

## **FRESH PROSPECTS**

Week 15 – September 25, 2008

### **This Week: a Celebration of Celeriac**

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#### **Celeriac the Underdog**

Celeriac (or celery root) is one of those CSA vegetables you won't find at Met Food. It's celery's unpopular sibling – same species, different breed. Whereas common (or Pascal) celery is grown for its stems and leaves, celeriac was bred for its underground charm – a stout fleshy taproot.

But it never made the top ten of root vegetables here either, perhaps because it lacks the caloric wallop of a tuber. Potatoes are 15% starch; celeriac a third of that. (Wikipedia never disappoints.) Not to mention it's an ugly-looking knob. All those tangled rootlets can be intimidating to peel. And then there's the name, celeriac, which sounds like a medication for arthritis or depression.

So why bother with celeriac at all? Well, mostly for flavor. The root tastes like a cross between celery and parsley. You can eat it raw, stir fry it, mash it, or bake it whole in its skin. And of course, it's an ideal ingredient in soups or stocks. It's also good for you: fat free, low in calories, high in fiber. And it will keep in your fridge for over a month. Try that with celery.

Speaking of which, ever wonder what that celery is doing in your Bloody Mary? It's kind of thick for a stirrer, don't you think? Well, it's not supposed to be there at all. The bartender just stuck it in there because they were all out of celeriac at Met Food.

You see, unlike the dugout-canoe shapes of celery stalks, the stalk of celeriac is cylindrical and hollow and happens to make an excellent straw. And such a straw is precisely what a properly made Bloody Mary needs, so that each spicy sip is tempered by a cool note of celeriac. Hangovers don't stand a chance.

#### **Celeriac with Onion and Lemon**

(adapted from [recipezaar.com](http://recipezaar.com))

serves 4 as a side dish

Celeriac is such a team player that you can cook with it for years without ever knowing exactly what it tastes like. Here's an easy recipe that really focuses your attention on the root:

1 celery root (approx. 2 cups of prepared root)  
1 large onion, chopped  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
Juice of 1 lemon  
Sea salt and ground black pepper to taste

Carve away the root's rough skin until only the white flesh remains. Cut into 1/8" thick bite-sized pieces. Steam until you can pierce with a fork (about 5 minutes).

Heat the oil in a large skillet. Add celeriac and onions. Stir to cook evenly, but allow the vegetables to brown (about 10 minutes).

Sprinkle with lemon juice, salt, and pepper. And serve.

### **News from Windflower Farm**

In this week's dispatch, Ted welcomes the change of seasons and reminisces about wearing tights.

"Fall greetings. The temperature dipped to 34 degrees here late last week, and to 36 last night. We spent a day last week placing protective row covers over all our sensitive crops. Although daytime temperatures have been warm, we know the end of summer vegetables is near. The maples have already begun to turn, and they should be at their peak in time for our Columbus Day Weekend farm gathering (more on that next week).

This week you are getting celeriac, bell peppers, onions, 'Yukina Savoy', arugula, a teenage salad mix consisting primarily of mustard greens (the long, deeply serrated, purple-leafed green is 'Red Komatsuna', a sharp-flavored mustard you might want to pull out of the mix), purple and orange carrots, sweet corn, and possibly something else. It's a share with one foot clearly in the fall season. Next week? We'll send salad and cooking greens, more sweet corn and snap beans, Italian peppers, fennel, leeks, potatoes and garlic.

Jan made eggplant Parmesan tonight, a favorite of mine. Batter fried eggplant on pizza with Ricotta and pesto is also wonderful. Tomorrow, she is going to make something with celeriac and apples (the recipe is below). We held a costume party here last Halloween. Jan dressed me as a celeriac bulb – my legs and artificial roots outfitted in sheer white leotards. Jan, who dressed herself as a cook, served celeriac fritters with a light mustard dip. Celeriac is good roasted, baked and fried, and it's excellent for seasoning soups.

Best wishes,  
Ted Blomgren”

**Ted's Apple & Celeriac Salad**

(from Soups & Starters)

serves 3 to 4

1 bulb Celeriac, peeled and shredded

2-3 tsp lemon juice

1 tsp walnut oil (optional)

1 apple, thinly sliced

3 tbsp mayonnaise

2 tsp Dijon mustard

1 tbsp parsley, chopped

salt and pepper to taste.

Mix all the ingredients together, chill for several hours, and serve.

UNTIL NEXT WEEK, we wish you all happy veggie eating