

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:

Collard greens or Kale • Beets
Cucumbers • Baby Salad Greens
Radishes • Kohlrabi • Cilantro
Raspberries

Also in Large Shares

Snap peas

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 1/4-inch thick or dice into 1/2-inch cubes. Blanch diced or sliced kohlrabi in boiling water for 1 to 2 minutes. Pack in containers, leaving 1/4 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 varietals, 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.

Refrigerator Pickles & Radish

Adapted from diynaturals.com

Ingredients:

1 quart jar with lid
Cut cucumbers & radish
5 sprigs of fresh dill or 1 Tbsp dried dill
2-4 cloves of garlic (or garlic scapes, minced)
3 Tbsp white distilled vinegar
1/2 to 1 Tbsp kosher salt, to taste

Directions

Make the pickle brine by mixing together vinegar, garlic, dill, and kosher salt. Cut cucumbers and radishes into discs, spears, or sandwich slices and add to the jar. Pour the brine over the cucumbers & radishes. Once everything is in the jar, fill to the very top with water and screw lid on very tightly. Shake the jar up to distribute flavors and store in the refrigerator for at least 24 hours before eating to ensure maximum flavor. After pickles have sat for a total of 24 hours go taste your creation – you won't believe how good they are! Store in refrigerator and enjoy within a month.

Spaghetti with Cooking Greens and Lemon

Adapted from Whole Living

Ingredients:

2 Tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
2 cloves garlic, sliced
1/4 tsp red pepper flakes
1 bunch collard greens or kale, ribs removed, thinly sliced
1/4 cup pine nuts (sub walnuts if you like), toasted
Grated zest of 1 lemon, plus more for garnish
2 Tbsp lemon juice
Coarse salt
12 oz spaghetti
1/4 cup parmesan cheese

Preparation:

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Cook garlic and pepper flakes until tender, about 1 minute. Add greens and cook, stirring until tender, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in pine nuts and lemon zest and juice. Season with salt. Meanwhile, cook pasta in well-salted water according to package directions. Reserve ½ cup pasta water and then drain. Add pasta to skillet, tossing to coat, and add reserved water to adjust consistency. Sprinkle with lemon zest and cheese before serving.