



TWO SMALL FARMS

Community Supported Agriculture

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Cilantro Roots, by Andy Griffin

As we harvest cilantro the smell of it hangs in the air around us like a fog. When I used to sell my produce in farmers' markets I'd pile the cilantro high on our display tables and there were always at least a few passers by that would stop to complain about the smell. But that's only to be expected; cilantro is a strong herb that has always provoked strong reactions. What other food can you think of that's been compared by the most ancient and revered authorities to both manna from heaven and bedbugs?

Cilantro is the Spanish and American name for *Coriandrum sativum*, or coriander, an aromatic member of the carrot family, the Umbelliferae. Plenty of carrot family members, like dill, anise, caraway, and celery have strong scents but their names don't have a pejorative odor. Coriander, on the other hand, traces its name to the Greek koris or koros, meaning bug. Classical scholars are divided as to whether the stinky bug that lent its name to the fragrant herb was a bedbug or a wood bug. Coriander's association with bugs isn't appetizing but the name alone hasn't been repellant enough to stop people from eating the plant.

Coriander evolved in Asia and the Middle East. Sanskrit texts that date back 7000 years mention the herb, as do Egyptian papyri. The Bible refers to coriander in the Book of Numbers, chapter 11: 7, "The manna was like coriander seed..." Given that manna was also described as a "bread" from heaven that appeared like flakes of frost and tasted like honey wafers it's difficult for me to understand how, except for sharing a color, manna could be anything at all like coriander seed. Maybe I'm reading a poor translation. I think it's interesting, though, that the Israelites were commanded to gather only so much manna as they could eat. Some people disregarded this warning and tried to hoard the manna but by the following day the old manna had broken out in maggots. Bugs again.

Northern Europeans used the seeds of coriander as a spice to flavor foods and liquors but they never warmed to eating the herb's fresh leaves the way the Persians, Turks, Indians and Chinese did. Coriander leaves were frequently dismissed as having a soapy, stinky quality. When the Spaniards conquered South America they brought coriander seed with them and the fresh herb was readily accepted by the indigenous peoples. This was probably because Native Americans were already used to the strong flavor that coriander leaves have. They were

Tell Your Friends!

Our fields are full of great summer vegetables and we now have room for more members. So, if you've got friends or neighbors who are interested in joining our CSA, now's a good time to tell them to sign up.

already cultivating an aromatic plant with an almost identical smell to coriander called culantro. Culantro is also a carrot family member but it has evolved to thrive in tropical conditions.

It didn't take long for culantro to travel from the Americas to Asia and to be accepted into the various tropical cuisines

that already were familiar with coriander. Besides using cilantro's green leaves some Asian cooks appreciate the plant's roots which they pound into a paste using a mortar and pestle and mix into sauces. When I used to sell at farmers' markets I would occasionally get chewed out by Filipina customers who were cross that I'd left "the good half of the bunch" in the ground. No longer! For today's cilantro harvest I've finally listened and we're leaving the roots on in case any of you appreciate the cilantro roots. If you do use cilantro roots please send us your recipes so that we can include them in a future newsletter for all the other cooks that want to learn how.

I don't know how coriander became "cilantro" in America, but I wonder if the Old World herb picked up its Spanish name cilantro after the smell and flavor of the fresh prompted association with the New World's culantro. It's a pleasing assumption but I don't have any word histories that can help me confirm the point. Are there any

word nerds out there that might be able to contribute some wisdom to this etymology? European scientists named culantro, this "new" coriander impersonator they encountered, *Eryngium foetidum*. Don't let Latin nomenclature lull you into believing scientists are any more objective than the rest of us; foetidum means "stinky." I think both cilantro and culantro smell refreshing, invigorating, and inviting. On my side are the billions of Indians, Chinese, Mexicans, Turks, Persians and other assorted jewels of humanity who find tasty reasons to enjoy cilantro with their meals. Provecho!

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This Week

Cilantro ^{MF}

Spinach ^{HG}

Strawberries ^{HG}

Erbette Chard ^{MF}

Purplette Onions ^{MF}

Tokyo Turnips ^{HG}

Salad Mix ^{HG}

Tarragon OR Oregano ^{MF}

Potatoes OR Summer Squash ^{HG}

Collard OR Spigariello Greens ^{MF}

Flowers: Mixed Bouquet ^{TF}

Everything in your box and the flowers are organically grown. From Mariquita Farm: cilantro, tarragon, oregano, erbetto chard, collards, spigariello, purplette onions. From High Ground: strawberries, new potatoes, summer squash, salad mix, spinach, turnips. From Thomas Farm: flowers.

Recipes and Notes

(also see www.mariquita.com/recipes)

How to store this week's box: Everything into the fridge. Top the turnips and cook the greens first—they're best when fresh. The potatoes are 'fresh dug', and not cured. Keep them in the fridge, and use them within a week. They will not keep.

Julia's Ideas on How to Use This Box: Cook all your cooking greens and plan on a couple of salads. Into the fabulous salads you make, put a few thinly sliced onions, and a few tarragon OR cilantro leaves.

Oregano Before Tomatoes! If you can't use all your oregano without fresh tomatoes, you can easily dry it. If you have a gas oven you can arrange the oregano stems evenly over a baking pan. Put it in the oven with just the pilot light and it should dry nicely. You can also hang the bunch (or make a couple of smaller bunches) upside down in a dark, dry place. Or use a food dehydrator if you have one.

Summer Squash: cook with garlic or a couple of the onions: chop into 1 inch pieces and sauté in a pan until it's really well done and nicely browned and even mushy. Sprinkle the top with flaky salt and one of the fresh herbs (chopped) as a side dish, or toss all of this with a cooked noodle/pasta.

Turnips: make a soup or roast them.

This week you have chard, spinach, collards (or spigariello, similar to collards), and turnip greens. The turnip greens should be cooked on day one or day two. The spinach is of course a classic in salad with the mixed baby salad greens, or on its own. The collards (spigariello) and chard can be cooked anytime in the first 5 days you bring your veggies home.

Cooked Greens: Julia's Everyday Recipe

Trim & wash the greens, leaving water on the leaves. Cut up into small squares or ribbons. Heat frying/sauté pan that will fit the greens, add a bit of oil (or bacon fat, or even butter if you like, I usually use grapeseed, peanut, or olive oil). Then add some-lots of chopped garlic and or onions. Cook only until barely translucent, don't let the garlic burn. Add the greens all at once, and give a stir. Then stir until they're bright shiny green, or even a darker green.

Additions:

–with chard I like to add a dollop of dijon mustard, and once in a while a dollop of cream cheese.

–you can add a couple of Tablespoons of rice wine or balsamic to finish the dish.

–S & P to taste if you like, but they're not crucial. Depends on your tastes!

–chopped/toasted nuts sprinkled at the end

–Once this is cooked, you can serve as is, or add these cooked greens to any soup you've got simmering, or a panini, or a quesadilla or taco, etc.

Caramelized Turnips, from Chef Andrew Cohen,

periodic guest writer for the newsletter

Wash the turnips and cut into wedges. Toss in oil and put into a sauté pan that will hold them all without crowding. Add enough water to fill ¼" in the pan, cover and steam just until turnips are starting to soften. Drain water from pan, drizzle a little oil in and toss to coat, then sprinkle in a little sugar over all. Gently cook the turnips, moving the turnips to caramelize each side. Be careful not to overcook or the turnips get mushy.

Oregano on Feta, from Chef Jonathan Miller

Get a nice piece of feta (I like sheep, but you should always get what you prefer). Pour some olive oil over it in a small dish until the oil comes up half way up the sides of the cheese. Sprinkle some sliced garlic over it, a few strips of lemon zest, many leaves of fresh oregano, and a generous helping of sliced purplette cocktail onions. Don't forget a little pepper and bake it at 400 for about 10–15 minutes. Eat it warm or at room temperature with your favorite bread or cracker! Easy and yummy!

Fingerling Potatoes with Oregano Pesto, from

Crescent City Farmers Market

(Any kind of potatoes will work, cut into 2-inch chunks.)

2 cups torn spinach leaves	2 cups fresh parsley leaves
1 cup fresh oregano leaves	1 TBS lemon juice
2 TBS sliced almonds, toasted	2 TBS grated fresh Parmesan cheese
¼ tsp. salt	2 large garlic cloves, peeled
2 TBS olive oil	about 1½ pounds potatoes

Combine first 8 ingredients in a food processor; process until smooth. With food processor on, slowly add oil through food chute; process until well blended. Set aside. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place potatoes on a jelly-roll pan. Bake at 425 degrees for 20 minutes or until tender, stirring occasionally. Place potatoes in a large bowl; add 1/3 cup pesto, tossing gently to coat. Note: Store remaining pesto in an airtight container in refrigerator for up to 1 week.

Tarragon Ginger Dressing, From 1991 "Shepherd's

Garden Seeds" catalog (The author describes this as "a piquant, almost spicy dressing that is equally good used hot over greens or at room temperature over mixed lettuces.")

1 TBS Vegetable oil	1 small Garlic clove; minced
2 TBS Scallion; finely chopped	1/2 c Chicken broth
2 TBS Red wine vinegar	1 tsp. Ginger; finely grated
2 TBS Chopped fresh tarragon or	2 TBS Olive oil
Salt and pepper; to taste	

In a skillet, heat oil. Add garlic and scallion; sauté until softened. Add broth and boil until the liquid is reduced by half –about 3 or 4 minutes. Stir in vinegar; cook an additional 2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl. Add ginger and tarragon. Gradually whisk in the olive oil. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Need More Strawberries?

We're offering strawberry flats for sale delivered with your CSA box to your pick-up site on rotating days. The next ones will be:

Wednesday, June 10th

Friday, June 19th

To order, send your check for \$22 per flat to Two Small Farms, PO Box 2065, Watsonville, CA 95077 and also e-mail Shelley at csa@twosmallfarms.com so we can record and verify your order. Please be sure to include your pick-up site and subscriber name. The flats will be delivered with the CSA boxes to the pick-up sites at the regular time and place.