

Rutabaga

Rutabaga, whose name in Old Nordic means “baggy root,” is a vegetable closely related to winter turnips; rutabagas differ only in their deeper color and slightly sweeter taste. Since rutabagas hold up for months in cold storage, seasonal eaters can appreciate them for the variety they add to the Midwestern winter table.

Rutabaga Waldorf Salad

Here's a clever take on the classic Waldorf Salad, named after the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. Bring it to your next picnic instead of the same old coleslaw or potato salad. This recipe is the perfect home for the often neglected rutabaga. It pairs up nicely with the cabbage and apple, and since there is no cooking involved, you can whip up this dish in no time. If you like, grapes and walnuts are more traditional than raisins and peanuts. *Angelic Organics Kitchen*. Serves 4

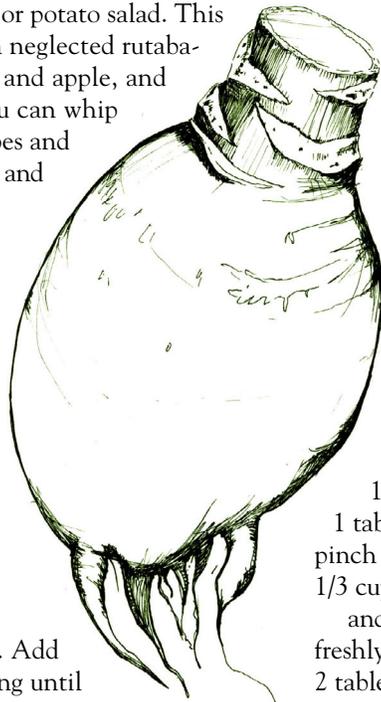
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 cup shredded cabbage
1 cup peeled, diced apple
1/2 cup coarsely grated peeled rutabaga
1/4 cup raisins
1/4 cup chopped toasted peanuts
salt
freshly ground black pepper

1. Put the mayonnaise in a small bowl. Add the lemon juice, a little at a time, stirring until smooth.

2. In a large bowl, combine the cabbage, apple, rutabaga, raisins, and peanuts. Add the mayonnaise mixture and toss to coat well. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Chill before serving.

A Shareholder

I've been a vegan for fifteen years, so I know my vegetables. Whenever someone asks, I tell them the rutabaga is the most underrated vegetable of all. Most of the time when I check out at the grocery store, the checker doesn't even know what it is. If you like white potatoes, sweet potatoes, or winter squash, you'll like rutabaga too—and get more nutrition for less calories. Of course the rutabaga from the farm are the best. I only wish there were more of them! My favorite way to eat rutabaga is to cut it up in little chunks (I don't even peel it) and bake it in a clay pot with red cabbage at 400 degrees for 70 minutes. It's the best!



STORAGE

Rutabagas store exceptionally well. Keep unwashed rutabagas in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for a month or longer.

HANDLING

Scrub rutabagas well to remove any lingering dirt. Peel larger roots, and grate, julienne, slice or chop according to your recipe.

Savory-Sweet Rutabaga Pudding

Somewhere between a fluffy ricotta dessert and mashed potatoes, this delectable rutabaga pudding has all the qualities needed to become a standard in your culinary repertoire. This dish will surprise you in many ways: in taste, in texture, in ease of preparing, and in the compliments it will bring to your table. It pairs exceptionally well with lamb. *Friend of the Farm* (adapted from *Nika Hazelton's Way with Vegetables*). Serves 6 to 8

1 large rutabaga (about 2 pounds), peeled, cut into 2-inch dice
1 1/2 teaspoons salt, divided
butter for greasing the baking dish
2 eggs plus 1 egg yolk, beaten
1/4 cup heavy cream
1/4 cup dried bread crumbs
1 tablespoon maple syrup
pinch freshly grated nutmeg
1/3 cup raisins, plumped in hot water for 15 minutes and drained (optional)
freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons butter

1. Bring a large pot of water to boil. Add the rutabaga and 1 teaspoon salt, partially cover, and cook until the rutabaga is very soft, 30 to 45 minutes. (You will need to reserve 1/2 cup of the cooking water.)

2. Preheat the oven to 350° F. Coat a 2-quart baking dish with butter.

3. Beat the eggs and egg yolk in a medium bowl. Stir in the cream, bread crumbs, maple syrup, and nutmeg.

4. Drain the rutabaga, reserving 1/2 cup of the cooking water. Mash the rutabaga thoroughly with a potato masher or run it through a food mill. If the mixture seems dry, add a little of the reserved rutabaga water as you mash. Add the egg mixture, raisins, remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt, and a few grindings of pepper; stir to combine.

5. Transfer the rutabaga pudding to the prepared baking dish. Smooth the top and dot with butter.

6. Bake until lightly golden on top, about 45 minutes. Serve hot.

Excerpted from *Farmer John's Cookbook: The Real Dirt On Vegetables: Seasonal Recipes and Stories from a Community Supported Farm* by Farmer John Peterson & Angelic Organics (Gibbs Smith Publisher). Check with your local farm or bookstore for availability. Additional recipes, charts, individual copies of this book, and quantity discounts available at www.AngelicOrganics.com/cookbook.

