



Boánn's Banks

Sustainable Agriculture Along the Broad River

June 14, 2003

This Week at Market

- Radish "French Breakfast"
- Lettuce "Bronze Mignonette"
- Italian Dandelion
- Lambs' Quarters
- Young Broccoli Greens
- Sugar Snap Peas
- Kohlrabi "Dyna" & "Superschmeltz"
- Heirloom Tomato Seedlings

On the horizon: Turnip and Beet greens and bottoms, Carrots, Rutabagas, Blackberries, and more!

Kohlrabi Vegetable Stew

2-3 medium kohlrabi, bulbs & greens

1 tbsp. olive oil

1 large onion, cut in slivers

3 medium carrots, cut in 3/4" chunks

2 medium potatoes, cut in 3/4" chunks

1 C peeled chopped tomatoes

4 C vegetable broth

1 bay leaf

2 tsp. chopped fresh oregano

1 tsp. salt

freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 tbsp. Dijon mustard

1/2 tbsp. molasses

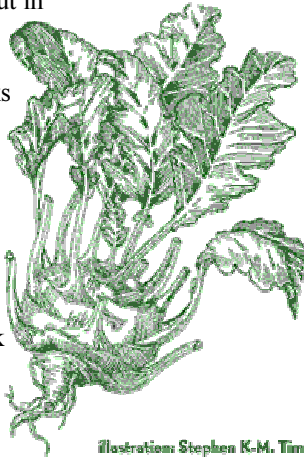


Illustration: Stephen K.M. Tim

Separate leaves from kohlrabi bulbs. Peel bulbs & cut into large chunks. De-rib leaves & cut into thin strips. Set aside. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onions & sauté for several minutes. Add kohlrabi bulb chunks, carrots, potatoes, tomatoes, broth, bay leaf, oregano, salt, pepper, molasses & mustard. Turn up heat to medium-high and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover & simmer for about 15 minutes, or until veggies are not quite tender. Add kohlrabi leaves & simmer, uncovered, for another 10 minutes, or until veggies are just cooked. Serves 4-6.

Many people just eat 'em raw, cut in sticks.

Hello! The farm is in a state of transition right now. Unfortunately, the overlap between spring and summer just didn't happen this year due to all the wet weather. It's still very wet – algae is growing on bare dirt! The "leafy greens" season is winding down, but we'll have a few items to tide us over until the tomatoes, beans, peppers, and squash come in. Namely, the kohlrabi are now ready, the carrots are small but edible, and the beets, turnips, and rutabagas are filling out nicely. We ate our first ripe blackberries this week, so we'll be bringing some of those in for you. Meanwhile, the young tomato plants are reaching for the first wire support in their trussing system. The beans have sprouted and will be bearing pods before long. Everything else is small but growing, and we are anxiously awaiting those tastes of summer.

If you braved the rain last week, you would have noticed we weren't here. When it came time to leave the farm Saturday morning, the rain was blowing sideways. Selling at the bakery would have been miserable for everyone, so we went to the market in downtown Comer, right up Hwy 78. The market there is under a nice shelter. In case of future bad weather, you'll find us (and several other farmers you know) there.

We performed our first full inspection of the beehive this week. The queen is busy laying lots of eggs to produce more workers for the hive, and the three pounds of workers that arrived with her have been busily making comb and filling it with nectar and pollen. In a couple weeks they'll be ready for a second story on their home.

Thanks for coming to market this week. Eat well!

-- Chris and Eric Wagoner

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Featured Vegetable

We've managed to go for a year and a half without repeating a featured vegetable, but this week's is a special case. Despite its excellent taste and versatility, it's virtually unknown in much of the United States. It looks more like something off the set of a science fiction movie than the centuries-old vegetable that it is. Kohlrabi, *Brassica oleracea*, is another branch of the cabbage family. As we've said before, this group (head cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, rabe, Brussels' sprouts, Chinese cabbage, kohlrabi, and others) are actually the same species, but have been bred over the centuries into very differently looking plants. Kohlrabi (the name is a blend of the German words for "turnip" and "cabbage") was bred for its stem instead of the leaves or flowers. This stem has turned into a bulb that looks like a turnip but actually grows above ground. The flavor is often compared to an apple. Elizabeth Schneider, in her classic *Uncommon Fruits and Vegetables*, describes kohlrabi as tasting "like the freshest, crunchiest broccoli stems, touched with a hint of radish and cucumber." This vegetable is used often in Slavic cooking, where many nutritional anthropologists believe it originated during Roman times.

The varieties we grew this spring are "Dyna", distinguished by its beautiful purple color and outstanding flavor, and "Superschmeltz", a green bulb that can grow to enormous size. Both the bulb and the leaves are edible, and they are a good source for vitamins A & C as well as calcium, potassium, and fiber. The bulb can be eaten raw, boiled and mashed, roasted, or diced or sliced and sautéed. It also makes a wonderful soup. Marion Morash, the chef for the Victory Garden suggests leaving the skin on for better flavor. The leaves can be eaten raw, though you may find them chewy, or they can be steamed, boiled, or sautéed. Both the bulb and the leaves can be kept for a couple weeks in the crisper section of your refrigerator.