



Cal Poly Organic Farm Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

Welcome to Week 22! As always, life on the farm is grand!

News from the farm

A bit more background information about Cindy Douglas, our new farm manager:

Cindy was born in Orange County and for as long as she can remember has "always wanted to be a farmer." She has belonged to a number of agricultural groups including 'Future Farmers of America' (FFA) and achieved a Masters Degree from Cal Poly, SLO in Agriculture with a concentration in Soil Science and a Bachelors Degree in Animal Science, also from Cal Poly. Her career in organic agriculture has been shaped by employment experiences at: CCOF (California Certified Organic Farmers), Oregon Tilth and the Organic Materials Review Institute.

Please stop and say hello to her when you see her at the farm.

Request for the newsletter:

If you have a tip or recipe to share - or a request or suggestion - I would love to hear from you. CSA members who receive the newsletter by e-mail can just "reply" and the message will get forwarded to me; those who pick up a copy of the newsletter with their vegetable box can leave messages at the shed or other pick-up point.

Fall/Winter Season 2006 - 2007

Week 22 Produce

11 February - 17 February

- * Sprouts - Mt. Olive Farm
- * Kiwis - Haussler Farms
- * Almonds or Walnuts or Raisins or Pistachios (full only)
- Arugula – CPOF (full only)
- Bunched onions - CPOF
- Butternut squash – CPOF
- Cilantro – CPOF (full only)
- Kale or Collards - CPOF
- Napa Cabbage - CPOF
- Salad Mix - CPOF
- Tat Soi - CPOF
- White Icicle Radish - CPOF
- * Certified Organic

Vegetable of the Week

Tat Soi [pronounced "that SOY"]

Brassica rapa var. rosularis

Other names

English: rosette pak choy, Chinese flat cabbage/pak choi, flat black cabbage/pak choi, spoon mustard, spinach mustard

Chinese: wu ta cai, ta ge cai, ta gu cai, hei cai, piao er cai, tai koo choy

Japanese: Tatsoi, tasai

Tat soi is a beautiful plant that forms a thick rosette of deep green leaves. At the market it may look like either of the pictures below:



This Asian salad green is most often eaten raw but is also combined with other greens and is prepared in cooked foods. Tat Soi has a mild mustard or cabbage flavor similar to Bok Choy but much stronger -- many consider the flavor superior to Bok Choy. Tat Soi is a very cold tolerant plant that withstands temperatures down to 15 degrees.

NUTRITION INFORMATION

The dark green leaves are high in beta-carotene and Vitamins A, C, and K; they also have good amounts of calcium, potassium, phosphorous and iron.

3 oz (85 g) of Tat Soi contain:

Calories	14
Protein	1.0g
Carbohydrate	2.73g
Total Fat	0.18g
Fiber	0.84g

Some suggestions for use:

- ❖ Place tat soi whole under grilled or baked foods or combine it with other greens to enhance the flavors
- ❖ Chop into small pieces and serve in oils that are to be used for dipping or for complementing sauces
- ❖ Mix with other lettuces to enhance the appearance, flavor, and nutritional value of salad
- ❖ Add the shredded leaves to soup at the end of cooking – the heat of the broth will cook them sufficiently
- ❖ Use the crunchy stalks of mature tat soi as you would use celery
- ❖ Add an artistic touch to garnishes: place some mizuna, some tat soi and some nasturtiums on the side of a plate for an epicurean flare.

RECIPES

Wilted Tat Soi

Wilting tat soi is a common preparation and there are many recipes. Following are the basic instructions. The number of servings depends on the amount of greens used. For 4 persons you might plan on using six cups raw greens.

Separate, wash, and dry the tat soi leaves

In a sauté pan, heat a little olive oil or a shallot or garlic vinaigrette (about 2 teaspoons oil if you are using six cups greens) and cook the leaves briefly, for just a few minutes, until the leaves are wilted but the stems are still crisp.

Season with sea salt, black pepper, and chile flakes (optional) and serve warm.

Some other options:

- A little sesame oil could be added for flavoring right before serving.
- For Red curry Tat Soi use the same technique and adding 1 teaspoon fresh peeled minced ginger and 1 teaspoon Thai red curry paste to the oil. Squeeze a little lime on top before serving.
- May use bok-choi, spinach, or other cooking green for this recipe

Tat soi with Pears and Raspberries

Vinaigrette:

2 Tablespoons Raspberry vinegar

2 Tablespoons walnut oil

1 Tablespoon apple juice

1 Tablespoon honey

Dash of salt to taste

Salad:

4 cups Tat soi

1 cup sliced pears

1 cup raspberries

¼ cup walnuts

Combine the vinaigrette ingredients in a small bowl, stir well and set aside. Place tat soi in a large bowl, toss gently with dressing. Divide salad among 4 individual plates and top with pears, raspberries, and toasted walnuts.

Grilled Halibut With Tat Soi And Spicy Thai Chilies

Makes 4 servings.

5 tablespoons sugar
5 tablespoons fish sauce*
1/4 cup water
3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
2 tablespoons minced peeled fresh ginger
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 Thai bird chilies with seeds or 1/2 large jalapeño chili with seeds, minced
1 small carrot, peeled, cut into matchstick-size strips
4 6- to 7-ounce halibut fillets
3 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
1 shallot, thinly sliced
3/4 pound tatsoi or baby spinach (about 12 cups packed)

Mix first 7 ingredients in medium glass bowl. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper. (Sauce can be prepared 2 days ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)

Prepare barbecue (medium-high heat). Place carrot in medium bowl. Cover with ice water. Let stand 15 minutes, then drain well. Brush fish on all sides with 2 tablespoons oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill until just opaque in center, about 4 minutes per side.

Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon oil in large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add shallot; stir 1 minute. Add tatsoi; sprinkle with salt. Toss until tatsoi is wilted but still bright green, about 2 minutes; divide among 4 plates.

Place fish atop tatsoi. Sprinkle each fillet with carrot; drizzle each with 2 tablespoons sauce. Serve, passing remaining sauce separately.

The ginger sauce is a good staple to keep on hand in the fridge — it's excellent with any fish, whether grilled, pan-seared, or steamed.

Miso Broth with Tatsoi-Enoki Salad

Makes 4 servings

Ingredients:

1/4 cup yellow miso
4 cups dashi
2 slices ginger
1/2 Tablespoon wasabi powder
1 Tablespoon rice wine vinegar
1/2 Tablespoon thin soy sauce
2 Tablespoons sliced scallions, green part only
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1 package enoki mushrooms
2 cups tat soi leaves
1 soft tofu block cut into 1/4 inch slices

Miso Broth with Tatsoi-Enoki Salad, continued

Preparation:

To make make broth, mix miso with dashi and add ginger. On medium heat, bring to a simmer. Let simmer for 5 minutes then remove ginger.

In a small bowl, make a paste with the vinegar and wasabi. Whisk in soy, scallions and sugar. Check for seasoning.

Toss vinaigrette with enoki and tat soi.

In soup bowls, gently place 1 slice of tofu and ladle the broth on top. Place a small mound of salad on the tofu.



Preserving Parsley

Drying

Parsley is more difficult to dry than most culinary herbs. That is because the oils that give it its unique aroma and flavor are relatively more volatile than oils in other herbs. When you dry the leaves, the oils are lost. If you have been ending up with nice looking leaves but little flavor try the following instructions:

First, preheat the oven to 400 F. Then, tie sprigs of parsley in loose bunches and dip them in boiling water for one minute. Shake off the water and hang the bunches by their stems from the bars of an oven rack. Insert the rack in the oven for one minute; then remove it. Now let the oven cool to 225 F and reinsert the rack of parsley. Let the parsley dry until crisp.

As soon as leaves are crisp crush them gently into flakes with a rolling pin. Store in opaque airtight containers (or put transparent containers in a dark place) as daylight robs parsley of its color. Label the container with the date and use within a year –preferable sooner.

Freezing

As with drying, parsley requires special treatment when it is frozen.

Blanching, which preserves color and flavor, has the drawback of making herbs limp, and limp parsley is not an attractive garnish. Therefore, freeze parsley without blanching, as follows:

Wash sprigs in cold water and shake off the moisture. Then put them in small plastic bags – just enough in each bag to use on one occasion. Seal the bags and put them in the freezer.

When parsley is needed, thaw it slowly and use as you would fresh sprigs.

This method has a drawback too: the parsley's green color will begin to turn yellow in about three months

If frozen parsley is needed in small pieces, break up frozen and brittle leaves by rubbing the bag gently between your hands before you open it.