



News and Views

Promoting health and protection of the environment through education and the provision of quality organic produce from our farm to your table.



News from the Farm:

The following is taken from an article appearing in the Vancouver Sun, Page A1 May 8/07 by K. Patterson.

“Canada boosts pesticide limits: More residue to be allowed on fruit, vegetables to match U.S. levels.”

Canada is set to raise its limits on pesticide residues on fruit and vegetables for hundred of products. The move is part of an effort to harmonize Canadian pesticide rules with those of the United States, which allows higher residue levels for 40 percent of the pesticides it regulates. Difference in residue limits, which apply both to domestic and imported food pose a potential “trade irritant,” said Richard Aucoin, chief registrar of the Pest Management Regulatory Agency, which sets Canada’s pesticide rules. Aucoin said Canada won’t be raising its limits for all of the cases where its rules are stricter, but “will likely be asked to raise them” for cases now being identified as priorities by growers. The agency is reviewing its limits on a case-by-case basis, he said. Comparing 40 U.S. limits with those set by Canada, the E.U., Australia and the WHO, he found the U.S. had the weakest rules for more than half of the pesticide uses studied. In some cases the difference was dramatic. The U.S. allows 50 times more vinclozolin on cherries as the E.U. and 100 times more lindane on pineapples. For permethrin on leaf lettuce and spinach, the Canadian and U.S. limit was 400 times higher than in Europe and the Canadian cap on methoxychlor was 1,400 times the European limit. Both countries also allow pesticides that have been banned not only in Europe but also in some developing countries. According to Aucoin, raising the limits “will not change the amount of pesticides coming into the country, noting the residue levels on imported produce are usually well below even the Canadian limits. “The Canadian Food Inspection Agency which monitors residue levels, has found “a relatively small number of violations” of Canada’s maximum levels in recent years. However, David Boyd an environmental lawyer and author of an 2006 study of international pesticide regulations raises questions about Canada’s monitoring system. He noted the federal food inspection

agency found residues in only 10 percent of the produce it tested in 2004-05. In the same period, U.S regulators found residues in 76 percent of the fresh fruit and vegetables they tested and British officials found pesticides in 40 percent of their produce in 2006.



Beets

Wild beets were thought to have originated in pre-historic times in North Africa and along the shores of Europe and Asia. First eaten just for the greens the Romans were the first to cultivate beets for the roots and they were frequently used just as animal fodder. Their popularity grew in the 19th century when it was discovered that they were a valuable source of sugar. Today most sugar in food products is derived from corn. Beet roots are rich in B vitamin folate which is essential for tissue growth which is especially important during pregnancy. Beets are also believed to be one of the best liver cleansers and an effective de-toxifier. Studies also indicate that it may lower cholesterol levels and prevent heart disease. Store beets unwashed in the crisper, cut away the greens so that the root does not lose moisture.

Harvard Beets

A favorite for many years, Harvard beets accompany beef and pork dishes beautifully!
2 lbs beets
1/2 cup sugar
5 tbsp red wine vinegar
Ground zest of two oranges.

2 tsp cornstarch
salt and pepper to taste
1 tbsp butter
1/4 cup fresh orange juice

Place the beets in a medium sized saucepan, cover with cold water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer, cover, and cook until tender, 40 to 50 minutes. Drain and rinse under cold water to cool. Slip off the skins, and cut the beets into 1/4 inch pieces. Yield about 4 cups. Set aside. Combine the sugar, vinegar, orange juice, cornstarch and salt and pepper in a heavy saucepan. Whisk well and bring to a boil over medium heat, whisking constantly until the mixture is clear and thickened, 4 to 5 minutes. Whisk in the butter and zest, and cook just until the butter has melted. Remove the pan from the heat and pour the sauce over the beets. Toss gently. Serve hot or at room temperature. 4- 6 portions.

Beets can also be grated raw and served in salads. Especially good with a red wine vinaigrette!