

Food Talk

Improving Access to Healthy Foods in our Community



Good Food News

January 2015

Most of you may have noticed that while your grocery bill seems to get higher and higher, the number of bags you bring home is fewer and fewer.

Unfortunately, the trend of rising food prices is expected to continue, regardless of the economy or fuel prices.

Our commitment to getting the Good Food Club members the best value for their dollar, while maintaining freshness and supporting local producers, occasionally means that your box may look a little different than it has in the past.

This month was a particular struggle when it came to sourcing the box contents.

You may be aware that much of the fresh fruits and vegetables in our grocery stores come from California, in fact the single state of California feeds almost half of North America it's nuts, fruits and vegetables. California is in the midst of one of the most severe droughts in their recorded history, which has driven up the price of produce. Added to that, they experienced unusual freezing temperatures at the start of last week, which further destroyed field crops. This drove the price of already harvested crops in warehouses up even higher. My supplier told me that his growers were unwilling to guarantee prices beyond 24 hours, and that the cost of broccoli alone was now 3 times the price it had been the previous week.

I looked into BC fruit, but our local wholesaler informed me that fruit had not been boxed during the last two weeks of December due to the holidays. And the one truck that had been sent, went off the road in a blizzard coming from BC on highway 3. Fortunately we were able to source some oranges at a decent price that had already been in the warehouse.

In addition to that, we are currently in an "off" part of our local greenhouse cycle. The vines have been pulled from previous crops. Red Hat Co-op is currently only brokering out of country produce, and even with their 40+ greenhouses, had only a couple of flats of local beefsteak tomatoes, not enough for our order.

This left us with very few options, which is why the majority of your box this month is stocked with long-storing Fall crops - all of which are sourced from Alberta, other than the oranges.

If you would like to discuss our ordering process or suppliers, please give me a call or send me an email at the numbers and address below. - *Alison Van Dyke, Food Security Coordinator*

DATES TO REMEMBER

Payment Deadline:
January 27th, 2015

Advisory Committee Meeting:
1pm February 3rd, 2015
Hillcrest Church
3785 - 13th Ave SE
North Entrance
All Members Welcome!

Next Pick-Up Date:
Tuesday, February 10th, 2015

Average Savings for a Large Good Food Box in December was:

\$16.29

Good Food Box		Co-op		Safeway		Superstore		Sobeys		Wal-Mart		Average Savings
		Cost	Savings	Cost	Savings	Cost	Savings	Cost	Savings	Cost	Savings	
Large	\$20.00	\$38.66	\$18.66	\$30.75	\$10.75	\$31.41	\$11.41	\$41.98	\$21.98	\$38.66	\$18.66	\$16.29
Regular	\$15.00	\$30.98	\$15.98	\$24.66	\$9.66	\$23.25	\$8.25	\$33.43	\$18.43	\$30.98	\$15.98	\$13.66
Small	\$10.00	\$21.82	\$11.82	\$15.39	\$5.39	\$13.83	\$3.83	\$24.29	\$14.29	\$21.82	\$11.82	\$9.43

Good Food Club, Community Kitchens & Community Gardens

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Cucumber Storage

I've had questions on how to store cucumbers so that they don't spoil as quickly. After doing some research, I've found that the University of California UC Davis Postharvest Technology department recommends that you should store cucumbers at room temperature.

Apparently cucumbers can only tolerate up to 3 days of cold storage (lower than 50F/10C) after which they are susceptible to cold injury such as wateriness, pitting on the outside and accelerated decay.

Cucumbers are also sensitive to ethylene gas, which is put off by some ripening fruits and vegetables. So for longest storage, don't keep them near melons, tomatoes or bananas.

I was quite surprised by this recommendation and I'm curious as to the outcome. Please let me know if you try this alternate means of storage this month and how it goes for you.

In case you don't want to risk experimenting with cucumber storage, here's a recipe for refrigerator pickles that will give you a much longer shelf life for those cucumbers!

Bread & Butter Refrigerator Pickles

In a large bowl combine:

- 4 long cucumbers - sliced
- 1 cup sliced onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 chopped green onion
- 1 chopped red pepper
- 1.5 Tbsp coarse pickling salt

Boil together:

- 2 cups of white sugar
- 1 cup of white vinegar
- 1 tsp. celery seed
- 1 tsp. mustard see



Let the vegetables and salt sit for 1/2 hour before adding the brine. Refrigerate in an ice cream bucket or glass jars. Will keep for up to 3 months in the fridge.

Cooking Rutabagas

You may not be familiar with the large yellowish root vegetable in your box this month. It's called a Rutabaga. Some people also call them turnips.

They can be peeled, sliced and eaten raw. More commonly, they are peeled, chopped, and cooked in boiling water much like a potato, until they are fork tender. Simply drain the water away, mash, and add butter, salt and pepper, OR butter and brown sugar, for a delicious side dish.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

- The committee has been hard at work reviewing and revising the membership policies.
 - 2015 memberships are now due. New members need to fill out a simple survey when they join that is available at each depot.
 - Please see the front page message from the Food Security Coordinator regarding produce availability.
- We strongly encourage your participation in the decision making that happens at the Advisory Committee meetings, 1pm on the 1st Tuesday of each month at Hillcrest Church - 3785 13th Ave. SE, North Entrance.