

The Pod

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

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Meet Your Farmer, Kate Kennedy

"Queen of the Shun-pikers" was a nickname Kate Kennedy earned from a friend of hers at massage school. "I favor back roads and circuitous routes; I like the long way round. You encounter interesting people and places that way," says Kate, "In a way, my driving style is exactly how I found farming."



Kate came to New Entry two years ago with great enthusiasm, and very little formal farming experience. "The whole experience has been intensely illuminating," remarks Kate, "I've been accumulating vast amounts of information on many levels. It is certainly the most interesting work I've ever done. I'm thankful for my varied career path. Many of my previous jobs' skills have been called into play at the farm." Kate's non-linear career path includes time spent in the music industry, practicing massage therapy and reiki, working at an educational research facility, coordinating conferences, and being a mom. "Mom is the most important piece. As any Mom will tell you, you are constantly juggling multiple needs at once." Kate has a very eclectic resume, but she feels it has prepared her for the many facets that require managing on a farm.

So, you may ask, what is WitchGrass Farm? WitchGrass Farm is a small New England farm specializing in medicinal and culinary herbs, and unusual cut flowers. "Food should be alchemical. A mixture of nutritious, delicious and energetically invigorating for both your body and soul," states Kate. "Don't tell anyone, but I practice reiki on the plants when no one is looking." Kate feels that to nourish yourself your food should speak to your body on every level from its visual appeal to its taste, to how it's raised. Raising food as organically and sustainably as one can is important to both our health and the health of the planet.

And is it a wise choice to name your farm after a tenacious weed? "A wise choice to name the farm after a tough weed, every farmer and gardener's nemesis? Probably not, at least that's what a sane person would say," laughs Kate, "but I like to think that witchgrass will lend it's spunk and vitality to the farm's inner workings."

Produce this week:

Tokyo bekana • Summer Squash
Arugula or Braising mix • Beets
Lettuce • Kohlrabi • Basil
Raspberries

Crop Information:

Kohlrabi



Kohlrabi is a plant in the cabbage family that slightly resembles turnips and can be substituted for them in most recipes. The bulbous stem of kohlrabi yields a crisp flesh that can be eaten raw or lightly cooked. The young leaves can be used like any cooking green. The bulbs are either green or purple, depending on the variety. The origins of kohlrabi is a little uncertain. We know it existed in the 1st century AD because Apicius, who wrote the oldest known cookbook on cooking and dining in imperial Rome, mentions the kohlrabi in his preparations. Kohlrabi found its way into Northern India in the 1600's where the Hindus considered it an important staple of their diet along with rice and greens. More recently, this unassuming vegetable is found in the cuisines of Israel, China and Africa

Handling: Separate bulb from greens. Smaller bulbs do not need to be peeled. For large bulbs, peel with sharp knife or vegetable peeler.

Storing: Kohlrabi can be stored in the vegetable bin for up to a week.

Freezing: Cut off tops and roots and wash well. Slice ¼-inch thick or dice into ½-inch cubes. Blanch diced or sliced kohlrabi in boiling water for 1 to 2 minutes. Pack in containers, leaving ¼ inch head space. Seal, label, and freeze.

Crop Information

Beets



Beets are in the amaranth family but the most well known variety is the garden beet. Other cultivated varieties include the spinach beet, as well as the sugar beet, which is important in the production of table sugar. The wild ancestor of these varieties is native to the Mediterranean, Europe's Atlantic Coast, and the Near East. The deep-red roots of popular red garden beet are often eaten boiled, either as a cooked vegetable, or cold in a salad after cooking and adding oil and vinegar. In Eastern Europe beet soups, like cold borscht, are popular dishes. Many farmers grow a several different beet varieties, including golden beets and Chioggia (or candy cane) striped beets.

Health Benefits: Beets are a great source of many vitamins and minerals. Beets are rich in antioxidants, which are important for their cancer-fighting properties. Beets also contain high amounts of fiber, which can help maintain a healthy body weight and promote digestive health.

Handling: Scrub well before cooking, but leave an inch or so of the green tops on to minimize bleeding.

Storing: Beets and greens will last several weeks in the refrigerator if wrapped in damp cloth or in plastic in drawer of fridge.

Freezing: Baby beets are worth freezer space. Wash and sort for sizes; small beets freeze the best. Leave roots and ½ inch of stem attached so the juice won't bleed out while boiling. Boil until tender, about 25-30 minutes for small ones and 45-50 minutes for medium. Cool quickly. Slip off skins, trim and cut in slices or cubes. Leave ½ inch of headroom for cubes and no headroom for whole or sliced. Seal and freeze.

Sautéed Kohlrabi with Onions & Cream

Adapted from marthastewart.com

Ingredients:

Cubes of peeled kohlrabi
Thinly sliced white onion
Unsalted butter
Finely shredded kohlrabi leaves
Heavy cream
Salt and pepper
Grated nutmeg

Preparation:

Cook kohlrabi and onion in butter over medium-high heat until almost tender. Stir in kohlrabi leaves, and cook until wilted. Add a generous splash of heavy cream, and cook for a few seconds to reduce. Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Serve with chicken, pork chops, or steak.

Tip: For a healthier option, try adding a splash of vegetable or chicken stock instead of the heavy cream.

Roasted Beets & Sautéed Beet Greens

Adapted from AllRecipes.com

Ingredients:

1 bunch beets w/ greens
¼ cup olive oil
2 cloves garlic
2 tablespoons chopped onion
Salt & pepper to taste
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar

Preparation: Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Wash the beets thoroughly, leaving the skins on, and remove the greens. Rinse greens, removing any large stems, and set aside. Place the beets in a small baking dish or roasting pan, and toss with 2 tablespoons of olive oil. If you wish to peel the beets, it is easier to do so once they have been roasted. Cover, and bake for 45 to 60 minutes, or until a knife can slide easily through the largest beet. When the roasted beets are almost done, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil in a skillet over medium-low heat. Add the garlic and onion, and cook for a minute. Tear the beet greens into 2 to 3 inch pieces, and add them to the skillet. Cook and stir until greens are wilted and tender. Season with salt and pepper. Serve the greens as is, and the roasted beets sliced with either red-wine vinegar, or butter and salt and pepper.

Tip: Add feta cheese for a tasty beet-cheese combo!

Asian-Style Tokyo Bekana

Adapted from themarketladyblog.com

Ingredients:

4 tbsp. light sesame oil or olive oil
2 tbsp. white hulled sesame seeds
4 tsp. peeled, minced ginger or ½ tsp. ground ginger
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 bunch Tokyo Bekana (or any Asian green)
2 tbsp. soy sauce
4 tsp. rice vinegar

Preparation:

In a wide heavy sauté pan over medium heat, warm the oil. Add the sesame seeds and stir until they pop and become fragrant. Add the ginger and garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add the greens and 1 tbsp. soy sauce, raise the heat and cook, covered, for 1 minute. Uncover and sauté for 1 or 2 minutes more, until the greens are tender but still bright green. Stir in more soy sauce and vinegar to taste, and serve immediately.