

What's in Your Box - January

Happy New Year all!

This is what you might find in your box in January:

beets—still around, though beginning to be stored beets rather than fresh. We are usually through our bunched beets, but many UK growers have lovely stored beets. They are surprisingly versatile and make great soup, are good in cakes, lovely roasted or boiled. We have golden beets as well as the traditional red ones for a bit of colour!

brussels sprouts—we had a relatively small crop of these this year, but they should continue a bit longer. We may also buy-in UK sprouts from time to time, always organically certified by the Soil Association. Just top and tail, cut in half if they are large and steam until tender (careful not to overcook!)

cabbage—cabbage is coming on! You'll see Savoy, Tundra, Red and others. My favourite is just to sauté some onion in butter, add cabbage and cook with a little water until cabbage is soft then add a splash of cream and cook a few more minutes until cream has thickened around the cabbage and onion; season with lots of salt and pepper. Remember that red cabbage needs different cooking as it's tougher, so look up a recipe for it. All work well raw in coleslaw.

carrots—will be mixing our carrots with other UK organic carrots to give some time for our crop to grow on. Both are delicious!

cauliflower—another winter favourite! Cauliflower is so nice in soup, stir fry, roasts and the ever popular, cauliflower cheese!

celeriac—I always look forward to when celeriac turns up; it has a really distinctive taste. It is really good cooked (add to mash with parsnips and potatoes) or raw grated into a remoulade with a nice dressing.

chillies—once our chillies have ended, we clear the crop and dry whatever is left, so they will be popping up in your box from time to time. Both green and red are from the same variety, called 'ring of fire', so be advised that they are hot! Deseeding and deveining them will lessen the heat.

kale—my favourite green is back. We're growing Russian kale and Cavolo Nero; traditional curly kale is also coming along. Key to liking kale is cooking it until it's tender which does take a bit longer but it shouldn't be tough and chewy. It works particularly well when cooked with lots of garlic and well seasoned.

leeks—a great winter favourite! It's one of those veg that you can do so much with. Make a pasta bake with sautéed leeks and a mustard béchamel sauce, or leek and potato soup, leek quiche, or just chop it finely and sauté it up slowly until it carmelizes as a side to meat or fish. Look through the monthly recipe sheets for ideas.

yellow and red onions—we've pulled are onions and are drying them.

parsnips—we always have lots of these and they are great! Roast them, soup them, mash em! A great winter staple.

purple sprouting broccoli—back on the menu later this month! This is one of my favourite and easy-peasy to cook. Just steam or boil until just tender (don't overcook!) slather in butter with a bit of salt and a squeeze of lemon.

potatoes—are usually being bought in at this time as we get through our small crop by the end of this month usually. However, we are getting supplied by other UK growers with different varieties of main crop potatoes.

salad leaves—our winter staple is finally coming back. We grow a wide variety of leaves, including rocket, mizuna, mibuna (the long slender one), baby pak choi, red and golden streaks mustard and many others. The flavours are amazing.

winter squash—these will be about a bit longer. Try them in stews and curries or make a quick soup with sautéed onion, squash, stock and cream - just boil until squash is tender and blend together with lots of salt and pepper. Top with blue cheese and toasted walnuts!

swede—much maligned, swede is a really nice side when mashed like potatoes— with lots of butter, milk, salt and especially! fresh ground pepper.