The Worm's Voice

Red Wiggler's CSA Newsletter

Fall 2025 Week 5
October 15 & 18

IN THE SHARE
- Delicatas/Sweet Potatoes
- Leeks/Garlic
- Cabbage
- Greens Choices
- Roots Choices

PICK-YOUR-OWN
Look for the **BLUE** flags on items ready to pick!

RED
Oregano, Chives, Russian Sage, Tarragon, Peppermint, Spearmint, Lavender, Blanket Flower, Chives, Thyme

ORANGE
Calendula, Pincushions, Parsley, Lemon Basil, Thai Basil, Holy Basil, Italian Basil, Sorrel, Sunflowers, Snapdragons

PINK
Zinnias, Cilantro, Dill, Sunflowers, Cosmos, Gomphrena, Celosia, Strawflowers, Coriander, Roselle, Pea Shoots

BROWN
Fennel Flowers & Seeds

YELLOW
Sage, Lemon Balm

Need help finding or using the flowers and herbs in the PYO? Just ask a RWCF staff member or volunteer!

Harlequin Bugs Suck…Literally (and Figuratively)

The diehards among you may have noticed a lack of collards in the greens choice this fall. Unfortunately, we were hit really hard this summer by harlequin bugs. They feast mainly on brassicas--kale, cabbage, turnips, etc—but (apparently) love collards the most. It occurred to me recently that I don't know much about them, so in the spirit of "know thy enemy," here are a few interesting facts about the little buggers:

- Some people (like me, until now) call them harlequin beetles, but they're not beetles, they're bugs (what's the difference?). There IS a thing called a harlequin beetle. It lives in Central and South America, and predictably, also looks cool.
- Harlequin bugs feed by piercing the leaves, stalks, and veins of a plant with their needle-like mouthparts and sucking out the plant's juices.
- Brassicas produce glycocide, or mustard oil. The harlequin bug sequesters the glycocide from the brassicas it eats and stores it in its prothorax. This is a defense mechanism that makes them taste bad to many birds.
- Harlequin bugs are members of the stinkbug family, Pentatomidae. In this part of the world, they are black, white and either red, yellow or orange. In other parts of the world, they can also be blue, green and iridescent.
- Harlequin adults can go through several mating cycles per season, and can also overwinter by burying themselves in crop residue. Some organic control methods include "brassica-free July" to try and break the mating cycle, planting cleome (their favorite) near your brassicas as a trap crop, and removing brassica residue from your beds at the end of the growing season.
- Harlequin bugs came to North American via Texas in 1864, coinciding with increased Union activity there. This prompted some Confederates to accuse the Union of deliberately releasing and spreading the pest, and earned them the early nicknames "Lincolnite" and Sherman-bug."

Other Farm News

- One benefit of the harlequin bugs loving the collards is that they basically left the cabbage alone—this week's Napa looks great!
- The allium leafminers are back, this time on the leeks. They've hit us hard this year—check out this article from Spring Week 2 for more details. The leeks are okay, but have similar issues to the spring onions.
- We've got a lot of cute, mini "fingerling" sweet potatoes that are perfect for quick meals, easy snacks (think fries with the skin still on!), or anything else you use sweet potatoes for. Anything a sweet potato can do, a tiny one can do cuter!

Recipes

VEG- Vegetarian DF- Dairy Free GF- Gluten Free

Melt-in-Your-Mouth Napa Cabbage GF DF Veg

It's cabbage week! I hope you're as excited as I am! I love greens in all their forms, but I especially love choi and Napa cabbage. As I was researching a recipe to share with you this week, I came across a familiar (and delicious looking) one. A quick search on the Recipe Index told me I featured it in the Fall of 2022. My watering mouth and desire to have this for dinner told me that it was time for a reshare! Serves 4 as a side.

INGREDIENTS

- **1 large head Napa Cabbage**
- ½ cup concentrated tomato paste
- **4 garlic cloves, minced or crushed**
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground coriander
- 1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon ground turmeric
- ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- ½ teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil divided
- Salt (kosher or sea), to taste

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. Cut the Napa cabbage in half through the core then cut each half into quarters, to make 8 wedges.
3. In a small bowl combine the tomato paste, garlic, coriander, cumin, turmeric, and black pepper.
4. Heat ¼ cup of the olive oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, if necessary, add as many cabbage wedges into the skillet cut side down as will comfortably fit. Season with the coarse kosher salt. Cook, turning once, until lightly charred, about 2-3 minutes per side. Transfer the seared cabbage to a plate and repeat with any remaining cabbage quarters.
5. Carefully, wipe out the skillet and reduce the heat to medium. Add the remaining ¼ cup olive oil to the skillet. Once warm and beginning to shimmer, add the spiced tomato paste mixture. Heat, stirring constantly, until the tomato paste begins to split and darken in color, 2-3 minutes.
6. Add enough water to the skillet to come halfway up the sides, about 1 to 1 ½ cups total. Season the liquid with salt and bring to a simmer.
7. Nestle all the seared cabbage wedges into the simmering tomato broth, overlapping if necessary. Transfer the cabbage to the oven and bake, uncovered, turning the cabbage wedges once about halfway through, about 40-50 minutes. The cabbage should be falling apart tender when cooked completely.
8. Serve immediately, and garnish with any or all of the following: crushed pistachios, cilantro, parsley, green onions, a dollop of sour cream or plain yogurt.