

## Storage Tips & Tricks

Have you checked out the website for recipes that we have printed through the past years? Visit [Alstedefarms.com](http://Alstedefarms.com), click on ways to eat fresh, and then CSA recipe, to the left of the page there is a list of all the produce we grow

This week I noticed and answered a question about freezing asparagus, freezing raw, without blanching. For those of you who are not on Facebook, freezing without blanching means that the enzyme activity slows but does not stop.

There will be a loss of nutrients, color, flavor, and texture if vegetables are not processed correctly.

Keep some of the spinach and asparagus for the winter. The asparagus season starts in May and is usually over before the middle of June.

**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 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.

### What can I do with all this spinach in my share?

**Prepare: Spanakopita, Spinach Quiche, Wilted Spinach Salad. Add spinach to sauces, soup, and stew. Sauté a bunch of spinach and prepare a bed for chicken or fish or sliced steak. One of the most nutritious additions to a smoothie would be fresh spinach.**

**Herbs this week will be Lemon Balm and Anise:** Lemon Balm and Anise will pair well with the rosemary, however if the pot has too many herbs start a new one. Lemon Balm can grow to be invasive like mint so you may want to plant it in its own pot. I have Anise everywhere this year, from previous years. It is a beautiful addition to a perennial garden. Thai Basil came to us ready to use. First, pinch off the flowers and then a versatile recipe Thai Basil Pesto – and what to do with it! – A Zest for Life.com

Pinch back all of your herbs so that the plants will become full.

**Huge heads of green leaf lettuce.** Make dinner about the salad, Caesar, Niçoise, Cobb, outside large leaves will make great wraps! Add lettuce to juicer or smoothie, grill a wedge, make soup...

**Mushrooms** can be stored in the original package that has openings designed for breathing for a couple of days. Do not wash before storing.

Or Transfer mushrooms to a paper bag with a damp paper towel. Plan to use mushrooms within 3-4 days after receiving them. If you are not ready to use them, slice and saute

And they will be ready for a recipe and it will prolong storage life.

**Strawberries - 2 methods of storage—** Remove the strawberries from the container. Do not wash. Place in a flat pan lined with paper towel and place Strawberries in a single layer. Top with a sheet of paper towel and cover with plastic. Clean the strawberries with 1- part water and 3- parts vinegar. Place strawberries in a bowl covered with the vinegar mixture. Drain, dry completely on paper towels. Store in a single layer. Vinegar will keep help to clean berries and keep the berries fresher longer.

## Week 5 Fresh Inspirations May 24th—May 30th

This is week 5 of CSA and I am not sure which week of spinach this is. It is growing like crazy so get ready once more to prepare your favorite recipes! And you will notice, not just spinach but leafy greens abound.” If you are dieting, they are one of the best forms of vegetables to prepare and serve. High in water, low in calories, and carbohydrates.

A little of Alstede CSA history, I believe that this year is the 12th anniversary of our Harvest Club. When we first started everyone came to the farm on 513 here in Chester. Distribution was at 2:00 in the afternoon at the Hen House. The line would start forming early. I have always picked up a share so that I could see what your actual experience is. I would stand in line with our members and there would always be a lot of conversation and sharing, truly what CSA is about. Somehow, we would always talk about why did you become a member? Often it was a specific health reason. Now many of you pick up at the chapters so we don't necessarily see each other. So, when I get an e-mail, it does brighten my day. Last week I heard from a seasoned CSA member Pam Knapp. Her original note was a question for a Creamed Spinach recipe using an alternate milk. She cannot have dairy products or meat from mammals. The disease is called Alpha Gal or Mammalian Meat Allergy, or it is also known as MMA. The disease is from the Lone Star Tick, small with a White star. The diagnosis is difficult because the symptoms from the foods come hours later when you are not relating the two. She doesn't have to be completely vegan as she can eat chicken or fish. I do believe however her preparation style at this point will be vegan and eating foods that are not processed are the best for her. She also talks about how other products that we use are prepared or made or even sprayed with animal by products. Interesting how having a disease can make you so much more aware of what is around you. So, my shout out to you is “have you prepared creamed spinach using an alternate milk product?” Almond milk or cashew or soy or even hemp? Which vegan “dairy” products have you used, and can you make some helpful recommendations?

CSA member, Virginia McDonnell was also in touch. She recommended a Beet Recipe from Mark Bittman, NYT. We will print the recipe for you this week. She also made a serving recommendation for asparagus. Have you tried it raw. It really is delicious. Actually sweet! Virginia says to use the spears as dippers for hummus. So delicious and so good for you! There is plenty of asparagus so give it a try. Serving some of the veggies in the share raw is always a good idea.

We are looking at that first three-day weekend of the season. It is time to remember all of our fallen service men. I hope you have a chance to relax with family and friends. I am including gardening in the tips this week. If you have any questions for me about recipes or your garden contact [jenn@alstedefarms.com](mailto:jenn@alstedefarms.com). If your questions are administrative call 908-879-7189 or [Trish@alstedefarms.com](mailto:Trish@alstedefarms.com).

Until next week, enjoy the freshness!

*Jenn Borealo*



## Beet Rosti with Rosemary

Many thanks to CSA member Virginia McDonnell she shared this recipe for: Beet Rosti with Rosemary from Mark Bittman it is simple and elegant. She says "We always use this with farm beets"

If you still have some beets:

1 + lbs. beets  
chopped fresh rosemary  
1 tsp salt  
1/4 cup flour  
2-3 Tbsp. butter

Using a grater or a food processor shred the peeled beets. Toss the beets with the rosemary, salt, and pepper and 2 T flour and when completely mixed add the remaining flour and toss again.

Melt 2 T butter into a 12" warmed skillet. Scrape beet mixture into the skillet and press down with spatula so that it fills pan. The pancake should sizzle, adjust heat to keep it from burning. Allow to cook for 6-8 minutes. Bottom of the cake should be crisp. Slide the cake onto a plate. Cover with a 2nd plate and flip. Add a little more butter to the pan and slide the beet cake back into the pan, and continue to cook. The bottom should be crisp in 6-8 minutes. Slide onto Serving plate and cut into wedges to serve.

Adapted from: MarkBittmanNYT.com

## Week 5 Harvest!

Strawberries

Dill

Spinach

Organic Chives

Beets

Mushrooms

Lemon Balm Plants

Organic Arugula

Kale

Mint

Lettuces

Asparagus

Swiss Chard

Anise Plants

*\*\*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.*

## Lettuce Soup

1 cup chopped onions, scallions, and/or shallots

2 garlic cloves, chopped

2 tablespoons unsalted butter

1 T olive oil

3/4 teaspoon ground coriander

3/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

1 1/2 cup diced (1/3 inch) peeled potato

4 cups vegetable broth or more as needed

8 cups coarsely chopped lettuce leaves including ribs (3/4 lb)

2 T chopped herbs to include parsley and chives

Cook onion mixture and garlic in 1 tablespoons butter and 1 T olive oil in a 4- to 5-quart heavy pot over moderately low heat, stirring, until softened, 3 to 5 minutes. Add coriander, salt, and pepper and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Stir in potato, lettuce, and broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, until potato is very tender, about 15 minutes. Purée soup in batches in a blender (use caution when blending hot liquids) and transfer to a 2- to 3-quart saucepan. Bring soup to a simmer, then whisk in remaining tablespoon butter and salt and pepper to taste. Blend in chopped herbs, serve. Adapted from: Bostonorganics.com

