



What's in the box and where does it go?

	Fridge?	Bag?	Notes & Varieties
Arugula	Yes	Plastic	
Lettuce	Yes	Plastic	Red leaf, green leaf and butter
Scallions	Yes	Plastic	
Pac Choi	Yes	Plastic	
Pea Shoots	Yes	Plastic	
Radishes	Yes	Plastic	Cherriette
Rapini	Yes	Plastic	
Spinach	Yes	Plastic	
Turnips	Yes	Plastic	Hakurei

Note: We had a good rain Tuesday night and it drizzled off and on all day Wednesday while we harvested, therefore things will have more dirt in the bunches than usual. We got off as much as we could at the farm but things will need to be washed well.

Turnips

The first lovely hakurei turnips of the season are in the box this week. Enjoy them in slices on top of your salads, or just sliced in a bowl with some coarse salt sprinkled on top. Our son, Baker, loves them this way. It's his favorite snack this time of year.

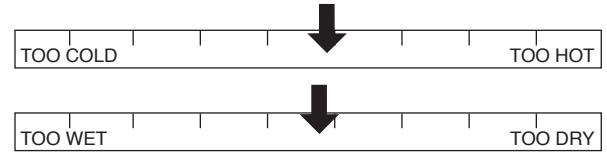
These are a fancy salad turnip which is very different from the hard, pungent cooking turnips you see on the store shelves in the winter. In fact, these salad turnips don't even store well and are really meant to be eaten fresh. You can, of course, cook them, but just a quick sauté is really all they need. The tops are edible as well and the classic way to eat these cooked is to sauté the roots until almost tender and then add the tops. A recipe follows.

I first started growing these turnips 6 or 7 years ago. The seed for these turnips costs 10 times as much as regular turnip seed and I wondered 'how much better can these turnips really be?' Well they are easily 10 times better, if not 30 or 40.

The arugula this week has been through the mill a bit. The strong hot winds we had last week took a toll on some of the crops that spend their lives under row cover. When we get a lot of wind the covers can

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Rainfall 1.2"
 High Temperature 77°
 Low Temperature 46°
 Farmer Complaint Indicators™:



damage some of the tender leaf edges, and you may see some of this damage in the form of a brown edge on a leaf or two. Other than that it's quite nice.

The lettuces are starting to come into their own this week. Head sizes are a little larger, and the butter lettuce has sized up nicely. Butter (aka Bib or Boston) lettuce is really the Cadillac of lettuces. If turnips are Baker's favorite this time of year, the Butter lettuce is our daughter Iris's. She has been known to devour (no, that's not too strong a word) an entire head while just standing in the field.

Our one round of pac choi is in the box this week. Normally we have this ready for the first box of the year, but these transplants were stunted while in the greenhouse. In early May we hit a 'bad' spot in one of our bags of potting mix in the greenhouse. Everything we seeded that week looked awful. We buy potting mix in giant thousand-pound bags and sometimes I just don't think they've mixed all the ingredients together very well. Once we were past that spot everything looked great again, but it really set back the pac choi, fennel and some late lettuce. The pac choi is a great choice for a stir fry this time of year, maybe with the turnip greens and some scallions.

Not really trying to be a nattering nabob of negativism this week but the pea shoots are a little tough. They also didn't respond well to last week's hot winds. Use the top half of the bunch and they should be sufficiently tender. When in doubt just take a bite of the stem, working your way up the plant until it's tender.

The radishes this week are the red cherriettes. They're a bit large but still wonderfully crisp and tender.

The bunch of greens that looks like extra turnip tops this week is actually rapini, or broccoli raab. It's in the same family as turnips, but with less of a pungent flavor. The classic Italian way to use it is sauteed with a little olive oil and tossed with pasta, or with white beans and sausage, which was sounding very good while picking it in the rain yesterday.

Lastly is another nice bunch of spinach. We had a bit of a snafu yesterday when we went to harvest and realized we really didn't have enough rubber bands. I've been meaning to try twist-ties on spinach, so here they are. I think it was a little more time-consuming to harvest, but they seem to damage the spinach less. Let me know what you think. And thanks to Melinda for making a rubber band run for us in the morning so that we could get the rest of the harvesting done!

Farm News

As I said above, we had a real nice rain Tuesday night and it was very welcome. Things were looking very dry and the wind just wasn't cooperating with my plans to irrigate. When we irrigate with our sprinklers we have to have pretty calm conditions in order not to waste a lot of the water and get it where we want it.

We hooked up a bunch of our crops to drip irrigation and watered them on Tuesday. Irrigating things is almost always the best way to make it rain. There was rain in the forecast, but if it's not a 100% chance I ignore it for the most part. You can go through several days of 60% chance of rain and never get a drop, and pretty soon things are very dry and you're far behind on irrigation. Most vegetables require about an inch of water per week to flourish.

The rain was welcome but it always makes for a tough harvest day. Everything moves a little slower when it's muddy. And after you've been out there a while you move slower because you're carrying 20 pounds of mud on your boots and pants. With seven things to harvest into bunches this week and all the lettuce and pac choi it was 4pm before we had everything out of the field and 7pm by the time we were done washing. A full 12-hour day for the crew and they really took it in stride. It's the kind of tired where you're almost too tired to sleep.

After the truck left the farm last week we did manage to get all of the winter squash transplanted. On Friday Kara and Daniel undertook the mammoth task of getting all the squash, melons, cukes and zukes row covered. The row cover protects them from insect pests while young, and gives them a warmer, more

stable environment to grow in. We'll leave the covers on for the next three or four weeks, until we start to see some flowers that need pollination.

While they were doing that I was cutting our fields of rye for straw. I've been trying to grow my own straw for a couple years and the weather really hasn't been cooperating. The straw I bought for the garlic last fall was so full of leftover wheat seeds that it looked like we'd planted grass seed in the garlic early this spring. We had to spend hours hand weeding and hoeing the wheat out of the garlic field, so it was another reason to grow our own, clean straw. To grow the cleanest straw possible we plant rye in the fall and cut it just when the heads are starting to pollinate. That way the grain has not become viable seed. The rye has to dry in the field for a week or two and it doesn't mind getting rained on a couple of times, but it can't stay wet indefinitely like it did last year.

Monday and Tuesday were mostly spent getting caught up on some weeding. I cultivated the brassicas, potatoes and a bunch of small seedlings, while the crew hand weeded beets, carrots and next year's strawberries. They also hoed all the edges of the plastic mulch where the tomatoes, peppers and onions live. Keeping ahead of the weeds there is critical to things not getting out of control. I also seeded more carrots and green beans and the row of dill that I forgot to seed a couple of weeks ago.

Coming next week: Arugula, lettuce, spinach, rapini, radishes, scallions, broccoli?, kale or collards, scapes?

Speedy Sautéed Hakurei Turnips and Greens

- 1 bunch hakurei turnips with greens
- 1/2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 tablespoon butter
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons white wine

Rinse the turnips and greens well. Cut the greens from the turnips and chop into 2-inch pieces. Trim any straggly roots from the turnips and discard. Cut the turnips into quarters or eighths, depending on size.

In a sauté pan with a lid, heat the olive oil and butter. Add the turnips, sprinkle lightly with salt and pepper, and sauté until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Remove the turnips from the pan. Add the greens to the pan, along with any moisture still clinging to the leaves. Cover the pan and allow the greens to cook, stirring once or twice, until just tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the white wine and cook until almost all the liquid is gone. Return the turnips to the pan; cook 1 to 2 minutes to heat through. Serve immediately.