



BROOKFIELD FARM Winter Share News

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Welcome to the Brookfield Farm Winter Share!

CONDITIONS IN THE CELLAR

Throughout the winter, we will keep you posted on the condition of all of the crops in the cellar. Here's the initial view, with a few tips on how to store them at home.

Cabbage: In the center of the cellar, trimmed and packed into black lugs, these cabbages have been treated extra special to help them on their long winter journey. We've traditionally had the most problems storing this crop in the cellar as the outer leaves get very rotten. So, we've tried to clean them up a little better and store them with maximum dry air flow (*not* in the cellar). In addition, after last season's experiment we have wrapped all of the Jan - March cabbage in newspaper to absorb excess moisture. If you do get a cabbage with a rotten outer leaf, simply peel it off and put the cabbage in the fridge. We only have green cabbage this winter as the red never headed-up in the field. We've got a great crop that should last through March.

Carrot, Beet, Celeriac, Parsnip, Rutabaga, & Turnip: All of these roots store better dirty. Once you clean them you should keep them refrigerated and used within a week. Otherwise keep them in a plastic bag (pop some holes in them if necessary to make them breathe) and keep them dirty. We have a great crop which should last through March. For the first distribution we will have beautiful celery and then, when that's gone, move on to the hardy celery root (celeriac).

Potatoes: These don't want to be wet, frozen, or subjected to light. They will do well in a paper bag in a cool dry spot. We have a good crop and should have these through March.

Leeks: We had an abundant fall leek crop, so we are going to distribute these through December and then turn to the also abundant, but longer keeping yellow onions through March.

Butternut Squash: Squash wants to be dry and not as cool (around 50F) which is why they aren't stored in our cellar (too moist and cold). We'll bring enough down for each distribution, but you should store them underneath a bed in your coldest room, or in a dry basement if you don't use them all this month. They want to be stored in a paper bag or box, (not in plastic). We will distribute all of our squash for the winter season in December.

Kale & Collards: Pick into a plastic bag and into the refrigerator. We have an excellent (Pick Your Own) crop this year which will be good until the real deep freeze gets them (middle of January usually). They are in the fields behind the greenhouses. The electric fence around the collards will be turned off (don't tell the deer).

WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE FARM

Getting Set For A Winter Of Local Food

Welcome to our root cellar. This space was created in 2004 to be an environmentally sustainable food storage space for a large amount of local produce. It uses no electricity to keep cold. Just the cooling power of the earth (and one single fan, powered by photovoltaics, to keep air circulating) keeps over 50,000 lbs of organic / biodynamic vegetables stored safely for at least four months. There's a few things you'll need to get used to (cleaning dirty veggies, coming down to the cellar, picking through bulk bins of veggies), but for the most part, most people have found this experience easy to get used to and delicious all winter long.

After five winters we have learned how to use our cellar and are very confident that we will have great food for you all the way through March. Here's a few things you might be wondering which will help make your Winter Share a fantastic way to stay fed all winter long....

How does this work?

Just like in our regular share, we will post the amounts of each crop to take on the chalkboard in the cellar. All amounts will be either by volume (bags provided) or by the piece so that you don't have to worry about weighing things out on scales, etc. Each crop will have a sign with it, in case it's difficult to identify and there will be a map on another chalk board so you can see where the crops are. We will stock the cellar every morning and afternoon. If you find the crates (green lugs or bushel baskets) looking a little low, just go to the one below. If all of the crates are empty, the bags behind the crates have more of that crop. Feel free to open the bags and help yourself. We will try to keep the crates filled!

continued on reverse...

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GRASS-FED MEAT SALE

Saturday December 5th
9am - 1pm

Beef and Pork (fresh & smoked). All meat was raised by Greenhorn Farm (Marc Cesario) in the fields around Brookfield & Bramble Hill Farms (Amherst). Pasture raised and delicious. All cuts sold frozen.



Some Great Winter Recipes....

What's Happening, con't,,

*there are many more on our website -
www.brookfieldfarm.org - send us your favorites!*

Winter Root Soup

2 leeks, washed, trimmed, sliced
4 carrots, sliced
2 turnips, sliced
1 rutabaga, sliced
3 parsnips, sliced
4 tbsp butter
1-1/2 quarts chicken stock or combination water/stock
several thyme sprigs tied together
4 cloves garlic, mashed
pinch cayenne pepper
sea salt and pepper
pinch nutmeg

Melt butter in large, stainless steel pot and add leeks, carrots, turnips, rutabaga and parsnips. Cover and cook gently about 1/2 hr over low heat, stirring occasionally. Add stock, bring to a boil and skim. Add, garlic, thyme and cayenne. Simmer, covered, for about 1/2 hr until the vegetables are soft. Season to taste.

from Nourishing Traditions, by Sally Fallon.

Cabbage and Caraway Seeds

1 head cabbage, 1.5 pounds
1 tsp butter or margerine
1 tblsp minced parsley
1 tsp sugar
ground pepper to taste
half cup chicken broth
half tsp caraway seeds or to taste

In skillet, melt butter. Add cleaned, chopped cabbage and other ingredients - except seeds. Cover and cook over moderate heat for about 12 minutes, basting with pan juices. Near end, sprinkle with seeds.

Variation (almost as good):

Less butter, Omit parsley if you don't have it. Water instead of broth if you don't have broth. Cook all except seeds in microwave at high until cabbage is tender (start checking and stirring at 5 minutes. Time depends on amount, etc.) Near end add seeds.

Delicious, Easy Green Kale

Chop & steam kale Cool. Serve with lemon juice & olive oil (proportions--base on how much kale you have & taste!)

This is from our shareholder Andrea Downs who says that is just delicious (and allows you to keep kale a few days longer, if it's threatening to yellow while stored raw in the fridge). Also super-easy!

When can I pick up my share?

The root cellar will be open every other week (from Monday - Sunday) to pick up your share (*with the exception of a two week break over the winter holidays*). All posted share amounts are for a single share. If you only want to come to the cellar once a month (every other distribution) feel free to take twice the posted amount. Please check off your name on the check-off sheet (on the clipboard). *If you take a month's worth of produce, mark down for TWO distributions*. Using the check-off sheet will help us keep track of our vegetable stocks and make sure that we have plenty of food for the entire winter.

What do I do with all of this food?

In general everything in this root cellar will keep best if it's kept around 34F and 95% humidity. The closest place to approximate this in your home besides your fridge, is in your garage or an unheated part of your basement. A bulkhead attached to the basement can be a nice cold place that doesn't freeze easily. A little insulation (foam, sand, blankets) is all you need to make sure that your crops won't freeze. If you have a couple of buckets or boxes to drop the produce in and then a wool blanket to cover them, in a cold spot (garage, etc) they should be just fine. These crops are HARDY – that's why they store well. We have lots of recipes on the website to help make your winter cooking interesting and delicious.

This stuff is dirty!

We don't wash the roots because they keep better that way *and* we don't have the facilities to wash them in the winter without freezing our pipes and/or our hands! Put them into the fridge (without washing) unless you will use them within one week. Otherwise they are better off in their dirty state. When you are ready to use them, scrub them with a veggie brush, and they'll be all set. If you are going to eat the carrots raw, and want them bright shiny orange, *you will need to peel them*. Yes, that will take some of the nutrients away (with the skin), but we consider that a small price to pay for organic carrots, stored with no refrigeration, for sweet eating into March!

How is this working for you?

If you ever have a question or comment, don't hesitate to call, email, or leave a note here in our "How We Doing" black box on the table in the cellar. One of our goals for the winter is to get some rest after a long season of farm work so you might not see us around all that often. Still, we will probably be around the office during the day, and certainly every morning at 8am during our distribution weeks. We want you to let us know how things are going as we are very committed to making this winter share work for you and your family.

We hope you enjoy the winter bounty,

Farmer Dan (for Karen, Abbe, Adan, Kerry, and Lisa)