Happy Hollow Farm Winter News

Week 5 of 6 - December 5, 2011

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Spotlight on Fennel

All parts of the fennel plant (Foeniculum vulgaris) - the bulb, foliage (fronds), and seeds - are widely used in many of the culinary traditions of the world.

Dried fennel seeds are aromatic, anise-flavored spice; often used medicinally to treat indigestion, gas, hypertension, and spasms of the digestive tract. The leaves are delicately flavored and similar in shape to those of dill. The bulb is a crisp, hardy root vegetable that can be sauteed, stewed, braised, grilled, or eaten raw.

Raw and cooked fennel bulbs and fronds feature prominently in Mediteranean cuisine in side dishes. Many cultures in the Indian subcontinent and the Middle East use fennel seed in their cookery. Fennel can be substituted for celery in most any recipe; especially delicious is in most tuna, chicken or turkey salad recipes. The fronds are especially nice & colorful used in these dishes.

Try a saute of fennel, artichoke hearts, leeks & hakurei turnips (delicious!).

Fennel & Arugula Salad

This salad is simple & delicious!!!

1. 1 fennel bulb sliced lengthwise into thin slivers (save fronds for later use). Chop arugula into salad size pieces & place both in a serving bowl.
2. Peel & segment one orange or grapefruit and cut the segments in half. Place on top of arugula & fennel.
3. Dressing: 1 Tblsp. honey, 1 Tblsp. lemon juice, 1/4 cup. olive oil, salt & pepper to taste. Whisk together & pour over salad.

Need recipe ideas? Check these out!!!! (click on these links to see)

Hortopita Pie

Tortolleni with Italian Sausage, Fennel & Mushroom

What's in your share this week

For full, partial & single shares

* Arugula
* Beauty heart radish
* Broccoli
* Chinese cabbage
* Fennel
* Hakurei turnips
* Leeks
* Tat soi

Also, for full & partial shares

* Dinosaur kale
* Greens mix
* Spaghetti squash

Great recipe ideas can be found on the HHF website

Remember to return one box when you pick up your box each week

Farmer Liz Update

Brrrr.... It looks like winter is finally upon us! With the forecast for snow this upcoming week, the true challenges of growing vegetables in the winter will begin to rear it's head. As you've probably noticed with the first 4 weeks of vegetable deliveries, winter vegetables are exceptionally sweet & juicy. We have the cold weather and frost to thank for that. However, these conditions also make it much more challenging for your farmer and her helpers to harvest, wash & pack the shares each week.

The biggest hurdle is that the vegetables actually freeze overnight and it takes many hours (most of the morning) for them to thaw out. It is this freezing, which actually condenses the sugars in the leaves and gives your winter vegetables their extra sweet flavors. If it's cloudy and cold they may never actually completely thaw, making it impossible to harvest some days. I have to watch the forecast closely and time the vegetable harvests just right to make sure things have thawed out so as not to damage the juicy liquid filled leaves.

Next it's a matter of getting everything washed and packed and at least for the rest of this season, we're still working in an open barn, which makes for some pretty darn *COLD* fingers in *COLD* water. I'm hoping to get the barn sided in 2012 and put in a small wood stove to help with the frozen fingers challenge for next winter's CSA season.

For this upcoming week.... it looks like it's going to be a cold one!

So, here's to keeping our fingers warm!!!

Cheers, Farmer Liz

sustainable table
serving up healthy food choices

Sustainable Table celebrates local sustainable food, educates consumers on food-related issues and works to build community through food. The sustainable table website offers a great look at the complicated issues surrounding food found in the grocery stores; food additives, air pollution, animal welfare, antibiotics, biodiversity, climate change & many more of the topics dealing with food & food production in today's world are discussed on this website.

Learning about sustainable food and the problems with factory farming can be daunting at first, but, with a little effort, you can quickly learn enough to make the safest and wisest food choices for you and your family.

eat well guide
local • sustainable • organic

There is also access to the Eat Well Guide, an index of over 25,000 farms, markets & restaurants across the U.S. If you have travel plans over the holidays check out the listings on the Eat Well Guide and help support other local farmers and sustainably minded restaurants during your travels.