

2. Keep the duck fat, bacon fat, or clarified butter warm in small saucepan over low heat. Using a pastry brush, coat a 12-inch skillet or baking pan with a generous amount of the fat. Make a layer of the rutabagas by slightly overlapping the slices in concentric circles.
3. Brush the layer of rutabagas lightly with the fat and sprinkle lightly with a few caraway seeds, salt, and pepper. Continue the process of layering the rutabaga slices, brushing with fat, and seasoning. Press down on the rutabagas occasionally to ensure a compact cake and to make room for all the layers. When the layering has been completed, cover the baking dish tightly with a double thickness of aluminum foil. Place an ovenproof weight, such as a slightly smaller frying pan, on top of the rutabagas and press down.
4. Bake the rutabagas with the weight 30 minutes. Remove the weight, uncover the rutabagas, and bake until the rutabagas are crisp and brown on top and tender throughout, about 30 minutes more.
5. Using pot holders and being careful not to burn yourself, invert the pan onto a warm large serving plate. Blot up any excess fat with paper towels. Present the rutabagas Anna whole at the table and serve by slicing into pie-shaped wedges.

*****From *Fine Cooking in Season* cookbook*****

Clarified Butter - yields about 1 ½ cups clarified butter.

Clarified butter is butter that has had the milk solids removed to yield a butter of delicious purity. It is essential for lending the best flavor to delicate pastries as well as savory dishes.

On a heavy saucepan melt a pound of butter over low heat. Remove the pan from the heat, let stand 3 minutes, then skim and discard any froth from the top. Strain the butter by slowly pouring it through a fine sieve lined with a double thickness of cheesecloth. When you get close to the end of the butter avoid the milky white solids that have sunk to the bottom by carefully spooning off any remaining clear liquid butter. Discard the milk solids. Store the clarified butter in the refrigerator. It will keep indefinitely.



Sisters Hill Farm

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Notes from Our Apprentice, Julia



As our apprenticeship draws to a close, I wanted to take a moment to thank everyone involved with Sisters Hill Farm for all the gifts they've given me over the past seven months—gifts of kindness, generosity, education, inspiration, and most of all, a new vision for the future:

Firstly, to our wonderful members. It's for you that we work hard each day, and seeing first hand how much you enjoy the food we grow makes work full of purpose and a real joy to do. Thank you to all whom from day one greeted us with open arms and smiles in the distribution area, and especially to those who filled our stomachs with breads and baked goods. You've all demonstrated to me what *community* supported agriculture truly means.

Thank you to Sister Mary Ann, for all of your kindness and support and for giving me the opportunity to learn the craft of farming at so special a place as Sisters Hill Farm. To our lovely neighbors down the driveway, Sister Eileen, Sister Margaret Ellen, and Sister Jean, thank you all for welcoming us into your kitchen on so many occasions, and for making the farm feel like home. Stopping and chatting with you all always made my day.

To Audrey and Rose. You were my apprenticeship within an apprenticeship, teaching and inspiring me with new ideas, skills, and tastes unknown to me before. Thanks to Rose, I can now make a proper pie, and to Audrey for helping me make cider from scratch (among other fermentation creations!). Before meeting you both, my ideas about farming were just a dreamy mix of aspirations. Now, after our dinner brainstorming sessions, and nights discussing our fears and doubts, my confidence in farming and vision for the future has expanded. Moreover, I've seen the future of farming in each of you—young, eager, whip smart, passionate beginning farmers armed with the knowledge and drive to change our food system and strengthen our communities for the better. I found in you all the kind of friends that stick for life, and I feel richer having known you both.

And most of all, thank you Dave, for being an exceptional teacher and mentor, and for taking a chance on me (having had little in the way of growing experience) but full of a desire to work hard and learn the craft. Dave embodies much of what farming means to me, from his intelligence, to his professionalism and strong character. I've heard it said that farmers "work like dogs and eat like kings." What's so unique about Dave and Sisters Hill Farm is his ability to minimize the former and maximize the latter. What he's created here, and taught me in tow, is how to farm efficiently, mindfully, and with an eye to quality in a way that produces fantastic food without high costs and backbreaking labor. But as skilled a farmer as Dave is, he's an even better person. Patient with us when we make mistakes, and always willing to stop and explain tasks as we work, I feel so fortunate to have had a mentor like Dave in my life and I'll be a better farmer and person going forward because of it.

I came into the apprenticeship this season with the goal of wanting to grow food. Beyond that, the thought of starting a farm of my own someday seemed daunting and farfetched. Seven months later, the people I've met and things that I've learned have changed my thoughts forever. I can now say with certainty (and enthusiasm!) that farming is my future.

Next year, I look forward to setting off to Malaysia on a Fulbright Scholarship grant, and all the adventures in store there (and farms to explore!). But mostly, I'm excited by the dream and vision that I didn't have before: a clear image of a farm—my own CSA—and a fulfilling career feeding my community. It's a vision that didn't exist before Sisters Hill Farm. And for that, I'm eternally grateful.

*****From Member Helen Hamad*****

Hello Members, it's that time of year again when we prepare to say goodbye to the weekly shares from our CSA. I would like to express my gratitude to the Sisters of Charity, especially Sister Maryann, Dave, our most excellent farmer, and the apprentices and volunteers of the Farm. The bounty that we have enjoyed this season has been one of the richest among many bountiful seasons. I continue to be amazed and appreciative of the tireless effort through the many variations of weather patterns that this team of farmers endured day in and day out. I have a garden where I grow flowers, some vegetables and herbs so I understand in a small way the full extent of what goes in to growing and harvesting. And in my estimation, Dave is a farmer extraordinaire. Anyone who can produce lettuce and greens throughout the growing season, even during the intense heat wave we endured this summer, deserves special recognition.

What I love most about Sisters Hill Farm is being able to watch the food I eat grow, picking up the harvest and sharing time with fellow members and the crew, pick your own harvesting, community work days and the picnics. Well, I guess I really didn't leave much out. I also really enjoy the children as they gather vegetables with their parents, the incredible things they say as they learn to pick flowers and the fun they have wandering around the farm.

I also enjoy the opportunity to benefit from Dave's knowledge. I've picked his brain about growing vegetables, fencing, and irrigation. He is always willing to generously share his wisdom with me. I look forward to next year already as this season is coming to a close.

*****From Herb Quarterly Magazine*****

Parsnip and Potato Mash

Ingredients

- 3 lbs Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and cut into large pieces
- 1 ½ pounds parsnips, peeled and cut into large pieces
- 2 bay leaves
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 ½ cups half and half
- 1 stick (1/4 pound) butter
- ¼ cup creamed horseradish, or to taste
- ¼ cup chives

Directions

1. Put potatoes, parsnips, and bay leaves in large pan. Cover with cold water. Salt water generously. Bring to a boil; reduce to a simmer and cook until fork tender, about 20 to 25 minutes. Drain well; remove bay leaves. Return potatoes and parsnips to pan and put on very low heat to dry out.
2. Meanwhile, warm half and half and butter together in a small saucepan. Mash vegetables with a potato masher or put through a food mill or ricer until they are smooth. Add hot cream and but-ter mixture until you

reach desired consistency. Season with salt and pepper. Stir in horseradish and chives. Serve with your favorite steak.

*****From Fine Cooking in Season cookbook*****

Sweet Peppers

Keeping them fresh

Store peppers in the fridge in plastic bags and bring them to room temperature before using. You'll get the best texture and flavor this way. Peppers will last up to about a week; after that, they tend to mold. Sometimes the mold is only apparent once you cut into the pepper, so be sure to check the interior.

Preserving options

Having frozen pepper strips can make stir-fries and fa-jitas a quick dinner option. Fleshy peppers freeze best. Core, seed, and cut into strips. Lay on a tray and freeze until firm, then pile into airtight freezer bags.

*****From Fine Cooking in Season cookbook*****

Piperade, Polenta, and Poached Eggs- A good idea for brunch

Slowly sauté a mix of sweet peppers, sliced onion, and garlic slivers in lots of olive oil until very soft and starting to caramelize. Season with smoked paprika and a touch of sherry vinegar. Serve over soft polenta with a poached egg on top.

*****From Fine Cooking in Season cookbook*****

Rutabagas

Keeping them fresh

If the greens are still attached when you buy your rutabaga, remove them before storing the bulb in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Preserving options

You can freeze rutabagas by cutting into cubes, blanching for about 3 minutes, draining well, and then packing into airtight containers. or make mashed rutabaga and freeze, tightly sealed.

*****From Fine Cooking in Season cookbook*****

Apple-Rutabaga Gratin

Arrange a bed of caramelized onions in a baking dish, then layer slices of rutabaga with sliced apples on top. Season with some fresh thyme and bake until tender.

*****From Fine Cooking in Season cookbook*****

Rutabagas Anna - Makes 6 to 8 servings

This spectacular yet simple vegetable torte takes its inspiration from the classic French preparation pommel Anna — a pie of sliced potatoes lavished in butter and promiscuously named after a cocotte of the Napoleonic era.

Ingredients

- 2 medium rutabagas (2 1/2 to 3 pounds total), peeled, cut in half, and then into thin 1/8-inch slices
- 1 cup rendered duck fat, bacon fat, or clarified butter
- 2 tablespoons caraway seeds, and salt and pepper to taste

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 425T.