

Getting Through the Lean Time

Despite the enthusiastic response to newsletters in the survey responses, we have decided to give newsletters a break for the next few months. I am off on holiday and will then be concentrating on getting growers geared up for next season. All past newsletters are available on the Channel Living website: channelliving.org.au (go to the “Newsletters” tab).

As you know we’ve decided to try to keep the program going through winter and spring if we can, before ramping up in summer. Eating locally through winter in Tasmania is certainly do-able (many home-gardeners do it every year), but may prove to be a challenge! For some people (including me, as a subscriber), it will take a bit of getting used to having less variety than we are used to, so we hope to be able to provide recipes in the “in the box” sheet, in the absence of the newsletter. It is also likely that we will have to reduce box volume/price again before the lean time is over.

The initial funding from the Tasmanian Climate Change Office has now finished and the program is running entirely self-sufficiently. The good news is that the financial side of the program has been going according to plan and we will manage OK until box volume/value and numbers are increased in summer. We are very grateful to the Climate Change Office, whose funding made the initiation of the program possible, and have provided our final report to them this week.

Thanks for your continued support and please send Mandy any tasty winter recipes you have – sharing recipes is a great way that we can support each other over the lean time, in our mission to eat locally. Thanks to Glen for the recipe below!

- Zoë

P.S. Tomorrow Tasmanian-time will be Friday in Samoa and I will be there - picking up a weekly basket of local veg at a Samoan CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) venture each Friday for 5 weeks!

Winter Vege Box Rice Pilaf – Glen Paley

Heat some olive oil in a frying pan. Add two crushed garlic cloves and one chopped onions. Cook until tender. Stir in 1 cup long grain rice. Add two cups stock (you can also add 1/2 cup white wine if you like). Cover. Cook for about 15 minutes. Add 2 cups chopped pumpkin, 1 cup finely chopped parsnip (or carrot, or cabbage), a few handfuls of chopped silverbeet and chopped parsley. Cook for about 10 minutes or until liquid has been absorbed. Season with pepper. Enjoy immediately.



Photo: This is what you will be eating in a few months time! (Alex’s seedlings waiting for the days to get longer to be planted out) Photo taken at subscribers’ farm visit last Saturday.

Making the Most of Your Garlic – Glen Paley

Post-harvest, garlic needs to be stored somewhere with good ventilation (so dry air moves over it), darkness (to prevent sprouting), and a dry atmosphere (to prevent mould). An excellent way to store garlic is in a garlic keeper, designed with holes to allow the air to circulate. A brown paper bag is also good. It is recommended to store garlic at around 15 degrees Celcius. It should keep for several months.

What to do with the excess garlic that is not sprouting? From my own experience and a little research I learnt a few things. It is not a good idea to store garlic in the fridge, especially in plastic bags, as it may grow mould. A novel idea is to store garlic in egg cartons – away from light and moisture. Garlic can be frozen – either as clean whole cloves in an airtight plastic container or freezer plastic bags (thaw before use) or puree garlic and olive oil to form a ‘pesto’ to spoon into small containers or ice cube trays. One part garlic to 2 parts olive oil makes the pesto soft enough to spoon required amounts from small containers. Most importantly **never** store raw garlic in oil - this can lead to botulism. Even when stored in the fridge.

So go ahead – enjoy the rest of your garlic harvest for months to come!