



The Nibbler

Your personal source for the best summertime veggies.



Covered Bridge Gardens

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Week Three of 16

Peters Creek Farm

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Hot! Hot! Dry!

Everyone is talking about this hot dry weather, especially farmers. Every season deals us a new hand of weather cards and this season is a full house of hot and dry. That is why we grow a wide variety of crops that like all kinds of conditions. We never know. Another thing we do is lay drip tape under the plastic mulch so we can water the plants in times like this.

It looks like another dry week. Even with predictions of rain we cannot take chances and just wait. We gave everyone the day off after the 4th but we were busy watering and making changes to the watering system. Both farms have ponds that help in dry times, but there is nothing like a good rain.

We encourage those of you with power to plan that outdoor picnic, wash windows or hang clothes out. I have been leaving the windows down in my car.

Rain or Shine

We will always be at your pick-up site rain or shine. **Look for our large white truck and we will be close by.**

For those picking up at Lakewood, look for signs that we are inside.

If you pick up at a farmer's market and because of severe weather it is closed, we will still be there waiting for you. These are your set delivery times and we promise to not miss.

Local Grown Popcorn

Covered Bridge Gardens has gained a wonderful reputation for our popcorn.

It all started when Steve wanted to see if we could grow it. Not only did it grow but it popped great with good flavor. Then we discovered it even popped right off the ear. The following year we expanded our yellow popcorn selection to include red, white and blue varieties. We have promoted our popcorn at the Fabulous Food Show at the IX Center for the past three years. Last year we began sending it to a local mill to be stone ground into cornmeal. We have even made it available on our website under our store.

Popcorn grows like any other corn. It really grows tall. Each stalk will produce two or three ears. We plant in May and harvest in late October and early November when it has started to dry down. The ears are stripped of their husks and placed in a corn crib built with a false bottom that allows air to flow up through the ears and promote drying. It will take several months to dry. This year's crop will not be ready till possibly next March. Once popcorn has reached the right dryness to pop it will maintain that ability as long as it is stored in a dry place. Do not put popcorn in the refrigerator. There are some connoisseurs that will only eat popcorn that is two years old. I don't think I can wait that long.

Here is a short portion of the history of popcorn you can find under "Everything Popcorn" on our site.

Most popcorn from 800 years ago was tough and slender-stalked. The kernels themselves were quite resilient. In tombs on the east coast of Peru, researchers have found grains of popcorn perhaps 1,000 years old. These grains have been so well-preserved that they will still pop. In southwestern Utah, a 1,000-year-old popped kernel of popcorn was found in a dry cave inhabited by predecessors of the Pueblo Indians. Even today, winds sometimes blow desert sands from ancient burials, exposing kernels of popped corn that look fresh and white but are many centuries old.

We hope you enjoy yours this week. We are including the delicate white kernels. They pop up to a delicate flake that can be used to top soups or can be used in place of bread with a meal. Tell us how you like to flavor your popcorn. Let's see who has the most unusual taste.



Ingredients: You will find more tips and recipes at our website.



Try Something New !

Kohlrabi

Kohlrabi is sometimes called an educated turnip. Kohlrabi is like a turnip in shape and texture but is actually the swollen stem of this cabbage-family plant. It grows as big as an orange. The leaves may be cooked but strong in flavor.

Kohlrabi is probably one of the least eaten vegetables. That's too bad. Raw, it's a great addition to a vegetable tray. Despite its relationship to cabbage, when cooked, it has a milder more pleasing taste. Look for relatively small bulbs less than 3-inches in diameter.

Peel the fibrous skin and slice it thin for salads, or steam it like a turnip.

Suggested preparation:

Wash. Trim off root and stems. Leaves may be served as greens. Pare and cut into slices or cubes.

Cook covered in boiling salt water 25 to 30 minutes. Or bake, steam, or fry, the same as potatoes. When frying, avoid having fat too hot (too hot fat makes kohlrabi shrivel).

Kohlrabi are not a widely used vegetable but it is a fun food and worth getting acquainted with. Kohlrabi is a good source of vitamin C and calcium. As a kitchen remedy it energizes the stomach.

Shallots

Most cooks buy only as many shallots as they will need for a particular recipe. To keep for longer time store them as you would any allium in a cool, dry, dark place with plenty of air circulation. Knot them in clean pantyhose, hang from the ceiling in a dry garage, cellar or closet, and they can last up to 2 months. If they sprout, you can still use them. Remove the bitter green sprouts if you don't want a strong onion flavor. Many cooks choose to include the sprouts and use them much like chives.

Shallots may be chopped and frozen up to 3 months. However, when thawed, they will have the texture of a lightly saute'ed shallot, so do not expect any crunch. This may actually be a time-saver in many recipes. The younger (smaller) the shallot, the milder the taste. Large shallots will smell and taste more like their onion and garlic cousins.

Shallots work particularly well in dishes using wine.

- Although shallots caramelize like onions, it is important to saute them gently. Browning over high heat is likely to turn them bitter, much like [garlic](#).
- Roast shallots in their skins until soft. Then peel, puree, and use as a flavoring for [soups](#) or [sauces](#).
- Shallots do not give bad breath like garlic or onions, and are more easily digestible.
- [Leeks](#), onions, and scallions may be substituted for shallots, but expect a stronger onion flavor.
- Refrigeration is not recommended for shallots as cold temperatures tend to encourage sprouting.
- 3 to 4 shallots may be substituted for 1 medium onion.



Like Peas in a Pod

Shelling peas are also call English peas. These peas bring back the old fashioned sit on the porch shelling time. Many parents find this a good job for young cooks. I like to sit and watch the evening news or a favorite show and shell up what I need for my meal while other things are cooking. They are well worth the added step. They can be boiled, steamed or added raw to salads. Unlike the sugar snap or snow peas, remember the shells are too tough for eating. They are sometimes hard to identify in the field and it takes careful charting to remember which is which. And then there is always the taste test at picking time.

