

# High Meadow Farm CSA

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Week 4

July 5, 2011

## Snow Peas

Snow peas are a great snack food- raw from the garden, but they become tender and the flavor is enhanced by lightly steaming or blanching them just until they turn bright green, but still crisp. You can do this easily in a sauté pan with a little water, stirring until they are ready, about 30 seconds. (Remove the stem ends first.)

Peas are a great addition to quiches, eggrolls and any salad (lettuce, pasta, bean, etc.) For eggrolls and quiche, I slice them lengthwise into matchstick-sized strips, or you can cut them crosswise on an angle for salads. See the Website for an easy quiche or torte using snow peas and fennel!

Peas can also be frozen for adding to those winter stir fry's. They need to be blanched in boiling water for about 1 ½ minute first, then put into cold water for at least 3 minutes, then dried a bit (I use a salad spinner, or just lay them out on a towel and gently roll them in it.) Bag, label and freeze.

## Snow Pea Salad with Sesame Dressing

To trim edible-pod peas, such as sugar snap and snow, cut or snap off ends and pull up sharply to remove any string on the pea. Discard ends and strings. To blanch fresh peas (either shelled or whole edible-pod types), bring water to a boil in a large pan, then add peas. Cook just until they start to turn a brighter green, 15 to 30 seconds, and then drain immediately. Rinse well under cold running water until cool, and then drain again.

### Ingredients

1 lb. snow peas, trimmed and  
blanched  
3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 1/2 tablespoons Asian sesame oil  
2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger  
1 teaspoon sugar  
1/2 teaspoon hot Chinese mustard  
2 tablespoons thinly sliced green  
onions  
1 teaspoon sesame seeds

### Preparation

1. Stack several snow peas and slice on the diagonal into 1/4-inch-wide strips. Repeat to slice remaining peas.
2. In a large bowl, whisk vegetable oil, soy sauce, sesame oil, ginger, sugar, and mustard until well combined. Add sliced snow peas and 1 tablespoon green onions; mix to coat. Cover and chill until cold, at least 1 hour, or up to 1 day.
3. Just before serving, mound salad on a platter and sprinkle with remaining tablespoon green onions and the sesame seeds

### This week's box:

Fennel  
Lettuce  
Turnips  
Snow Peas  
Redbor Kale

## Acquiring a Taste for New Veggies

So many beautiful veggies in the world, but no idea what to do with them? I have not always loved them all, either, until I learned to try them each on their own and judge them on their own merit. After that, you can understand how they are best used and what dishes are enhanced by their additions. On the other hand, if you dislike a veggie on first bite, you may find that a contrasting flavor may make it irresistible to you! I was never a big fan of arugula until I tried it alone with a little salad dressing. Now I absolutely love it! Once I started liking kale, I recognized it as something that is very nutritious for my body's well-being.

This week, you may find yourself wondering about kale, turnips and their tops! These veggies are loaded with nutrition; kale is rich in vitamins and minerals, plus antioxidants and phytochemicals that fight against cancers and other diseases. The list goes on and on!

Turnips are earthy and have a bit of a "bite". These turnips are the "Purple Top" variety, often harvested for roasting and storage in the fall, but the tender young turnips are very good now. The flavor is a little stronger than the salad turnips, but our nice salad turnips couldn't take that first heat spell. There are more on the way, though! The roots are high in vitamin C. They turnip tops have lots of nutrients, though and are really a nice cooking green, similar to the greens that you had a few weeks ago. Small turnip roots can be chopped or shredded onto salad, or they can be cooked in a stir fry, roasted, or steamed and eaten with butter. Turnips and tops are 2 veggies in one!

Be brave and adventurous, relax and enjoy. You may find that you are feeding yourself something that your body has been missing and didn't know it!

## Using Kale:

Stem it; unless it is young, stems are too tough for most people's tastes. Fold leaves in half, the face of the leaf touching, so stem sticks out along one edge. Rip or cut stem away.

### **Here are a few cooking ideas:**

+Before wilting kale, brown some sliced onion, then add kale along with garlic, red pepper, salt, pepper, &/or a squeeze of lemon or vinegar.

+Serve seasoned wilted kale mixed into scrambled eggs, alongside grilled or seared meat, layered into lasagna, or in calzones.

+Soft tacos: Use wilted kale with onions as filling for soft corn tortillas (warmed in a towel in microwave) with a smoky salsa and crumbles of a fresh cheese like feta, queso fresco, or goat cheese.

***This recipe for kale sounds interesting...***

## Colcannon

3 lbs potatoes

½ cup hot milk

2 T butter

1 cup diced leek or onion

3 packed cups finely chopped kale (about 1 bunch) 2 T minced parsley

+ Boil potatoes until tender, and mash them with the milk. Meanwhile, melt butter in a skillet, add the leeks/onion and kale, and stir from time to time until they're tender. When it's done, stir into the mashed potatoes, season with parsley, salt, and pepper, and serve.

## Fennel

Fennel is the beautiful white bulb in your box with feathery fronds that smells and tastes a bit like licorice. It is an exotic treat- no other vegetable has a flavor like it. It may be another "acquired" taste for some, but one that can find a place in your heart with a good recipe!

These bulbs are young and tender. We are picking them a bit early because, as with all cool-weather lovers, some of them are starting to bolt. On older fennel, it is suggested to remove the core if it is tough.

Fennel can be grilled, braised, roasted or eaten raw.

We will be re-planting soon for fall and more agreeable weather.

To use, remove the tops first. These can be used as a garnish or as seasoning in soups or as a substitute for celery in dishes. Keep in mind the licorice-like taste. Fennel is used often in Italian cooking. Fennel seed is a must on most pizza and spaghetti! The fronds also are beautiful just in a vase or as a filler with some nice garden flowers.

This is a yummy and delicious fennel salad, the thin shaving that a mandolin slicer can do is key, unless you are very adept with a sharp knife!

## Shaved Fennel, Mushroom and Parmesan Salad

*Fennel*

*Fresh Parmesan cheese*

*Mushrooms*

*Fresh Lemon*

Use a mandolin slicer to make very thin cuts (crosswise), layer them on a plate, drizzling with a good olive oil between layers, then shave and layer with mushrooms. Squeeze ½ lemon over and top with shaved parmesan.

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## Ginger-Glazed Young Turnips with Cider and Raisins

½ tsp salt plus a dash, divided

1 bunch young turnips, trimmed

¼ cup sugar or honey

1/8 cup white wine vinegar

1-2 tsp. freshly grated ginger

2 Tbsp cornstarch

¼ cup apple or grape cider

½ cup raisins

2 Tbsp finely chopped parsley

finely chopped crystallized ginger (optional)

Bring 2 quarts water to boil in large pot. Add dash of salt, then the young turnips. When water returns to a boil, cover and reduce heat. Simmer turnips gently until tender, but not mushy 10 minutes at most. Remove the pot from heat and transfer turnips to a dish to cool. Meanwhile, transfer ½ cup of hot cooking water to medium pot. Stir in sugar or honey, vinegar, and ginger to taste. Add ½ tsp salt.

Combine cornstarch and cider in small glass or bowl; let stand until cornstarch is dissolved. Slice turnips to desired thickness. Place pot with ginger mixture over medium heat. Stir in cider mixture and adjust heat so ingredients simmer. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture is smooth and thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Remove pot from heat; stir in the raisins and sliced turnips and continue to stir for 2 minutes, until the mixture reaches thick, gravy like consistency. Stop stirring and let stand for 2 minutes.

Garnish with parsley and crystallized ginger.

Don't forget the turnip tops! Sauté' and season them, then serve over pasta or add pea pods to the sauté!