



TUV HASHAVUA

BEST OF THE WEEK

Vegetable Fatigue: the Ongoing Dilemma of the CSA Shareholder

Catherine Price, slate.com

TUV HA'ARETZ WINTER CSA 2014-2015

MANY THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

12/18/2014

5-8pm Pick-up
Poonam Chitale
Ariela Fryman
Anny Sun
Mary Beth Bentaha

Noon Truck Unload
Jessica Keane
Daisy Alter
Brian Gardner Hoashi

8pm Unclaimed Shares
Adrian Hayes

1/15/2015

5-8pm Pick-up
Judy Hu
Caryn Hartglass
Jesse Shapiro
Natalie Zych

Noon Truck Unload
Matthew Weitzman
Rebecca Spilke
Brian Gardner Hoashi

8pm Unclaimed Shares
Emilee Wyner

TUV HA'ARETZ CSA at the
Forest Hills Jewish Center

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It was what I did to the macaroni and cheese that made me seek professional help.

My husband and I were looking for new ways to use the vegetables from our CSA — a program, short for "community supported agriculture," in which you pay in advance for a weekly box of fresh produce delivered from a local organic farm. We've been members of this particular CSA for about three years, and for the most part, we love it. In August, we receive endless tomatoes. In June, we're invited to a farm event called "strawberry day." Every time we re-subscribe, they send us a lavender sachet. But each year, toward the end of winter, I run into the Turnip Problem.

Ordinarily, I would never eat turnips. I managed to go 30 years without buying one. But now every winter I'm faced with a two-month supply, not to mention the kale, collards, and flat-leaf Italian parsley that sit in my refrigerator, slowly wilting, filling me with guilt every time I reach past them for the milk. After three years of practice, I've figured out simple ways to deal with most of these problem vegetables: I braise the turnips in butter and white wine; I sauté the kale and collards with olive oil and sea salt; I wait until the parsley shrivels and then throw it out. The abundance of roughage is overwhelming.

It's a problem that affects anyone who tries to eat seasonally or consume a wider variety of vegetables, as an increasing number of Michael Pollan-ated Americans are trying to do. But it becomes especially acute when you're faced with a new delivery each week or month, whether you're ready for it or not. One friend confessed "utter panic" at the sight of tomatillos. When I asked another what he did with his mustard greens, he responded, straight-faced, "I take them home, put them in my refrigerator, and wait until they rot." Cabbage, kohlrabi, collards, bok choy — everyone, it seems, has their problem vegetables. And, like me, many feel guilty about it. When our farm's CSA manager, an enthusiastic woman who has been known to use the words tasty and rutabaga in the same sentence, revealed that her problem vegetable was the radish, she immediately asked for forgiveness: "I know I should embrace it more and am getting better."

But along with their confessions, friends shared success stories, too: recipes for winter ravioli, vegetable stock, curried cauliflower, even chimichurri sauce. Their creativity made me remember how my box used to make me feel — the thrill of my first vegetable custard, the rush of a successful butternut squash soup. Somewhere along the way, I had lost the faith. I wanted it back.

Which brings me to the macaroni. When my husband came home excited about a recipe for Martha Stewart's "perfect macaroni and cheese," I refused to make it unless we could incorporate one of our vegetables. With six and a half cups of cheese and an entire stick of butter, it had enough fat to camouflage anything. Surely, I insisted, we could swap the macaroni with turnips.

I was wrong. Our goal was a rich, creamy interior topped by a crispy, cheesy crust. But far from absorbing excess liquid, the vegetables released it. Our white sauce became a watery soup; our kitchen filled with turnips' telltale scent.

It was time to call in the experts. So I phoned Mark Bittman, author of the ubiquitous classic *How To Cook Everything*, to see what suggestions he had for overcoming vegetable fatigue.

Bittman, who used to belong to a CSA in New Haven, CT, pointed out that complaining about a surplus of vegetables in the dead of winter made me sound like a spoiled Californian. Feeling defensive — sure, he was right, but he hadn't answered the question of what he would do with winter produce if he were lucky enough to have it — I challenged him to a game of vegetable free association. I would throw out a problematic vegetable; he would tell me the first preparation that came to mind.

"I love that," he said. "Go."

"Daikon radish," I began, skipping any pretense at a warm-up.

He didn't miss a beat. "Raw, grated, with soy sauce and sesame oil."

"Cabbage."

"Sauté it with garlic, brown it, shrivel it, maybe turn it into fried rice."

"Parsley."

"Parsley is a staple. You should be using it by the handful daily anyway. It can go on top of anything. Just use it."

A bag full of parsley was currently rotting in my green bin, but I refused to be chastened. "Butternut squash."

"I like to grate butternut squash, cook it with olive oil and garlic, and toss it with pasta."

"Kiwi," I said, trying to catch him off guard. We'd been getting them by the bagful for almost a month, and my counter was covered in furry brown balls. "Is there any way to eat them other than just as a fruit?"

He thought for a moment. "Not that I know of. And I don't even think they're that good."

I came away from our conversation convinced that my kitchen was suffering from a lack of sesame oil and buoyed by a newfound zest for collards. But helpful as our conversation had been, there was still one person I needed to reach.

For CSA devotees, talking to Deborah Madison — founder of San Francisco's iconic vegetarian restaurant *Greens* and author of nine cookbooks — is the equivalent of getting a personal phone call from Barack Obama. "I do find that kale sits in my refrigerator longer than other things," she confessed when I called her. "And I sometimes forget what to do with turnips." But Madison's love of fresh produce could not be suppressed. Kale, she said, goes well with the "softness and neutrality" of black-eyed peas. Radish greens' peppery bite is reminiscent of arugula, and they can be braised along with their roots or mashed into butter. She praised butternut squash as being "very utilitarian" but then paused. "I hate to say so," she said, as if she had admitted to having a favorite child. "There are so many other great squashes out there."

Several hours later, I received a new box, containing kale, lettuce, butternut squash, and still more turnips. Previously, this would have filled me with dread, but I felt a sense of renewed optimism. Perhaps I would turn those turnips into soup. Maybe the squash could find its way into ravioli.

I realized my problem was not that I had lost my creativity but, rather, that I was trying too hard, as evidenced by my attraction to any recipe containing the word "gratin." Rather than covering my vegetables in béchamel sauce, I should be making recipes that complemented and highlighted their natural flavors.



Catherine Price is the author of "101 Places Not to See Before You Die". She writes about diabetes for "A Sweet Life".

SIGN UP FOR TUV HA'AERETZ EMAILS
You'll get advanced notice of vegetables to expect in the share, recipes, tips about storage and cooking, etc. Get an invitation to join by emailing your request to tuv@fhjc.org.

12/18: WHAT'S IN THE BOX??

Carrots, Sweet Potatoes, Potatoes, Cabbage, Leeks, Hakurei Turnips, Kale, Daikon Radishes, Garlic, Herbs, Butternut Squash, Onions ...

Daikon Radish and Potato Latkes | Makes 8

Sandy Gluck | HuffPost Taste

- 8 oz russet potato, shredded on the large holes of a box grater, drained, squeezed dry
- 8 oz daikon radish, shredded on large holes of a box grater
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced
- 3/4 tsp Dijon mustard
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 3 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil

Heat the oven to 250F. Place a wire rack on a rimmed baking sheet; set aside.

With your hands, squeeze the potato until dry and transfer to a large bowl. Discard the potato liquid. Add the daikon, scallions, mustard, and 1/2 teaspoon of the salt; toss to combine. Add the flour and egg and mix well.

Heat 2 tbsp oil in a big heavy skillet over medium-low flame. Using a 1/4 cup measure, place 3 - 4 mounds of daikon mixture in the pan, flattening lightly with a metal spatula to a 1/2-inch thickness. Cook until golden brown and cooked through, about 4 minutes per side, lowering the heat if over-browning.

Transfer latkes to reserved rack and place in the oven to keep warm while you cook the remainder. Repeat with remaining mixture, adding additional oil as needed.

Turkish Squash Candy (Kabak Tatlısı)

Elizabeth Taviloglu | turkishfood.about.com

- 2.5 lb / 1 kg fresh pumpkin or squash, peeled, trimmed and cut into pieces 3" long by 1" wide
- 2 cups sugar
- pinch of salt
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- Crushed walnuts, for garnish
- Turkish 'kaymak' or clotted cream, for garnish

Line the bottom of a covered skillet with the squash. Cover with sugar, salt, and place cinnamon sticks on top. Rest the lidded pan overnight.

The next morning, squash will have released a lot of juice. There should be no need for more water.

Heat the covered pan to a boil, then reduce the heat. Let the squash simmer until it is very soft and translucent and the juice and sugar are reduced to a thick, syrupy consistency, 1-2 hours. Check the pan often and stir to prevent the sugar from burning.

Once the squash is "candied," let it cool down in the pan. Gently arrange pieces on your serving platter. Drizzle syrup over the top and refrigerate for several hours.

Just before serving, garnish your squash pieces with crushed walnuts and a dollop of kaymak, or clotted cream.

TIP: You can also add whole cloves, cardamom, ginger and nutmeg to the juice before boiling.

NOTES FROM MOUNTAIN VIEW FARM

Sweet potatoes and butternut squash want to be kept warm, dry and dark; all of the other roots want to be stored cold (32°F), with high humidity but without free water. As a rule, sweet potatoes and butternut can be stored in your kitchen cupboard and the other roots can be stored in your refrigerator. Though the fridge will keep the veggies cold, it might not be quite humid enough — you can use perforated plastic bags to maintain higher humidity. Make sure to never store apples near any other produce, nor in your fridge! With proper storage, you can make your share items last!