



Boánn's Banks

Sustainable Agriculture Along the Broad River

May 17, 2003

This Week at Market

- Radish "French Breakfast"
- Lettuce "Forellenschluss" and "Bronze Mignonette"
- Italian Dandelion
- Mountain Spinach "Ruby Orach" and "Golden Orach"
- Lambs' Quarters
- Baby Turnip Greens
- Young Broccoli Greens
- Baby Collard Greens
- Baby Kale "True Siberian"
- Parsnips

On the horizon: Turnip and Beet Greens and bottoms, Kohlrabi, Carrots, Rutabagas, and more!

Radish Sauté with Fresh Chives

- 12 radishes
- Boiling salted water
- 3 T butter
- 2 t lemon juice
- 2 T fresh snipped chives

Wash the radishes and cut off the roots and trim off the tops. Slice thinly. Bring the salted water to a rolling boil and blanch the radish slices for 30 seconds. Drain.

In a saucepan, melt the butter and when it stops foaming, add the lemon juice and blanched radishes and put a top on. Cook over medium-low heat for 2 minutes, shaking the pan gently several times. In the last minute, add the snipped fresh chives and stir. Turn heat off and keep hot until served. For extra flavor, try using garlic chives!



Simple Radishes the French Way

Nothing could be simpler than this dish. All you need is radishes, unsalted softened butter, and coarse salt. Dip a whole radish in butter, sprinkle with salt, and eat. Add crusty French bread, and you'll have a meal!

Hello! This is our third week at market, but the first of our regular newsletters. We try to have a new one each week that includes vignettes of farm life, spotlights an item currently in season, and provides recipes that use your fresh produce. They're always free and are also available on our website, www.boannsbanks.com, where you'll also find last year's entire newsletter collection.

Our farm is located just inside Franklin County along the middle fork of the Broad River. We grow a large variety of vegetables, almost entirely heirloom or open pollinated varieties. Like many things in our increasingly homogenous world, thousands of beautiful and delicious varieties of vegetables face extinction. One of our goals is to find some of those threatened varieties

that both grow well in this area and make worthwhile additions to your kitchen and bring them to you. This week's featured vegetable, the French Breakfast radish, is one of the more "ordinary" varieties we grow.

The weather has really hampered our planting efforts. All the rain we've had will be good in the long run, but it's really slowed us down. Last week's tornado that went through Franklin, Madison, and Elbert counties passed directly over the farm (but luckily didn't touch down) – we'll take rain over tornadoes any day! With any luck, we'll have our summer seeds and plants in the ground within a week, putting us (only) a half-month behind.

Thanks for coming to market this week. Eat well!

-- Chris and Eric Wagoner
www.boannsbanks.com

Featured Vegetable

This week's featured vegetable is one of the oldest heirloom vegetables of all: the radish, *Raphanus sativus*. The "French Breakfast" variety, to be specific. Radishes get their English name from the Latin *radix*, meaning "root". These roots, members of the mustard family, were domesticated in China at the dawn of civilization. They made their way to Egypt before the pyramids were built. They were so revered by the Greeks that they carved replicas out of gold. Then, the most common types were the large "turnip-rooted" varieties, like the large Spanish radish. The smaller red types didn't develop until much later – the first ones reached England in 1595.

Introduced sometime before 1885, the French Breakfast variety was a favorite among French market gardeners, who considered it both attractive and tasty. American seed catalogs began offering it in the late 1880s. Faust's 1889 catalog said of it, "Its beautiful color makes it one of the most attractive for table use, while its superior quality recommends it to all. It is of quick growth, medium size, color red, tipped with white, olive shape, crisp and tender." Ten years later, Child's 1899 catalog called the French Breakfast "A grand little table sort" and reported that it had "delicately flavored flesh, free from coarseness or any biting quality."