

Fair Fields News

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On the Farm

We hope you have all been enjoying the produce thus far. The weather has been good to us this spring and we are very happy with the state of the garden and the harvests coming out of it.

Topping the list this week are strawberries. We planted the strawberry crowns last spring. Strawberries are biennial, and this is our first year harvesting. We were a little unsure of how much to expect. With the drought last year, we had troubles with transplanting and irrigating the plants and the weed pressure was phenomenal. Many hours were spent watering, hand weeding and mulching, to the point where we wondered if it was all worth it. With the good yield and great

flavour so far we would gladly do it all again! We should have berries for another 2-3 weeks, so enjoy them while they last.

One group of plants that has struggled this year are the brassica greens. Brassica is a family that includes cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, turnip, radishes, arugula and many Asian greens like pak choy and tatsoi. The whole family is affected by the flea beetle, a small beetle that multiplies quickly and eats 24 hours a day. It is a challenging pest to deal with. You have all seen the holes they make in our arugula, pak choy, tatsoi and to a lesser extent, kale.

Rain has been fairly regular this spring and

so it was with reluctance that we pulled out our irrigation system this week. We use a drip system, which consists of a main delivery line with lines of drip tape coming off it. The drip tape is a flexible plastic tube with emitters that drip when the tape is full of water and under pressure. It is a very efficient system, using far less water than sprinkler systems. Unfortunately it also gets in the way of cultivating and weeding. And it takes a long time to set up. As luck would have it I was close to finishing setting up drip lines for rows in need, when the rains moved in this week and dropped 15-20 mm on us. I guess we've figured out our rain dance...

This Week's Harvest

- ◆ **Arugula**
- ◆ **Fresh herbs**
- ◆ **Green onions**
- ◆ **Kohlrabi**
- ◆ **Pak choy**
- ◆ **Peas**
- ◆ **Radishes**
- ◆ **Salad mix (mesclun)**
- ◆ **Spinach**
- ◆ **Strawberries**
- ◆ **Tatsoi**

Feature Produce – Kohlrabi

Kohlrabi originated in Eastern Europe. Its name means "cabbage-turnip" in German. A member of the cabbage (brassica) family, kohlrabi looks a little like a pale green or purple

sputnik. It tastes like broccoli stems, with maybe just a touch of radish. It has a nice crunchy texture.

Kohlrabi is low in calories, high in dietary fibre and Vitamin C, and is a good source of potassium.



Some Notes on Preparing Kohlrabi

Before using, remove the off-shoots and leaves, and then peel the thick skin off the bulb.

Kohlrabi can then be shredded, cut in thin julienne strips, sliced or cut into chunks.

Kohlrabi is good raw and cooked. It can be served raw with a dip, lightly coated with a vinaigrette, or added to a salad.

It can also be cooked in soups or stews, added to stir-fries, or pureed. Kohlrabi can also be steamed and served simply with lemon juice and melted butter. It takes 20-30 minutes to steam kohlrabi, depending on the size of the pieces.

Kohlrabi will keep in the fridge for a week. Freezing is not recommended.

Fair Fields Wish List

- ◆ **Green plastic berry boxes**
- ◆ **Clean grocery bags**
- ◆ **Buckets**
- ◆ **Milk crates**

Kohlrabi and Apple Salad (Two Versions)

1 kohlrabi
1 to 2 apples (Gala is good)

Creamy Dressing (Version 1)

1/4 C cream, 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice, 1/2 tbsp mustard
1/2 tsp sugar, Fresh chopped mint, salt & pepper to taste

Spicy Dressing (Version 2)

2 tbsp rice vinegar, 2 tbsp sesame oil, 1/2 tsp sambal oelek or other chili paste, pinch cumin, 1/2 tsp fish sauce (optional), 3 tbsp chopped cilantro

Cut kohlrabi and apple(s) into matchstick pieces.

If using the creamy dressing, whisk cream into light pillows (takes a minute or so) and add other ingredients. Serve immediately.

If using the spicy dressing, toss the kohlrabi and apple with the other ingredients and chill before eating.

**Adapted from A Veggie Venture and Saucy Radish
Serves 2**

Sauteed Kale and Kohlrabi

1 kohlrabi bulb
1/2 tsp grated lime zest
2 tbsp fresh lime juice
1/4 C olive oil, divided
1 large bunch kale, stems & centre ribs removed
3-5 garlic cloves
1/2 C salted, roasted pistachios

Peel and very thinly slice kohlrabi bulb. Whisk together lime zest and juice, 2 tbsp olive oil, and 1/2 tsp each of salt and pepper in a large bowl. Toss kohlrabi with dressing.

Finely chop kale. Heat remaining 2 tbsp oil in a large heavy skillet over medium-high heat until it shimmers. Sauté garlic until pale golden, about 30 seconds. Add kale by the handful, turning and stirring with tongs and adding more kale as volume reduces.

When all the kale is wilted, sauté with 1/2 teaspoon salt until just tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and cool to room temperature. Toss kale with kohlrabi and pistachios and serve.

**From Epicurious
Makes 6 servings**