

# Farmer's Choice

organic food for kids,  
fundraising for schools



23<sup>rd</sup> November 2009

## KID'S CORNER

### Carrot craze

How many different ways can you carry a carrot?

Hold it under your arm. Balance it on your shoulder. Tuck it under your chin. Carry it in your mouth.

Get your parent to help you make long thin ribbons with the carrots using a vegetable peeler. Make some scary teeth by hanging carrot ribbons from your lips. Or perhaps make a long tongue.

Sprinkle grated carrot onto your plate and listen to the sound it makes. Lick it and see if it sticks on your tongue.

Which do you like best: raw or cooked carrot? How are they different? Colour? Taste? Texture?

*Adapted from Lucy Thomas' Mange Tout (Penguin: £12) book and children's classes. [www.mangetoutkids.com](http://www.mangetoutkids.com)*

### Did you know?

Unlike apples, pears cannot ripen on the tree? Left to ripen and turn yellow on the tree, the sugars will turn to starch crystals and the pear will have a gritty texture.

## Mushy on the Beeb

Patrick Hearne is a mushroom genius, which is probably why Jamie Oliver's pig farmer friend, Jimmy Doherty, sought his advice when filming his new BBC One programme Jimmy's Food Factory.

Patrick and his family, who've run Capel Organic Mushrooms in Suffolk since the 1960s, will feature on the programme this week. "We spent two full days with Jimmy and his camera crew," Patrick says, "but then we're only 5 miles up the road." It airs on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm, or you can catch it on BBC iPlayer for up to a week afterwards.

"Jimmy came to us to find out how it's possible to grow mushrooms throughout the year," Patrick reveals. "It's simple science really," he says modestly. "Mushrooms like cool damp places so we create the right environment for them."

But it's not really that simple. Much of the work starts before the mushrooms start growing: "We spend 6 weeks preparing the compost where they grow." A mix of manure, straw, water, air, heat and time are involved. Mushroom spawn is then placed in the compost. It takes another 4 weeks before anything sprouts.

And, then it all begins. The phrase 'it's really mushrooming' is backed with meaning when Patrick points out: "mushrooms double in size every day." Once the first mushroom bud appears it only takes a week to develop to full size.

Five minutes on the phone with Patrick filled us with all sorts of mushroom wisdom. Button mushrooms are the same as Portobello mushrooms. "They're the same variety but one is just picked earlier and the other has more room to grow." Ah... Check out Jimmy's programme to find out more.

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## This week's bags...

### Vegetable

Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Leeks  
Potatoes  
Shallots

### Fruit & Veg

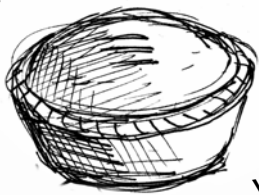
Apples  
Bananas (Fairtrade)  
Cauliflower  
Leeks  
Brown Mushrooms

### Fruit

Apples  
Bananas (Fairtrade)  
Oranges  
Pears

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...



### Autumn Chicken & Vegetable Pie

You can make the pastry and filling a day or two ahead, refrigerate separately, and bake when needed. The vegetables can be swapped depending on what you have to hand: try turnips, peas, parsnips, winter greens, sprouts, sweet potatoes, or squash.  
Serves 8.

#### Pastry:

250g plain flour (or use 1/2 white, 1/2 brown)  
1 tablespoon dried parsley  
1 teaspoon dried thyme  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon sugar  
225g cold unsalted butter, chopped  
About 6 tablespoons ice-cold water

#### Filling:

About 1 1/2 kg raw chicken meat  
1.4 litres chicken stock  
450g carrots, cut into 2cm pieces  
450g potatoes, cut into 2cm pieces  
60g butter  
2 large leeks, sliced (white & pale green parts only)  
1 medium onion, chopped  
2 teaspoons dried thyme  
50g plain white flour  
120ml white wine  
120ml double cream

Make the pastry: place the flour, herbs, salt,

sugar and butter in a food processor, and blend until it looks like coarse crumbs (or place ingredients in a large bowl and rub the cold butter into the flour mixture with your fingers.) Transfer to a large bowl. Using a fork, mix enough cold water into the mixture to form a dough, and then roll into a ball. Flatten into a rectangle shape, cover and chill for at least 30 minutes.

Butter a large pie or casserole baking dish (26-30cm). Place the chicken and stock in a large saucepan, and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer until chicken is just cooked, 15-20 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the meat to a plate to cool. Add the vegetables (but not the onion or leeks) to the stock and simmer uncovered until just tender, 10-15 minutes. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the vegetables to the baking dish. Pour the stock into another container and set aside. Melt the butter in the saucepan over medium heat. Add the leeks, onion and thyme. Cook until tender, about 8 minutes. Add the flour and stir 2 minutes. Stir in the stock and white wine. Increase the heat to high and bring to the boil, stirring. Add the cream and boil until the sauce thickens enough to coat a spoon, stirring or whisking frequently, about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cut the chicken into 2cm pieces and add to the vegetables. Pour the sauce over and leave to cool. Preheat oven to 200C/400F/gas6. Roll out the dough on baking paper to a size a bit larger than the baking dish. Lift the paper and turn the dough over onto the filling. Trim the overhang and tuck the dough edge inside the dish. Use scraps to decorate the top. Bake until crust is golden and gravy is bubbling, about 50 minutes. Let stand 10 minutes.