

# Farmer's Choice

organic food for kids,  
fundraising for schools



30<sup>th</sup> March 2009



## KID'S CORNER

### Don't make me cry, Mr. Onion

Does your mother or father burst into tears every time they chop an onion? The mighty vegetable is quite a complex little creature. You can't see them but onions have something called cellulose pockets. When you cut an onion, these pockets are ruptured and this releases pungent sulphur compounds that can irritate the eyes. The body's defence is to wash these pungent vapours away with tears. The good news is that these compounds dissolve in water and are sensitive to heat and cold. (*Hint: When onions are cooked or put it in the fridge or cold water before being chopped, the toxic gas is minimized.*)

#### DID YOU KNOW?

Mangoes are related to cashew and pistachio nuts!

### A mushrooming success

Back in 1961, Squadron Leader Peter Hearne, his wife and their eight children embarked on an epic mushroom adventure. They were armed with very few skills, except Peter's ability to fly a fighter plane, yet they managed to forge a mushrooming business in the small village of Capel St Mary, just outside Ipswich in Suffolk.

"Mushroom farming was very different from today," says Peter, "very little machinery, very low yields and quite a high price. Times were hard..." Peter's children were destined to either love or loathe fungi. Many of them have ventured into mushroom enterprises. Damian and Patrick Hearne now run their father's business, Capel Organic Mushrooms. When they took over all was going well but they met a few challenges in the late 80's when they decided to go organic. "We nearly gave up and became snail farmers," laughs Patrick. Though, it wasn't funny then. "It was a nervous time, but after a few mishaps, we achieved full organic status". This was all well and good but there was a very limited market for organic produce at first, but slowly the organic movement started to take off. The biggest blip during this time was an EEC directive requiring the compost to be made from organic straw.

"We got sorted a full two years before this came into force ensuring our supply of straw from all over the country, making us the only organic farm in the UK making its own compost."

**Abel & Cole**  
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## This week's bags...

### Vegetable

Green Kale  
Green Lettuce  
Portobello mushrooms  
Potatoes  
Spring Onions

### Fruit & Veg

Cauliflower  
Mango  
Pears  
Potatoes  
White Onions

### Fruit

Mango  
Oranges  
Pears  
Plums

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...



### Portobello Burgers with Red Pepper Sauce

Serve with salad or homemade oven chips. Wonderfully flavourful and fun as is, or add any kind of cheese or additional vegetable toppings that take your fancy. The recipe makes extra sauce, which will keep for a few days in the fridge and is great on other sandwiches, burgers and wraps. Serves 2

1 roasted red pepper, or a few pieces from a jar  
3 tablespoons mayonnaise  
1 small garlic clove, chopped  
Pinch of chilli or cayenne powder  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
2 portobello mushrooms, stems removed  
2-4 slices red onion  
4 crusty country bread slices (or 2 gorgeous rolls)  
Lettuce leaves, to taste

Blend the red pepper, mayonnaise, garlic, and chilli powder in a processor or mortar and pestle, until smooth. Season to taste with a little salt and pepper if needed. Brush the mushrooms and onions with the oil and season with a little pepper. Grill them in an oiled grill pan, or sear them in a non-stick frying pan, turning, until tender. Lightly toast the bread. Make two sandwiches, layering the mushrooms, onions, and lettuce on the bread - and add as much sauce as you like.

### Creamed Kale and Potatoes

A bit different from mash, this is a smoother, creamier dish to serve alongside your favourite roast, or with sausages. It's a gorgeously tasty way to get some healthy greens in, and is a good starting point for those who have never cooked with kale before. Serves 4

1 bag kale (or about 400g)  
About 400g mashing potatoes (peeled or unpeeled, according to taste)  
120ml whipping cream (single cream will do if you can't find this)

Remove and discard the stems and thickest centre ribs of the kale, and chop the leaves. Add to a pot of salted boiling water, and boil until just tender, 5-8 minutes. Drain it in a colander, then immediately transfer the kale to an ice bath to stop it from cooking any more (an ice bath is a bowl of water and ice). When the kale is cool, drain it gently but do not squeeze it dry. While the kale cooks, cut the potatoes into small chunks. Add to a medium saucepan with the cream, ¼ teaspoon of salt, and ¼ teaspoon of ground black pepper. Simmer over low heat, covered, stirring occasionally until tender, 15-20 minutes. Drain the potatoes into a colander set over a bowl to catch the cream. Puree the kale and cream in a food processor until just smooth, then add the potatoes and pulse until just mashed (if you over-process cooked potatoes, they can get gluey). Transfer to a saucepan and warm over low heat, stirring frequently. Season to taste with additional nutmeg, salt, and pepper if needed.