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JULY 30, 2009

RIVERFRONT FARMERS' MARKET



Brassica oleracea Linne

THE SCOTS CALL IT BOWKAIL,
THE ENGLISH CALL IT A LOAF,
BUT WE JUST CALL IT CABBAGE

It's Harvest Time

by National Gardening Association Editors

Cabbage can be a challenge at midsummer harvest time because you can coax each plant into producing two, three or up to six heads for a fall harvest. To do it, you must harvest the first spring-planted cabbage when the heads are fairly small, about softball size. These small heads make terrific coleslaw for two. Leave four to five lower leaves on the plant, and from each leaf or two another small head may appear.

Of course, you can settle for just one cabbage from each plant. You have no choice in the fall, because your second crop of cabbage only has time to make single heads. Harvest the largest heads in the row; the larger and firmer they are, the better they'll keep.

To store cabbages, harvest only fully mature heads, handling them carefully to prevent bruising. Don't wash the heads or trim off any outer leaves; these will help protect the heads.

Cabbages can be tricky to store for extended periods. They need cool, moist, dark surroundings, such as a root cellar with an even temperature. To prolong preservation, wrap each head in several thicknesses of newspaper. Check your stored cabbages often -- even slight rot can send out a three-alarm smell.

If you don't have a root cellar, you can make cabbage storage mounds outdoors with very little effort. Dig a deep hole, and line the bottom with a heavy layer of straw for insulation. Place the heads upside-down in the hole, cover them with more thick straw, shovel 4 to 5 inches of soil around the straw and leave an opening on top. Cover the opening with a board. Whenever you need a cabbage, dig down into the straw pit and repack the straw around the remaining vegetables when you're finished.

PORT OF BURLINGTON
5:00 - 8:00 P.M.

Weekly Events



What's Local

- green beans
- sweet corn
- cauliflower
- broccoli
- spinach
- kale
- cabbage
- kohlrabi
- eggs
- grass-fed meat
- baked goods
- tomatoes
- potatoes
- scallions
- honey
- chard
- cherries
- blueberries



Today's Events

- Music by Joyful Sounds
- Kids' crafts: Decorating wooden summer-themed ornaments
- Recipes and nutrition info provided by Des Moines County Extension Office



What's Bugging My Peppers?

by National Gardening Association Editors



Here's a rundown of the most common pests and what can be done for them.

Aphids

Small and of various colors, these sucking insects can drain the sap from peppers, eggplant and okra all season long. If you notice ants near your plants, look for aphids. The aphids give off a sweet substance called "honeydew" that attracts the ants. Aphids also spread plant diseases, so be sure to control them if they're a problem. To get rid of aphids, try spraying with a mild solution of soapy water or put out yellow pans of soapy water (aphids are attracted to yellow). If the infestation is severe, spray with pyrethrum.

Colorado Potato Beetles

These pests will feed on the foliage of eggplant and peppers. The adults are yellow with black stripes down their backs; larvae are reddish with a black head. Hand pick adult beetles and larvae every time you see them. Crush egg masses under leaves. They can be controlled by spraying with Sevin, pyrethrum, or a biological control called Bt San Diego.

Cutworms

The gray, brown or black worms chew tender transplants off at ground level. Cutworms are 1- to 1 1/2- inches long and curl up tightly when disturbed. They hide in the soil and attack at night. You don't have to use anything to control them except newspaper cutworm collars at transplanting time.

Flea Beetles

These tiny black or brown bugs attack young peppers, eggplant and okra. They eat small holes in the leaves, usually early in the season, and if not controlled, can wipe out the foliage entirely, seriously injuring the plants. You can dust with wood ashes or spray with a garlic or hot pepper solution. Spraying with pyrethrum will also control flea beetles.

Pepper Maggots

The adults are yellow flies with brown bands on each wing. They lay their eggs within the peppers, and the maggots feed from the inside out, causing considerable damage. If you see any maggot flies, spray with rotenone to control before they begin egg-laying. Once the maggots are inside the fruit, there's little you can do but pick and destroy infested peppers.

Pepper Weevils

Common in the South, these tiny black-snouted beetles are only 1/8 of an inch long. Don't let their size fool you; they can cause a great deal of damage. Adult weevils feed on the foliage and lay eggs in the buds of immature pepper pods. When the eggs hatch, the larvae eat through the buds or fruit, causing them to drop or to be misshapen. There may be several generations a year.

Dusting or spraying with pyrethrum helps to control them.

Tomato Fruitworm/Corn Earworm

Nearly 2-inches long, this pest is yellowish, green or brown with lengthwise light and dark stripes. It affects all three of these vegetables, boring into the pods or fruit. To control, cover the plants with a floating row cover to prevent adults from laying eggs, hand pick worms or spray with Sevin as soon as you notice them or the small holes they've bored into the fruit or pods.



Cabbage Roll Casserole

- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) tomato sauce, divided
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon dill weed
- 1/2 teaspoon rubbed sage
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 cups cooked rice
- 4 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
- 1 medium head cabbage (2 pounds), shredded
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese

In a large skillet, cook the beef, onion and garlic over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Stir in one can of tomato sauce and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat: cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in rice and bacon; heat through. Remove from the heat.

Layer a third of the cabbage in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. baking dish. Top with half of the meat mixture. Repeat layers; top with remaining cabbage. Pour remaining tomato sauce over top. Cover and bake at 375° for 45 minutes. Uncover; sprinkle with cheese. Bake 10 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving. Yield: 12 servings.

Don't forget to vote for your favorite farmers' market at farmland.org/vote!!!