

Storage Tips & Tricks

Asparagus- To store, place the ends in a container of water. If storing for a couple of days leave room for possible growth and check the water level each day or wrap in a damp paper towel and store in plastic. Cleaning asparagus. Run under cold water gently rubbing the stalk and the tip. You may also soak in cold water. To ensure grit is removed, bring a pan of water to a boil, add a little salt. Add asparagus for 2-3 minutes to release any sandy soil remove and drop into an ice bath to stop the cooking. Store asparagus for later use. Use in salad, roast, or sauté in olive oil and serve with lemon.

Basil- Remove dead stems and leaves, snip ends and gently pat dry. Place stems in container filled with water, do not submerge the leaves. Wash leaves as needed. If you change the water daily the herbs will keep for up to a week on the counter. The top of the plant can be covered with a plastic bag. Do not refrigerated basil.

Leafy greens- Leafy greens have been washed and they will come to you damp. They have been watered or washed or iced.

You may clean them when you receive them or as you use them. Either way before they are refrigerated, they should be dry, wrapped or layered in paper towel and stored in plastic, bags, or containers. To clean greens: Fill a pan with cold water, plunge in the leafy greens, swish the greens. Allow to sit. Gently, lift out the greens, check the bottom of the pan for grit/sand/dirt. Repeat until the water is completely clear. Drain and allow to dry. Wrap in paper towel and place in a plastic bag or layer paper towel in a container. Refrigerate, use the most tender greens 1st within a couple of days.

Spinach- can be washed and dried before storing. Store spinach wrapped in paper towel or in layers of paper towel. Dried leaves can keep up to one week. Wilted Spinach Salad, Creamed Spinach, Stir Fry, Sauté with Garlic, shallots, onion as a side or as a bed under Chicken, fish, sliced steak, Mix into eggs for omelets or fill the omelet, Wilt spinach into soups, stews, sauces, Greek Spinach Feta Pie, Spanakopita, Quiche, add spinach to smoothies, add to ricotta cheese for Lasagna for Spinach Stem Recipes, look at Pantryfun.com

Leeks – should be tightly wrapped in the refrigerator so that their flavor will not be absorbed by other foods. Do not wash or remove roots before storing. They can keep up to two weeks. Most recipes will call for the white bottom and the light green. Keep the tops for preparing stock. Be sure to clean leeks in cold water making sure that any soil or grit is removed from between the layers.

Baby Bok Choy—Store in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Do not wash until you are ready to use. Will keep 3-4 days. Simple stir fry, 1-2 T oil heated, add 2 cloves of garlic chopped, top with baby bok choy, Stir fry 3-4 minutes over moderate heat, add 1 T soy sauce and 2 T vegetable stock continue to stir fry until bok choy is tender/crisp

Mushrooms- can be stored in the original container in the refrigerator. The perforated plastic covering will allow any excess moisture to escape. If you prefer to remove them from the plastic place them in a brown paper lunch bag and store with the bag open in a crisper drawer. You may want to add a damp paper towel to the bag to keep the moisture level even.

Week 4 Fresh Inspirations May 16th-22nd 2022

As you may have noticed, spring is the season for leafy greens. The true sign of spring however is the perennial vegetable asparagus. When the weather warms up there is a noticeable difference in the bounty of the harvest. When a crop is plentiful at the farm, we all reap the benefit in our CSA shares. Please notice that we are including the freezing information that may be helpful to you considering the extra bunches of asparagus. Our seasoned members realize that this favorite vegetable will be available for a few more weeks. Having some in your freezer, makes it possible to add to a dinner in the later seasons of the year. It can really be a treat!

Mushrooms will be in the shares for the first time this year. You will receive either variety, Button, or Baby Bella. Button mushrooms may be served raw in salads. Either variety may be added to your favorite recipes like stroganoff or bourguignon. They can stand alone in recipes like the mushroom tart that we posted last week. Sauté sliced mushrooms to top a pizza or burger. Baby Bella mushrooms will work best cooked, and they tolerate high temperatures so roast along with asparagus for a treat. Baby Bella mushrooms have a heartier flavor and texture and they have been noted as a meat substitute in many diets. The mushrooms are from a farm that we partner with. They add a layer of flavor to our spring dishes that cannot be matched. They have been a CSA favorite for a few years now and the best part is that they are a favored food that is really good for you with low calories and sodium, and bonus, they are fat free!

Cilantro is the herb plant that is ready for planting this week. I have planted cilantro in a large pot with parsley and dill. Cilantro is one of the more delicate herbs that might not make it through the entire season. It does require a little softer light, especially as we get into the hot days of summer.

Remember to pinch herbs that you have planted in the previous weeks so that they will not flower or go to seed and you will encourage new growth. Just a reminder, if you have some of the empty 4” herb pots around, send them back with your share boxes.

As always, for any reason you need administrative help get in touch with Trish@alstedefarms.com or call 908-879-7189. If you have any ideas or recipes to share, contact jenn@alstedefarms.com

Until next week, enjoy the freshness!

Jenn Borealo



How to Freeze Asparagus

Prepare the following items:

Bring 1 gallon of water per pound of asparagus to a boil

Prepare an ice bath ice and ice water

Freezer containers / zip lock bags

Clean the asparagus to remove any grit, soil, and snap or cut off /break off the woody ends

Bring the water to a boil, keep the heat on high and immerse the asparagus, water should come back to a boil in one minute

Boil 1 ½ minutes for thin stems, 2 minutes for medium and 3 for fat.

Immediately remove and submerge into the ice bath. This will stop the cooking process.

When cold, drain, allow to dry on paper towels

Pack in airtight containers or bags

If using bags, close the bag almost to the end. Stick a straw into the bag and draw out as much air as possible from inside the bag. Press down on the straw as you continue to close the bag and pull the straw out. Label and date bags or containers. Some ideas for using the asparagus in your shares:

Pancetta & Asparagus Strata

Savory Bread Pudding

Italian Bread

French Baguette

Hallah Bread Loaf

Asparagus (blanched)

Butter Salted

Diced Pancetta (rendered)

Gruyere Cheese Shredded

Grated Parmesan Cheese

Eggs

Heavy Cream

Whole milk

Salt & Pepper, Fresh Tarragon

Diced all breads into larger crouton size. Lightly Toast.

Blanch Asparagus in salted water, Shock in ice water. Let Drain.

Dice Pancetta render in pan, save fat.

Combine egg, heavy cream, whole milk, Salt & Pepper, tarragon.

Pour Mixture over cut bread in Hotel pan, make sure all bread is saturated in egg mixture.

Bake 325 Degrees for 35-40 minutes

Add asparagus to your favorite quiche recipe, or prepare a frittata, scrambled eggs, or an omelet with blanched asparagus or leftover roasted asparagus. Asparagus can be prepared as part of a Salad Niçoise or using your favorite Caesar Salad recipe, add some blanched asparagus. Have you tried Asparagus Carbonara or Pesto? (Recipes are on our website.) Serve roasted asparagus with some hollandaise sauce. For a treat wrap the spear of asparagus with bacon or pancetta and then roast. Bacon Wrapped Asparagus Recipe (EASY!) | Wholesome Yum

If you check out our website you will find recipes for Asparagus Eggs Mornay, Asparagus Carbonaro, Asparagus and Arugula Pizza, Creamy Asparagus and Leek Soup and more! If you enter "Asparagus" in the search bar at the top of our website homepage, you'll find over fifty of our favorite recipes!

Week 4 Harvest!

Asparagus

Spinach

Button Mushrooms

Baby Bella Mushrooms

Collard Greens

Scallions

Cilantro Plants

Lettuce

Kale

Chives

Arugula

Leeks

Swiss Chard

****Your actual CSA share contents will be listed on the label inside of your box and may differ from this list. Your share contents are based on your individual preferences and customizations that you make on your Harvie profile, as well as changes in availability.**



Asparagus Pita Pizza

Serves 1

8-10 cherry tomatoes or a chopped small to medium tomato

Olive oil

3-4 shaved spears of asparagus

1 clove of garlic, finely chopped

Fresh basil leaves, cleaned and torn

1 whole wheat or whole grain pita

2-3 slices provolone cheese

2 T shredded mozzarella

Preheat the oven to 400

Cut the cherry tomatoes into 3- 4 pieces or chop the tomato. Place onto a parchment paper lined baking sheet and drizzle with olive oil. Place the tray in the middle of the oven. Roast until lightly charred about 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and top the tomatoes with the basil. Lower the temperature to 350. Using a vegetable peeler, shave the spear of asparagus. Warm a Tablespoon of olive oil in a sauté pan over medium heat and add the asparagus cook until bright green and add the garlic, cook a minute or two more until the asparagus is tender. Set aside.

Brush the pita on both sides with olive oil and place in the oven for about 5 minutes. Remove from the oven and top with the provolone cheese and then the asparagus, tomato, and mozzarella cheese.

Bake the pita pizza for about 10 minutes until the cheeses are melted.

Optional: Add a little cooked, crumbled, sausage or sauté a few sliced mushrooms to add to the pizza topping.