

Farmer's Choice

organic food for kids,
fundraising for schools



8th June 2009

KID'S CORNER

Does temperature change the flavour?

Grab a mirror. Stick your tongue out. See all those tiny little dots? Those are taste buds. When food hits these taste buds it sends messages to your brain. Belgian scientists have found that warmer temperature makes the messages stronger. So, the warmer the food the more your brain responds to the flavour.

The scientists found that taste buds will hardly even register foods colder than 15 degrees Celsius, whereas the flavour of foods served at 37 degrees Celsius have 100 times more flavour.

Test this out with ice cream. Let a scoop fully melt in a cup. Now, take a sip. It will be really, really sweet. Too sweet! Now, have a bite of cold ice cream. What makes eating cold ice cream so nice is that you start to taste it when it begins to melt on your tongue. If you eat it too quickly, you really won't be able to taste much of it at all!

Keep this experiment going and try all sorts of foods - nearly frozen slices of melon vs. a slice at room temperature, really cold tomatoes vs. warm ones, etc. You can really taste the difference!

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Shoots from sandy soils

We're one of the few to get our hands on organic, British asparagus - it's a rare seasonal treat. Unlike some of the English asparagus you'll see in the shops, ours is 100% outdoor grown (no greenhouses used). This means it's truly in season! Much of our asparagus comes from Richard Thomas on Inkersall Grange Farm in Nottinghamshire, where the soil is very sandy - an ideal condition for growing superb spears! Once the asparagus shoots through the ground they are fast growing and need to be picked every day, sometimes twice a day.

If you ever see a bent asparagus spear it is probably due to the weather. If we have cold nights and warm days (quite typical for this time of the year) the side facing the sun grows faster than the side in the shade and therefore it doesn't grow straight.

Some shops reject these spears but we snap them up. They still taste superb and will be 100% outdoor grown (unlike some non-organic spears), so we hope you don't mind! It'd be wasteful not to take them.

Portobello mushrooms are simply the fully mature form of the Crimino, a common variety. The name "portobello" was attached in the 80's as a brilliant marketing ploy to popularize the mushroom.

This week's bags...

Vegetable

Carrots
Cherry Tomatoes
Courgettes
Mushrooms White
Spring Greens

Fruit & Veg

Asparagus
Mini Watermelon
Oranges
Red Pepper
Spring Greens

Fruit

Apples
Kiwi Fruit
Mango
Mini Watermelon

Please note that the planned bag contents shown may vary through the week due to unforeseen changes in weather and availability. If we do have to change the contents we will replace with something else.

This week's recipes...



Asparagus, Ham & Olive Bread Bake

It's actually a savoury bread pudding, but don't let that put you off - this is gorgeous and easy, and is a good use for asparagus if you're stuck for ideas. If you have picky eaters, chop the asparagus very small and leave out the olives if needed. Use any stale bread, from plain white baguette to an herbed walnut spelt country loaf. A great side dish to meat or fish, or make it a meal with salad. 6-8 servings

450g stale bread, cut into 2cm cubes

700ml milk

3 eggs

260ml chicken or vegetable stock

½ teaspoon each salt and pepper

½ teaspoon dried thyme (optional)

About 450g asparagus

200g chopped ham /cooked bacon or sausage

80g black olives, pitted, chopped

1 medium onion, minced

100g Gruyere, Emmental, Jarlsberg, or 'Swiss' cheese, grated (or amount to taste)

Preheat the oven to 200C/400F/gas6. Grease a large casserole dish. Place the bread cubes in a large bowl. In a medium bowl, whisk together the milk, stock, eggs, salt, pepper, and thyme until combined. Pour the mixture over the bread. Snap off the tough ends of the asparagus and cut the spears into 2 cm (or

smaller) pieces. Add them to the bread along with the ham, olives and onions. Fold everything together well to combine the ingredients. Spoon the mixture into the casserole dish and pat down the top. Sprinkle the cheese over. Bake for 45 minutes, or until the top is browned and crisp and there is no liquid in the centre. Remove from the oven and let it stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Just Like Caesar Salad

A tasty side salad - or try it as a main course, topped with grilled and thinly sliced Portobello mushroom, chicken, or salmon, and served with crusty bread and butter. Feel free to bulk it out with extra vegetables like tomatoes, onions, red peppers, or grated carrot. Serves 4-6

2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

3 anchovy fillets

2 medium garlic cloves

2 teaspoon Dijon mustard

2 teaspoons horseradish sauce

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

180ml olive oil

6 large handfuls of lettuce or mixed greens, chopped or torn into bite-sized pieces

2-3 handfuls croutons

1 big handful grated Parmesan cheese

Blend the first 6 ingredients together in a food processor until smooth. Slowly add the oil and blend until well combined. Toss the remaining ingredients together (with any additional vegetables) in a large bowl. Add the dressing and toss to combine.