



The Pod

Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

World PEAS is a program of the New Entry Sustainable Farming Project

Wednesday October 7, 2015

A Day In The Life of AmeriCorps VISTA member, Devin Ingersoll

As the AmeriCorps VISTA Food Access Facilitator at New Entry, my days are extremely busy & diverse. Since starting two months ago I, [Devin Ingersoll](#), have gotten involved in all aspects of ensuring that the fresh, delicious produce our farmers are growing gets to the table of individuals and families needing it most. World PEAS partners with social services organizations in the greater Boston area to provide produce to their clients free or at a very reduced price. Over the course of the 2015 season, our produce will reach the table of over 2,000 individuals and families in need!



I have been lucky enough to visit almost all of our partner sites over the past few weeks. Each site is unique, with differences in demographics, taste preferences, and even styles of distribution. Just last week I was able to visit the "Produce in a SNAP" program coordinated by the Medford Farmers Market [MFM]. MFM sets up a weekly farmer's market for area seniors who pay only \$5 for over \$20 worth of fresh World PEAS/New Entry farmers' local produce. Many seniors have a hard time accessing fresh produce due to high cost and lack of safe transportation, but MFM seniors have been able to try new items grown by our diverse farmers, such as bok choy, while savoring some classic flavors, like carrots and sweet potatoes. This week the hit item was ground cherries – I spent the majority of my visit ripping the browned husks off the fruit to show off the sweet treasure inside. At first skeptical of the strange item, most seniors walked away excited to eat the husked cherries raw or prepare a ground cherry salsa using the recipe we provided in their weekly newsletter.

As the Food Access Facilitator, I am also responsible for developing and distributing surveys to customers receiving free or reduced price produce. These surveys help World PEAS capture important information about who we're serving, our impact in those communities and what we can do to improve or expand this work next season. For the first time in our program's history, we sent out surveys in self-addressed envelopes to homebound seniors that World PEAS serves through various Meals On Wheels programs. In Dorchester, Kit Clark Senior Services delivered CSA shares to 150 homebound seniors right to their door, a welcome addition to the pantry of seniors who rarely get to experience fresh vegetables. Already, we've received phone calls and completed surveys asking for more fresh produce! With more comprehensive survey data and impact assessment opportunities, we hope to do just that.

If you are connected with a community organization whose low-income clients could benefit from linking to fresh, locally-grown nutritious fruits and vegetables produced by New Entry farmers, please contact nesfp@tufts.edu.

Produce this week:

Daikon Radish • Winter Squash
Lettuce • Chinese Broccoli
Carrots • Parsnips • Potatoes
Lemongrass • Hot Pepper • Apples

Also in Large Shares

Parsley • Slicing Tomatoes
Arugula

Crop Information:

Parsnips



Parsnips are sweeter than carrots, easy to prepare, and have a long shelf life. They are wonderful pureed, but they are also great roasted with other vegetables. Parsnips are a real cold-weather treat, only developing their full flavor after exposure to extended periods of cooler weather. In response to declining temperatures, parsnips, like carrots begin converting starches to sugar, presumably to act as an antifreeze to prevent cells from rupturing in the cold.

Handling: Treat parsnips as you would a carrot. If the parsnip is large, you must remove its woody core by digging it out with the end of a vegetable peeler or sharp spoon.

Storing: Parsnips should be unwashed and put in a plastic bag in the fridge. They will last several months this way. Owing to their wonderful storability, parsnips are available all year round, but are best harvested fresh in the fall, winter or spring [having overwintered in the ground].

Freezing: Select small to medium, firm parsnips that are tender and have a mild flavor. Wash, peel and cut into ½-inch cubes. Blanch in boiling water for 2 minutes. Cool promptly in cold water and drain. Pack into containers, leaving ½-inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

Slow Cooker Root Vegetables Stew

Adapted from gimmesomeoven.com

Ingredients:

1 large white onion OR 2 leeks, chopped
1 lb. butternut squash, peeled, seeded and chopped
1 lb. carrots, peeled and chopped
1 lb. parsnips, peeled and chopped
1 lb. sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped
1 lb. Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and chopped
2 celery ribs, stems removed and chopped
6 cloves garlic, peeled and thinly sliced
3 cups chicken or vegetable broth
1 bay leaf
1 Tbsp. fresh sage leaves, finely chopped
1 tsp. freshly-cracked black pepper
1/2 tsp. sea salt
2 cups chopped fresh kale

Preparation:

Add first ingredients to a slow-cooker, and carefully stir to combine. Cook on low heat for 6-8 hours until the vegetables are tender. Remove bay leaf, and carefully stir in the kale. Let the stew continue cooking for 10 minutes or so until the kale is wilted. Season with additional salt and pepper if need be. Turn off slow cooker.

Serve immediately, with the option to garnish with fried sage leaves or Parmesan cheese.

Daikon-Carrot Salad

From foodnetwork.com

Ingredients:

1 1/2 pounds daikon, peeled
Kosher salt
1 pound carrots
1 tablespoon grated peeled ginger
3 tablespoons unseasoned rice vinegar
2 teaspoons fresh lime juice
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
1 3/4 teaspoons white sesame seeds
1 3/4 teaspoons black sesame seeds

Preparation:

Shave the daikon into ribbons with a vegetable peeler. Toss with 1/4 teaspoon salt in a colander; let drain in the sink, tossing occasionally, about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, shave the carrots into ribbons with the peeler. Whisk the ginger, vinegar, lime juice and 1/2 teaspoon salt in a large bowl. Slowly whisk in the vegetable oil and sesame oil until blended. Toast the sesame seeds in a skillet over medium heat, tossing occasionally, until the white seeds are golden, about 5 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon seeds to the dressing. Toss the daikon and carrots with the dressing and season with salt. Top with the remaining sesame seeds.

Dim Sum Style Gai-Lan (Chinese Broccoli)

From food.com

Ingredients:

Gai Lan:

1 lb gai lan or 1 lb [Chinese broccoli](#)
2 teaspoons [salt](#)
1 teaspoon [baking soda](#)
1 [garlic clove](#), sliced
1 inch [ginger root](#) [1 inch piece, peeled]
2 teaspoons [toasted sesame seeds](#)

Sauce:

3 tablespoons [oyster sauce](#)
3 tablespoons [water](#) or 3 tablespoons [chicken broth](#)
1 tablespoon [mirin](#) or 1 tablespoon [dry sherry](#)
1 tablespoon [sugar](#)

Preparation:

Gai Lan: Rinse gai lan and trim the end of the stems. Bring eight cups of water to a boil in a large saucepan or stock pot. Stir in salt, baking soda, garlic and ginger. Add gai-lan. Cover and simmer about 4 minutes, until the gai lan turns bright green and is tender-crisp. Drain and serve drizzled with the oyster sauce and sprinkled with sesame seeds.

Sauce: Mix oyster sauce with water or broth, mirin and sugar in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil to melt the sugar. Remove from heat.