



FEB 2010 Week 3 Newsletter

The contents of your box this week will be made up of the following:

Name	Method	Source
Potatoes	No Spray	Tenterden
Carrots	Organic	Wye
Cabbage	No Spray	Ash
Beet	Organic	Wye
Parsnips	No Spray	Ash
Apples		Maidstone

I was planning on getting some cauliflower this week but the weather has seen wholesale prices rise to over £1 each. As you can imagine once I add our extravagant profit for the service it would take out a fair proportion of the box price, so not worth it. I have gone for cabbage again I am afraid, but I have forward purchased caulis for next week at a good price. I did wonder about setting up other financial instruments for veg trading; which would make me a veg investment banker. I can perhaps get a large bail out from HMG if I get into trouble? And should I set up a 'hedge' fund for the farmers' field as well....??

Anyway in discussing international veg trading with Dickie Ovenden he let slip, somewhat carelessly I think, that he had a crop of purple sprouting; looking good as he hidden them under fleece during the bad weather. A few warmer days and they will be ready. I tried to get an option over the contents of the fleeces but he was having none of it – he's going to play the market when it is ready to crop. I am surprised; I thought 70+ veg farmers would take options, hedge funds and like on board – I was wrong.

Early date for the diary – Sat 6th March - sausage tasting at the Old Dairy. We have some new flavours of sausage for you to try and will also have some special offers on....

I have put a recipe below for borscht, which is a Russian dish I believe. A quick Google tells me that beet drives from sea beet, which is found worldwide. Cultivated in the Eastern Med, it originally looked like a carrot and it was the leaves that were mainly eaten. The current round form was developed in the C16th, where it became popular in Russia and they developed Borscht. Nicely done that I think.

Anyway – borscht away...

Borscht – Cabbage and Beet Soup

12 oz (350 g) raw beetroot	7 oz (200 g) cabbage
1 carrot	1 leek
1 medium-sized potato	1 green celery stalk
1 1/2 oz (40 g) butter	12 oz (350 g) boiling beef (e.g. brisket)
1 thick slice smoked streaky bacon	1/4 lb (100 g) fresh or drained tinned tomatoes
1 bay leaf	2 tbsp chopped fresh dill
7 fl oz (200 ml) soured cream or smetana	
1 tbsp red wine vinegar	salt and black peppercorns

Method

1. Trim, wash and dry all the vegetables. Peel the beetroot, reserving 4 oz (100 g) in weight and cut all the rest, and the cabbage, carrot, leek and celery into strips. Dice the peeled potatoes.
2. Heat the butter in a stockpot or a very large, deep, enamelled cast iron casserole dish and fry the vegetables in it gently for about 15 minutes, stirring frequently. Add 2 pints (1.2 litres) water, the chopped, seeded tomatoes and the beef.
3. Add the bay leaf, bacon, a few black peppercorns and 3/4 tsp coarse sea salt. Bring to the boil, skimming off any scum that rises to the surface, then turn down the heat to very low and simmer very gently for 3 hours, or until the beef is extremely tender.
4. Cut the reserved raw beetroot into small pieces and grate finely, place in a piece of muslin and twist tightly to force out all the juice, collecting this in a small bowl.
5. Stir in a pinch of salt and the vinegar. Take the beef and bacon out of the soup, spearing them with a carving fork and cut into strips.
6. Return these to the soup. Add a little salt if necessary and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Draw aside from the heat, stir in the raw beetroot juice and vinegar mixture and immediately ladle into individual soup bowls.
7. Place 1 - 1 1/2 tbsp chilled soured cream in the centre of each serving and sprinkle with the chopped dill.