the "Pink" meal.

Grandma Ann's Red Cabbage

I can't get a head of red cabbage without making at least ONE pot of my Grandmother's red cabbage. I'm not sure if this came from the Welsh side or the German side of her family, but it's a favorite of ALL sides of our family.

1 medium head red cabbage	3 large tart apples, chopped
½ large sweet onion, chopped	1 TBS Butter
Salt and Pepper	½ C sugar
½ cup cider vinegar	Pinch of Caraway seeds if you have them

According to Grandma: Use kettle with a tight fitting lid. Put in butter, shredded cabbage, apples, onion and seasoning. Start cooking on high fire, then on slow fire about 1 or 1 ½ hours. Stir frequently. (I like to brown the onions a bit for the first step and then just throw everything in.)

Crowd Pleaser Potato Casserole

Since I'm on a "family favorites" roll, I'm going to include my Mom's Potato casserole recipe. She made this for Stephen's and my wedding many years ago... folks have long since forgotten our wedding, but few have forgotten Mom's casserole!

WARNING: this recipe is not for the calorie/cholesterol counters, but the good news is that substitutions for low fat products can be made with no ill effects to the outcome!

8 (or the equivalent to) large potatoes	1-2 Bay leaves
1 ½ cups sour cream	1 ½ cups grated cheddar cheese
¼ c melted butter	3 green onions, including tops
1-small can of chopped green chilies for a bit more spice, OPTIONAL	cooked, chopped chicken breasts for a little extra protein, OPTIONAL
Salt and pepper	

Put whole potatoes in pot of water with bay leaves and salt. Boil until fork tender. Let cool enough to be able to grate coarsely into mixing bowl. Add the remaining ingredients and stir gently. Put in casserole dish and bake uncovered at 350 or ½ hour or until hot.

Tell a Friend Campaign!

If you can find a friend to sign up for a 4-week trial to our CSA, we'll give you a free flower bouquet. If they sign up for a full 9-week session, you get 3 weeks of flowers free! Just write "Referred by: your name" on the sign-up form, or tell your friend to mention you if they call in to sign up.

Full text of all recipes is available on our website:
www.highgroundorganics.com/recipes

CSA Cooking Demos - Williams Sonoma, Los Gatos

Saturday, August 13th, from 10 am to 12 , \$10
 Thursday, August 25th from 6:30 to 8:30 pm, \$10
 Saturday, September 10th from 10 to 12 pm, \$10

Join Joni Sare, Therapeutic Chef, at Williams-Sonoma, in Los Gatos, for an improv cooking demo using the ingredients from the CSA box, plus your pantry and spice drawer. Joni will share info on: the anatomy of food, nutritional information, biochemistry of the body, the alchemy of cooking, tips and tricks for healthy cooking, and so much more. (These classes are really fun!) Sign up at www.jonisare.com/cooking-outside-the-box/ or just show up.

Wine Poached Beets

I'm a huge beet fan and I LOVE this recipe. It's simple, fast and can be eaten hot out of the pan or cold sliced into a salad.

¾ c dry red wine or apple juice, if preferred	½ c water
1 Tbsp. brown sugar	2 ½ lbs beets quartered
Honey	1 Tbsp. chopped Parsley

Combine ½ c wine, water and sugar in pan. Bring to a boil and allow sugar to dissolve. Add beets and cook on low about 45 minutes. Drain, beets skins can easily be removed at this time, transfer to a serving bowl with salt and pepper to taste, and remaining ¼ c of wine. Drizzle with honey and garnish with parsley.

Italian Stuffed Summer Squash

This is a lovely recipe that can be made as vegetarian or can have Italian sausage added for the non-vegetarian. It works great if you have some spinach left over (ha ha) from last week's box.

4 medium summer squash, halved and seeds removed	8 large basil leaves
1 8 oz pkg of softened cream cheese	½ c sour cream
2 cups fresh spinach	¼ cup parsley, finely chopped
Cherry tomatoes	½ tsp. sea salt and pepper to taste.

Sauté spinach in a frying pan over a medium heat with a small amount of olive oil and cook until it is reduced by ½. Press out remaining liquid. Combine cream cheese, sour cream, spinach, parsley and salt and pepper to taste.

OPTIONAL: Sauté sweet Italian sausage with ½ onion and combine to the cream cheese mix.

Place a basil leaf in the bottom of each squash and fill with the cream cheese mixture.

Bake at 350 for 25-35 minutes, depending on the size of the squash, until fork tender.

Garnish with halved cherry tomatoes and perhaps some fresh grated parmesan cheese.

Everything in your box and the flowers are certified organic. All veggies and fruits were grown by High Ground Organics, except the tomatoes, which are from Coke Farm this week. Organic flowers are from the Thomas Farm.