

Storage Tips & Tricks

Mushrooms- Normally it would be ok to store in the original container. In this case you may have some leafy greens that are wet above the mushrooms so you would want to remove them and place them in a brown paper bag. Do not store mushrooms in a zip lock bag. Mushrooms need to breathe. Wipe clean with a damp cloth before using. If rinsing, use as little water as possible, dry before preparing. They should be used within a couple of days To prolong storage clean and cook and then store. Sauté, to have them ready for a soup or stew or sauce.

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 it in salad, roast, or sauté in olive oil and serve with lemon. Or try this trending recipe: [This 5-Ingredient Asparagus Pasta Is the Perfect Easy Weeknight Meal | Kitchn \(thekitchn.com\)](#)

Leafy greens- Leafy greens have been washed and they will come to you damp. They have been watered or washed or iced. You can 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 warm water, plunge in the leafy greens, you will find that most of the grit, dirt, will just fall away. Swish the greens. Allow to sit.

Gently, lift out the greens, check the bottom of the pan for grit/sand/dirt Repeat cold water 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 1 st within a couple of days.

Lettuce- Foil method: Wash and use salad spinner, lay on paper towels (use layers if there are a lot), roll up paper towels and place in HEAVY DUTY foil (buy the name brand really heavy and wide), and label with name and date. the greens are easy to access when preparing a meal and already cleaned and ready to go. The heavy-duty foil is a must, and the great news is that because the foil is thick, you will be able to reuse the same piece over and over. Reuse the paper towels as they dry out too.

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, take a look at [Pantryfun.com](#)

Beets- and all root vegetables. When the root vegetable comes to you with the tops attached you should cut the tops from the root and store in two separate containers. These are tender greens, use them within a few days. Roots should keep a week or more.

The garden herbs. Chamomile and cilantro can be planted together. You also have the option if space allows to add cilantro to pots with chives, parsley, and oregano. If you are starting a new pot with Chamomile you may want to add dill and basil when they arrive in the coming weeks. We will wait for chamomile to produce daisy

Popcorn - Place the ear of corn into a paper lunch bag, Fold the bag closed. Set the bag in the microwave and set the time at 2.5 minutes. DO NOT LEAVE THE ROOM. Listen to the corn popping and if it slows, stop. Then remove the bag from the oven, CAUTION, EVERYTHING IS HOT! Pour popcorn into a bowl and then top with butter or olive oil, salt, herbs, your choice.

You will often receive a bunch of cut herbs:

To keep fresh herbs: Remove dead stems and leaves, wash as needed. Snip the stems. Place stems in a container filled with water, do not submerge the leaves. Changing the water daily will help to keep the herbs fresh. They can keep up to a week on the counter. Or Cover the container with a plastic bag and refrigerate. If storing basil leave on the counter, do not refrigerate. Change water every day or two. Most fresh herbs will last more than a week when stored this way.

Mint Tea: Boil a cup of water and clean and tear 8-10 mint leaves and add them directly to the cup or teapot (you will need a strainer). Allow the tea to steep for 10 minutes. Steeping longer will produce stronger tea. Leaves can be removed or left in the cup. Pouring from a pot you can pour through a strainer. Add a little lemon, honey, sugar, to taste. Mint leaves can also be added to a cup of your favorite tea steeping along with your tea bag for a little more flavor.

Home- made Vegetable Stock - If you haven't started already, it is time to save scraps for vegetable stock. Your stock will change as we work through the season. Scraps can be frozen until you are ready to use them. It is time to start keeping a stock container/bag in the freezer

4c vegetable scraps = 2 quarts of stock

Veggie peels, ends, tops, roots, vegetables a little past prime.

Be sure they are not spoiled, moldy etc.

The three vegetables always found in stock are:

Onion, Celery, and carrot

Save, leeks, scallions, parsnips, asparagus ends, mushroom scraps,

Lettuce, spinach, and kale leaves and stems.

Parsley, cilantro, Later in the season, pepper, squash, eggplant, and corn cobs.

Add a bay leaf and some black peppercorns

Week 5 2023—May 22nd—May 28th

This past week started with business as usual for the most part. For me that meant school tours and potting plants with young children and their teachers. As you know farmers watch the weather as closely as they watch their crops. During the week, suddenly children on the tours were wearing heavier jackets and the forecast was for very chilly weather. This created an unexpected turn of events. The production team prepared to protect. After a mild winter and a spring that has had mostly very warm days and even nights, we had a frost scare last week. Plants that were out on wagons ready to be taken out to the fields and planted were moved back into greenhouses. Acres of strawberries were either covered with row cover, or irrigated to keep them warm, and large fans were used to protect the blueberries as well. The temperature did dip as low as 29 degrees in some of the field locations. Hats off to the production team for a job well done. We cannot thank them enough. The strawberry season will soon be upon us, and the plants look absolutely beautiful. The beloved strawberries are the first fruit crop in our shares, and we will all reap the benefits of their efforts very soon!

This week in our gardens we will all be planting chamomile and cilantro. Your pots may be somewhat full so be sure you are leaving enough space for the plants to grow and achieve full potential. We will wait for chamomile to produce daisy-like flowers for tea and cilantro will be welcome in all of your Southwestern dishes. Chamomile is a perennial so moving to a garden later is suggested. Cilantro is one of the more difficult herbs to grow. It is a tender annual that doesn't always make it through the season. If you truly want to have cilantro all season in your garden, you will probably need to plant some seeds so that a new plant will eventually replace this one. Maybe some of your plants left seeds last year, they may show up in your garden this year as a very welcome volunteer. The production team plants cilantro multiple times during the season so that they should be able to bring us cilantro at times through the summer and fall. While you are in the herb garden be sure to be pinching back the herbs. Chives may be flowering, flowers can be added to salad they can also be pickled, or fried, or added to your potatoes as you would add chives. We do not want herbs to go to seed and we want to pinch back so that the herb plants will produce more leaves and become more full, rather than just tall.

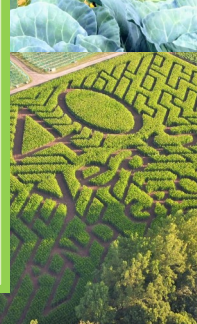
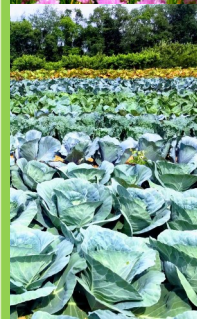
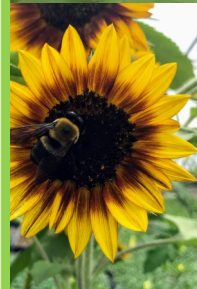
During the week many of us here at the farm attended a meeting of the Chester Agricultural Committee. Maxine Finney, who is on our Marketing team, is the Secretary and Rebekah Alstede is on the board. Refreshments were provided by some of the farms. Our chefs, John Paul and Johan, prepared some delicious dishes. Johan is sharing his recipe for a composed salad that is printed here and it will be in the recipe index on the website.

Coming up is the first three-day weekend of the season. It is a time to spend with our families and friends while we take a few moments to thank all of the men in women in military service, especially those who fought and gave their lives for our freedom.

As always you have any questions for me about recipes or your garden contact jenn@alstedefarms.com. If your questions are administrative call 908-879-7189 or Trish@alstedefarms.com.

Until next week, enjoy the freshness!

Jenn Borealo



Roasted Beet and Asparagus Salad a la Chef Johan

Prepare the beets, walnuts, and hummus in advance

Roasted beets*
Curry Walnuts
1 C Walnuts
1/2 C Red Wine
1-2 T Curry Powder
Shaved asparagus
Green Grapes
2-3 T Alstede Clover Honey
1/4 C Olive Oil
1 t Sumac**
Hummus***

Chive flowers from your garden (optional)

Preheat oven to 350

Place beets into a piece of aluminum foil and completely enclose. Place in a preheated oven and roast for 1-1/2 hours until beets are fork tender. Cool, peel, and slice.

Lower the oven temperature to 250. Coat the coarsely chopped walnuts with red wine and then curry. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Bake until nuts are dry and crisp and fragrant, 20-25 minutes, tossing once after 10 minutes.

Place a heavier spear of asparagus on a cutting board and shave with a vegetable peeler into long thin ribbons. Dress with a drizzle of olive oil and lemon juice

Slice green grapes in half. Prepare dressing in a medium bowl pour in the olive oil, whisk in the honey and sprinkle in the sumac, add the grapes to be coated by the dressing.

To serve the salad, place a dollop of hummus onto each salad plate. Top with a few slices of roasted beets. Add 3-4 shaved pieces of asparagus. Spoon grapes onto the top and Sprinkle with curried walnuts and garnish with some chive petals.

Serve

*The chefs salt roasted the beets. Salt-Roasted Beets Recipe | Amanda Cohen | Food Network

**Sumac is available in the Farm Store. Lemon pepper or lemon zest can be used as a substitute.

***Hummus is available on Harvey or in our farm store, or use your favorite recipe to prepare at home.

Week 4 Harvest

Asparagus
Spinach
Lettuces
Chives
Beets
Scallions

Leeks
Kale
Radishes
Swiss Chard
Mint
Anise & Lemon Balm 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.*

Spring Garden Green Rice

1 C Basmati or Jasmine rice*
3-4 cloves of garlic cut into small pieces
3 scallions cut into 1" pieces
3 T parsley leaves
1 ½ Cups torn spinach leaves, packed
2 Cups vegetable broth
1 T olive oil
½ t salt**

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Place the rice into a 2-quart casserole dish with a tight-fitting lid.

Add the next four ingredients to a food processor or chopper and pulse to finely chop.

Heat the broth to boiling. Add the vegetable mixture to the rice, sprinkle with salt and drizzle in the olive oil. Add the broth and stir just to combine. Cover and place the casserole into the oven for 20-25 minutes. Rice should be tender. Remove the lid and stir gently to evenly distribute the greens. Serve. If rice isn't tender, it may need a little more time or a little more hot broth.

*Brown Texmati rice may be used, check the package for cooking time, about 45 minutes.

**Salt may be decreased or increased depending on the salt content of the broth