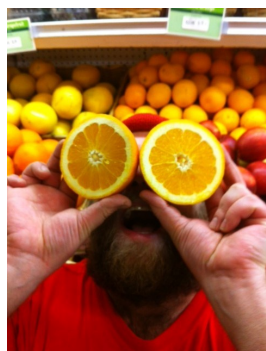


OLYMPIA FOOD CO-OP'S
PRODUCE NEWSLETTER

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Something Special:

Heirloom Navel Oranges

Recently a shopper asked us why the heirloom navel oranges don't have seeds. I think her hope was to try planting some of the seeds, and she was confused as to why an heirloom variety wouldn't have seeds. I did a little research to find an answer to her questions, and found out that, and more, about the heirloom navels that the Co-op carries. First, they don't have seeds because no navels have seeds—all navels are a naturally seedless variety of citrus. Most of the heirloom navels we buy come from Buck Citrus which is at Deer Creek Heights Ranch in Porterville, California. They had this to say about their heirloom navels:

The heirloom navels that are planted at Deer Creek are bud wood from the original navel brought as a gift from Brazil to the United States. That tree and its grafted children are at UC Riverside. The Buck trees were planted as grafts on sour orange root stock from that tree in 1907....trees after the mid 20's are hybrids developed to reduce the kess that the heirloom navels still have (that extra segment at the bloom end of the fruit) ... Navel oranges just don't have seeds, they are pollinated like other citrus that produce seeds.

So I asked Don Mayfield, the citrus buyer from Organically Grown Company, if someone wanted to grow heirloom navels how they'd go about that:

They would need to buy a grove that had been planted in the early 1900's

He was joking of course, but went on to say:

I suppose you could buy bud wood and graft onto root stock if you could find a bud wood source.

If you haven't tried the heirloom navels yet this year, I highly recommend them, so flavorful and juicy, with that distinctive, sweet, floral aroma that you smell when you are near a citrus grove. Someday I hope to visit Deer Creek Heights ranch and see those heirloom navel trees that were planted over 100 years ago!

Blood Oranges

Lately I have been a bit of a blood orange fanatic. I remember the first time I saw and tasted a blood orange, I was blown away...a piece of fruit that tastes (and looks) like a cross between an orange and a raspberry? Sounds pretty fantastic. Blood oranges, like many dark red and purple-colored fruit, are high in compounds called anthocyanins. These compounds have been shown in some studies to help prevent cancer and heart disease. The darker the reddish-purple hue, the more anthocyanins the fruit or vegetable contains. Blood oranges are also fantastic because they are easy to peel, and give a nice bit of color to winter salads. See the back of the newsletter for one of my favorite winter salad



My Recent Love Affair

With Butternut Squash

Recently I discovered something pretty cool—you can put uncooked chunks of peeled butternut squash in your smoothies, which easily adds extra vitamin A&C&E, potassium, calcium, magnesium, and folate! I usually put about 3/4 of a cup in a 16oz smoothie. Of course butternut squash is also a wonderful winter warmer when it's baked and sprinkled with cinnamon before serving. I've also been adding it to soups, and find it especially delicious paired with beans, tomatoes and kale. On my weekend, I peel and cube a large butternut squash so it's ready to go for the week.



Blood Orange, Fennel, and Cabbage Salad

serves 4

For salad:

A mixture of red, savoy and/or green cabbage and Italian kale, washed and shredded into fine ribbons

1 bulb fennel, chopped into very small pieces

A large handful of fresh mint, washed, and sliced

2 blood oranges, peeled, segmented, and cut into bite-sized pieces

2 Tbs toasted sesame seeds

For dressing :

2 Tbsp. olive oil

zest of 1 blood orange

juice of 1 blood orange

1 Tbsp. liquid honey (or agave, maple syrup)

1/3 cup roasted tahini

Whisk dressing ingredients in a small bowl and set aside. Fill each plate with your cabbage/kale mixture. Top each plate with mint, fennel, and blood orange pieces. Drizzle dressing on top and sprinkle with sesame seeds. Serve.

Note: After I made this, I kind of wished I'd dressed the salad before plating it. So for a more even dispersion of dressing, put the dressing in a large bowl, add a little water to thin it down, then add the cabbage mixture and toss to coat. Proceed with plating and topping the salad.

Butternut and Spinach Smoothie

Large handful spinach

3/4 cup peeled butternut squash chunks

1/2 banana

1/2 cup frozen pineapple

1 cup nut, coconut, cow, or goat milk

1 Tbs flax meal

A squeeze of lime or lemon juice

Blend all ingredients well in a blender. Add a little water or coconut water if needed to thin.

Erin's Easy Winter Stew

2 Tbs Olive oil

1 large yellow onion, diced

3 cloves garlic, minced

1/2 a butternut squash, seeded, peeled, and cut into chunks

2 medium potatoes, cut into chunks

1 15oz can diced tomatoes— fire roasted if possible

1 15oz can white beans, butter beans, or garbanzo beans

6 cups vegetable broth, or bouillon mixed with water

1 tsp salt (omit if broth is salted)

1/2 bunch Italian kale, cut into ribbons

1/2 cup fresh basil, sliced into ribbons

A splash of vinegar

Ground pepper

Add olive oil to a large soup pot. When it is warm, add onions and garlic and sauté until translucent and fragrant. Add squash and potatoes. Sauté for a few more minutes.

Add broth, tomatoes, beans, and salt (if using). Allow to cook until squash and potatoes are soft (about 20 minutes). Add Italian kale and cook for five more minutes.

Add basil. Add a splash of vinegar and a little pepper. Taste and add more salt or pepper as needed. Tastes even better after it sits for a day or two!

