

Blanch Broccoli florets and stems for three minutes before freeing in zip lock bags. Keeps for up to several months.

Crisp Asian Broccoli

Ingredients

- 1 Tbs. soy sauce
- 1 tsp. rice vinegar
- 1 tsp. toasted sesame oil
- 3 Tbs. peanut or canola oil
- 1 Tbs. fermented black beans, rinsed, dried, and coarsely chopped (optional)
- Pinch dried red chile flakes
- 3/4 lb. broccoli crowns, cut into medium florets
- 1/4 red bell pepper, finely-diced
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
- 1-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and quartered
- Kosher salt
- 1/4 cup water; more if needed

Directions

1. Combine the soy sauce, vinegar, sesame oil, and 1 Tbs. of the peanut oil in a small bowl; set aside.
2. Turn on the exhaust fan and heat a heavy 12-inch skillet or large wok over high heat for 2 minutes.
3. When the pan is hot, pour in the remaining 2 Tbs. peanut oil; a couple of seconds later, add the black beans (if using), the chile flakes, broccoli, red pepper, garlic, and ginger.
4. Season the mixture well with salt and cook, tossing or stirring often, until the broccoli deepens to a dark green and browns in places, 3 to 4 minutes.
5. Reduce the heat to medium low, carefully add the water (it will steam), and cover the pan with the lid ajar.
6. Cook until the broccoli softens but still has some crunch, about 4 minutes. (If the water evaporates before the broccoli is done, add more, 1 Tbs. at a time.)
7. Stir the soy sauce mixture well and drizzle it over the broccoli, toss well, and serve immediately.



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Notes from Apprentice Anna Metscher

Summer has arrived! This week we celebrated the Summer Solstice and welcomed it in with sweltering heat. Lots of the plants are thriving in the hot weather, however, like the solanaceous family members of tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant, while others such as the tender greens will be on hiatus until it cools down again in the fall. For the farm crew this weather means starting early and drinking lots of water.

The plants have similar functions to deal with summer's heat. One thing plants do naturally is to send a taproot down into the soil to sequester water and nutrients from far below. This helps them stay healthy and hydrated in dry stretches when a more shallow rooted plant would be more stressed. Something that we do to help them throughout the summer is irrigate. We implement several different techniques at Sisters Hill Farm, with the most common being overhead irrigation.

This consists of 30' pieces of PVC pipe that connects together down a bed, watering about seven beds wide at a rate of about one inch per four hours. This is great because it can be put together quickly and easily by a small number of people and a large amount of the field can be covered at one time. Another technique is drip irrigation where pieces of 'drip tape' plastic tubing is strung down a row within a bed and trickles right at the plant.

This week we also mulched the tomatoes and eggplant with hay from a neighboring farmer. This is beneficial to those crops for several reasons- it keeps the soil moisture levels high, suppresses weeds, and is turned into the soil in the fall, adding rich organic matter that will help fertilize next year's growth. Last year where we mulched tomatoes, the gorgeous broccoli is growing. If that isn't proof that this system works, I don't know what is.

This week I purchased a wonderful new cookbook titled "Wild about Greens" by Nava Atlas. Nava lives here in the Hudson Valley. I was fascinated by a heading "Massaged Kale: Basic Techniques". According to Nava there are 3 methods to massage kale. Which ever method you use begin by stripping the kale leaves from the stems. Then cut the kale into ribbons or bite size pieces. Give them a good rinse and let them dry. No need to be perfectly dry. Transfer them to a large bowl and massage using one of these methods.

The three Methods are:

1. Sprinkle 1/2 to 1 teaspoon of sea salt onto the kale. Mas-

sage it into the leaves for 1 to 2 minutes, until they soften and turn bright green.

2. Rub a small amount of olive oil onto your palms and massage the kale leaves for 30 to 60 seconds, until they turn bright green and soften.
3. Drizzle a small amount of olive oil and lemon juice onto the greens and massage them for 30 to 60 seconds, until they turn bright green and soften.

*****From Wild About Greens Cookbook*****

Kale Salad with Dried Fruits & Nuts—6 to 8 servings

This basic preparation is beyond delicious—I don't think I've ever served it without being asked for the recipe. It also highlights how appealing raw kale can be.

Ingredients

- 8 to 12 ounces kale, preferably curly green
- 2/3 cup dried fruit of your choice—raisins, cranberries, cherries, chopped apricots, etc.
- 1/2 cup crushed toasted cashews, pecans, or walnuts
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of 1/2 to 1 lemon, to taste
- 1 tablespoon agave nectar
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Directions

1. Use one of the three techniques for massaging kale described above.
2. Stir in the remaining ingredients and serve at once.

*****From Member Recipe*****

Fresh Pasta with Fresh Peas, Garlic Scapes, & Ricotta—Serves 2

Ingredients:

- 8 oz Fresh Pasta Noodles
- 6 Garlic Scapes - shaved into ribbons or 2 Cloves Garlic - minced
- 1 Cup Fresh Shelled Peas - shelled and rinsed
- 2 Tbsp Olive Oil
- 3 Sprigs Fresh Tarragon - chopped (about 2 Tbsp)
- Zest of 1/2 Lemon - about 1 Tbsp
- 1/2 Cup Ricotta
- 1 oz, Cheese—a dry crumbly grating style cheese works best like Sprout Creek' Toussaint or Dancing Ewe's Pecorino
- Salt & Pepper

Directions:

1. Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a boil.
2. Meanwhile, shave the garlic scapes into thin ribbons. I do this by laying the garlic scape on a cutting board and running a vegetable peeler along the stalk. This takes a little getting used to but I think it's worth the effort to retain the curvy shape of the garlic scapes.
3. Add the pasta to the boiling water and cook until al dente. Add the peas during the last 4 minutes of cooking time. Strain the pasta and peas, reserving 1/2 cup of the cooking water. Do not rinse. Set aside.
4. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the shaved garlic scapes along with a pinch of salt and a few grinds of black pepper. Cook until the garlic scapes have softened and are golden on the edges, 2-3 minutes.
5. Add the pasta, peas and cooking liquid. Stir to combine. Stir in the tarragon and lemon zest. Cook, stirring for 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Add dollops of ricotta cheese and top with shavings of your choice of grating cheese.

*****From FineCooking.com*****

Grilled Zucchini with Chive Oil Serves four.

Ingredients

- 3/4 oz. chives, thinly sliced (about 6 Tbs.)
- 1/3 cup plus 2 Tbs. walnut oil
- 1 lb. small zucchini (3 to 4), cut on a sharp angle into 1/2-inch-thick ovals
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions

1. Put all but 1 Tbs. of the chives in a blender. Begin to blend while slowly pouring 1/3 cup of the walnut oil through the feed hole of the blender lid. Continue to blend for 1 minute. Stop to scrape down the sides of the blender with a rubber spatula. Blend for another minute. Set aside for 30 minutes to 1 hour to let the flavors infuse.
2. Strain the oil through a fine sieve into a bowl, pressing the puréed chives with a rubber spatula or the back of a spoon to extract any remaining oil.
3. Prepare a medium-high charcoal or gas grill fire.
4. In a medium bowl, toss the zucchini with the remaining 2 Tbs. oil, 1/2 tsp. salt, and a few grinds of pepper.
5. Set the zucchini ovals at an angle on the grill grates and cook until the zucchini has developed rich brown grill marks, about 3 minutes. Turn the zucchini with tongs and cook until the other sides have rich brown grill marks and the zucchini is tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a small serving dish or platter.
6. Drizzle 3 to 4 tsp. of the chive oil over the zucchini and sprinkle with the reserved 1 Tbs. chives.

*****From Fine Cooking in Season Cookbook*****

Preserving options for Broccoli