

August 13, 2008

Hello CSA!

Things at Olden Produce have been going very well so far in August. This week your box will be full of potatoes, fennel, tomatoes, beets, and sweet corn. We will also be adding broccoli and cauliflower depending on whether or not they are big enough to harvest again just yet.

It seems that we're always coming across articles about how important it is for our health to not only eat fresh fruits and vegetables, but to try to consume only chemical-free goods. Even *Glamour* magazine is heralding whole food and chemical free diets. "How does what's in your stomach affect your immune system? "The lining of the gut is on alert for any strange stuff we're eating," says Dr. Pamela Peeke, author of *Body for Life for Women*. "The body has to decide at that moment, 'Do I digest that, absorb that or get rid of it right away?' If the food is, say, a whole food like broccoli, the gut doesn't give a damn and it's quickly digested. But spray that broccoli with pesticides, and the gut says, 'Now you've got my attention.' And then immune system has to go to work" ("The Scariest Health Threat You've Never Heard Of," Donna Jackson Nakazawa. *Glamour*, September 2008; Pg. 339.) The article goes on to really pinpoint how chemicals and poor dietary choices negatively affect our immune system.

So, congratulations to doing your body a favor and giving it healthy fuel to live on. ☺

Take care.

Your dedicated farmers,

Tracy and Dick



*We believe the only way to get produce fresher, is if you grow it yourself...or in our case, when you get it locally, from your neighbor's at Olden Produce.*



## Melbourne's Caper of the Week

Although not following the usual farm/garden theme, these puns are sure to make you smile!

Did you hear about the optometrist who fell into a lens grinder and made a spectacle of himself?



Doctors tell us there are over seven million people who are overweight. These, of course, are only round figures.

What is the purpose of reindeer? It makes the grass grow, sweetie.

The other day I sent my girlfriend a huge pile of snow. I rang her up and asked, "Did you get my drift?"

Where do you find giant snails? On the ends of giant's fingers.

When I was in the supermarket I saw a man and a woman wrapped in a barcode. I asked, "Are you two an item?"

I went to the butchers the other day and I bet him \$50 that he couldn't reach the meat off the top shelf. He said, 'no, the steaks are too high.'

I fired my masseuse today. She just rubbed me the wrong way

Question: How did Christopher Columbus finance his trip to America? Answer: With the Discover Card.

When she told me I was average, she was just being mean.

A man opened a dry-cleaning business next door to the convent. He knocked on the door and asked the Mother Superior if she had any dirty habits.

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Found online at <http://www.bored.com/sillypuns/index.htm>.

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Fennel is a very versatile perennial herb that continues to be as popular today as it was in the ancient world of the Greeks and Romans. It has an abundance of potassium, calcium, and vitamins A and E. It can be added to really any vegetable dish to give it more of a kick. Here are some creative ideas for fennel from a great online resource, Mariquita Farm, at <http://www.mariquita.com/recipes/fennel.html>:



- 🌈 Sprinkle chopped fennel leaves on hot baked oysters or clams.
- 🌈 Add cooked fennel to omelets, quiches, stuffings, or sauces.
- 🌈 Add stalks to stocks for their flavor.
- 🌈 Cook fennel in your favorite tomato sauce.
- 🌈 Here is a unique one: Place stalks and leaves on barbeque coals as they do in France; the fennel scent permeates the grilled food.
- 🌈 Slice steamed or blanched fennel, cover with a vinaigrette and serve chilled.

Here are some great fennel recipes from the same website:

FENNEL AND CHEESE FOR DESSERT adapted from The Victory Garden Cookbook, by M. Morash

Fennel bulbs

One great cheese, such as blue cheese or a local goat cheese

Best olive oil

S & P

Wash and trim fennel bulbs. If small, cut in half; quarter larger ones. Serve with slices of cheese and pass the oil, salt, and pepper.

FENNEL SALAD from Adrienne Cox

1 bulb fennel

1 bunch radish

1 cucumber

A few carrots

Rice vinegar

Dill 1-2 tsp if fresh

Thinly slice fennel, carrots and radish. Seed and chop

cucumber. Mix everything into a bowl and toss with some rice vinegar and some dill to taste. This salad gets better as the days go by and it marinates in the vinegar, but it is really tasty the day of as well.

#### OVEN POTATOES with FENNEL

20 ounces Yukon Gold potatoes, cut in 1/2" cubes  
1 medium fennel bulb, trimmed and cut in 1" slices  
1 medium sweet onion, diced  
1 tablespoon fresh parsley, minced finely  
2 teaspoons vegetable oil  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
Freshly ground black pepper -- to taste

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray. In large bowl, combine potatoes, fennel, onion, parsley, oil, salt and pepper; toss gently until well coated. Arrange mixture in a single layer on a prepared baking sheet. Bake, turning occasionally, until potatoes are crisp on all sides, 30-35 minutes. Serve immediately.

#### FENNEL BAKED with Parmesan Cheese from: Jane Grigson's Vegetable Book

Jane Grigson's note about this recipe: *"My favorite fennel dish, the best one of all by far. The simple additions of butter and Parmesan - no other cheese will do - show off the fennel flavor perfectly. The point to watch, when the dish is in the oven, is the browning of the cheese. Do not let it go beyond a rich golden-brown."*

Julia's note: this dish can be halved or made even smaller for just two people with one or two large heads of fennel.

6 heads fennel, trimmed, quartered  
Butter  
Pepper  
3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Cook the fennel in salted water until it is tender. It is important to get this right: the fennel should not still be crisp, on the other hand it should not be floppy either. Drain it well and arrange in a generously buttered gratin dish. Be generous, too, with the pepper mill. Sprinkle on

the cheese. Put into the oven at 400 degrees, until the cheese is golden brown and the fennel is bubbling vigorously in buttery juices.

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We at Olden Produce also thought it'd be helpful to include this snippet from the Mariquita Farm website:

PREPARING FENNEL

**Baking:** First, braise the fennel for about 5 minutes. Transfer to a baking dish and add just 1/2 cup of the cooking liquid. Cover tightly and bake at 350 degrees until just tender and beginning to brown. If desired, uncover toward the end to allow any excess liquid to evaporate, then sprinkle with breadcrumbs and grated Parmesan cheese, and brown under the broiler before serving. Cooking time: about 1 hour.

**Braising:** Braise fennel in broth, tomato sauce, vermouth or sherry (diluted 1-to-1 with water); add lemon zest, garlic, or onion for extra flavor. Braised fennel is delicious hot, warm, or chilled. Place fennel slices, or halved or quartered small fennel bulbs, in a saucepan and add just enough boiling liquid to barely cover the vegetable. Simmer uncovered, turning occasionally, until the fennel is tender, adding more liquid if necessary. Cooking time: 25 to 40 minutes.

**Sautéing:** Cut fennel into slivers and heat in a small amount of stock, tossing and stirring it frequently. For extra flavor, cook chopped onion and garlic along with fennel. A sprinkling of lemon juice and zest makes a nice finishing touch. Cooking time: 10 to 15 minutes.

**Steaming:** Fennel steamed until crisp-tender can be covered with your favorite sauce or marinated in vinaigrette, chilled, and served as a salad. To steam it, place whole or halved bulbs in a vegetable steamer and cook over boiling water until just tender. Cooking time: 20 to 30 minutes.

The Wellness Encyclopedia of Food and Nutrition, Shelden Margen, M.D.

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This potato recipe is so quick and easy, you'll wonder why you have never thought of it before!

### MICROWAVE-ROASTED POTATOES

Flavor these microwave-roasted potatoes with your family's favorite herbs and see how fast they disappear!

4 medium russet, yellow-flesh or white potatoes or 6 to 8 small red potatoes  
Vegetable or olive oil  
Salt and black pepper  
Chopped parsley, rosemary or thyme, or other seasoning

Cut potatoes into uniform cubes. Place in microwave-safe dish or a microwavable steamer bag. Drizzle potatoes with oil and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with seasoning and toss to coat potatoes evenly. Cover tightly with lid or plastic wrap. Microwave on high for 10 minutes (cooking time may vary depending on your microwave) or until potatoes are done. Use oven mitts or tongs to remove from microwave. Remove plastic wrap carefully to prevent burns from steam.

*Makes 4 servings.*

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### TUSCAN POTATOES and VEGETABLES

Potatoes and summer vegetables make a bright and healthy warm-weather side dish.

2 medium russet, white or yellow-flesh potatoes or 3 to 4 small red potatoes  
1 medium zucchini  
1 medium yellow summer squash  
1 can (14 1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes  
1/2 cup diced yellow onion  
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning  
1/4 teaspoon granulated garlic  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese



Cut potatoes, zucchini and squash into 1/2-inch cubes. Place in microwave-safe dish. Add tomatoes, onion, Italian seasoning and garlic and mix well. Sprinkle with cheese. Cover tightly with lid or plastic wrap. Microwave on high for 17 minutes (cooking time may vary depending on your

microwave) or until potatoes are done. Let sit for two minutes. Use oven mitts or tongs to remove from microwave. Remove plastic wrap carefully to prevent burns from steam.

*Makes 4 servings.*

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#### GRILLED SPUD DOGS

Kids will love these hot dogs in potato "buns". Have their favorite condiments on hand so they can customize their dogs.

2 medium russet potatoes  
2 hot dogs

Preheat grill. With apple corer, cut centers out of potatoes lengthwise, or cut a lengthwise wedge out of each potato. Insert hot dogs into potatoes. Wrap potatoes individually in foil. Place potatoes on top rack of grill over low heat. Close grill lid and cook for 40 minutes or until potatoes are done. Use oven mitts to remove potatoes from grill. Unwrap potatoes before serving.

*Makes 2 servings*

Potato recipes found online at  
<http://www.wisconsinpotatoes.com/recipe/QuickEasyRecipes.php#Microwave-Roasted%20Potatoes>.

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#### TOFU with TOMATO-MUSHROOM SAUCE

14 ounces extra-firm tofu, preferably water-packed  
2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil  
2 medium tomatoes, coarsely chopped  
1 1/2 cups sliced mushrooms  
2 tablespoons prepared pesto  
2 tablespoons crumbled feta cheese

1 Drain and rinse tofu; pat dry. Slice the block crosswise into eight 1/2-inch-thick slabs. Coarsely crumble each slice into smaller, uneven pieces.



2 Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add tofu and cook in a

single layer, without stirring, until the pieces begin to turn golden brown on the bottom, about 5 minutes. Then gently stir and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until all sides are golden brown, 5 to 7 minutes more.

- 3 Add tomatoes and mushrooms and cook, stirring, until the vegetables are just cooked, 1 to 2 minutes more. Remove from the heat and stir in pesto and feta.

*Serves 4.*

Found online at  
<http://food.yahoo.com/recipes/eatingwell/379/tofu-with-tomato-mushroom-sauce>.

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#### PICKLED BEETS RECIPE

1 bunch (4 or 5) beets  
1/4 cup cider vinegar  
1 Tbsp sugar  
1 Tbsp olive oil  
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard  
Salt and pepper



Remove greens from beets, save for future use (see beet greens recipe below). Cut beets to uniform sizes so they will cook evenly. Steam or boil around 30 minutes or until done. (Alternatively, you can roast them by wrapping them whole in foil and cooking them in a 350°F oven for about an hour.) A fork easily inserted into the beet will tell you if the beets are done or not.

Drain the beets, rinsing them in cold water. Use your fingers to slip the peels off of the beets. The peels should come off easily. Discard the peels. Slice the beets.

Make the vinaigrette by combining the cider vinegar, sugar, olive oil, and dry mustard. Whisk ingredients together with a fork. The dry mustard will help to emulsify the vinaigrette. Adjust to taste. Add salt and pepper to taste. Combine beets and vinaigrette in a bowl and allow to marinate for a half hour at room temperature.

*Serves 4.*

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Beet recipe found online at  
<http://www.else.com/recipes/archives/>.

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Making sweet corn doesn't have to take more than three minutes.

#### MATT'S SUPER-NUKE SWEETCORN ROCKET

Just shuck and wash one ear of sweet corn. Wrap it in a paper towel and microwave on high for two minutes. Butter and sal to taste while you read the sports page.

Found online at <http://sweetcorn.org>.

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#### SWEET CORN PANCAKES

1 1/4 cup milk  
4 tablespoons butter  
1 cup sweet corn  
1 tablespoon sugara  
1 1/4 cups all-purpose flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
3/4 teaspoon salt  
2 large eggs  
2 teaspoons canola oil

Combine 1 cup milk, butter, and corn in small saucepan over medium heat. When the butter has melted, remove the pan from the heat and let the mixture cool to lukewarm.

Sift dry ingredients onto waxed paper.

In a large bowl, beat the eggs until they are well mixed. Add the milk mixture, then gently stir the flour mixture, mixing until it is moistened and thoroughly combined.

Add remaining milk if the batter is thicker than cake batter.

Brush large heavy skillet or griddle with the oil, and place it over medium-high heat.

When a drop of water sizzles in the pan, pour the batter, 1/4 cup for each pancake inot the skillet.

Cook the cakes until bubbles cover the surface and begin to burst, 2 to 3 minutes.

Flip the cakes and cook for about 30 seconds on the other side.

Found online at <http://www.recipezaar.com/314971>.

