



General Recommendations

Fruit: Eat frozen or only thaw slightly. Use frozen directly in recipes. Reduce the amount of liquids added to recipes if the recipe calls for fresh fruit. Great in milkshakes and smoothies. Use as topping for ice cream. Mix into yogurt. Use in muffins, pies and cobblers.

Vegetables: Add frozen to recipes – typically no need to thaw (except just enough to loosen from package.) Most of the vegetables have been blanched, so they need some cooking time, but not too much. General rules of thumb – cook frozen vegetables ½ as long as you would cook fresh, reduce amount of added liquid or increase amount of thickening ingredients. Use vegetables directly from frozen in stir fry, casseroles, soups, into the oven for roasting.

Ideas

Blueberries (Sodt's Berry Farm) Eat them right out of the bag. Add them to pancakes, muffins, & cobblers. Drop them into hot oatmeal. Make savory sauces like barbeque and chutney. Add to hamburgers! No kidding.

Strawberries (Gibbs Berries Farm) Eat them just slightly thawed, or make shakes and smoothies. Add them to cobblers, pies and cheesecakes. Make a simple sauce & use it in salad dressings or as an ice cream or fruit salad topping. Makes a quick and wonderful jam.

Rhubarb (Deanna Malan aka the Leather Lady at the market, Wasem's, and others) Rhubarb, the vegetable we like to think of as a fruit, is a relative of buckwheat and has an earthy, sour flavor. Rhubarb is very tart and needs the addition of something sweet to balance its acidity. Use it in pies and desserts, or in jams, pickles and sauces. A great compilation of rhubarb recipes is at www.rhubarbinfo.com. Rhubarb pairs nicely with strawberries and apples.

Asparagus (Reske's, Kapnick) Ah, asparagus, a great reminder of spring. Frozen asparagus works well in risotto, stews and soups. It's also an excellent addition to Asian-style stir-fries. For a more simple preparation, asparagus can be oven roasted or steamed. It pairs well with hollandaise, butter or olive oil, Parmesan cheese and bacon. I like it in quiche, or you can make a frittata.

Corn (Tantre Farm, Nemeth Orchard, Schultz Farm, and Wolfe Orchard) Corn kernels in their natural, milky juice. Just heat, eat and enjoy! Use in chowder, soup, and salsas. Add to cornbread. Combine with the summer squash and make Calabacitas.

Green beans (Tantre, Goetz, Frog Holler and others) Use in your favorite green bean recipes, just reduce cooking time. Green beans work well in stir fry, soups & casseroles. They pair well with garlic, lemon, butter, sesame, and smoked meats. You can roast them in a hot oven.

Sugar Snap Peas (Tantre, Goetz, Rowe's) These plump, sweet edible-pod peas are wonderful in stir-fries and in creamy pasta dishes. Snap peas can also be enjoyed just lightly steamed. Even though these frozen local beauties won't have the crisp crunch of fresh spring snaps, they still work well thawed and mixed into a salad. Try a snap pea (or green bean) almandine.

Summer squash (Tantre, Goetz, & Frog Holler Farms) A mix of zucchini and organic yellow squash. It will have a much softer texture than fresh zucchini & squash. Use it in casseroles, soups and veggie side dishes. It's best to eat frozen squash dishes right after cooking; they will lose color and flavor if left in the refrigerator. Can shred and make zucchini bread.



Recipes

Blueberry Pancakes

Chef Jeff's famous fabulous homemade blueberry pancakes. And I'm not biased at all.

3 T butter
1 ½ cups low fat buttermilk
½ cup flour
1 ½ cup whole wheat flour
4 tsp baking powder
3 T sugar
¼ tsp salt
2 eggs
~ 1 cup frozen blueberries

Preheat griddle to 275° F. Melt butter in a small saucepan. Remove from heat, add buttermilk. Combine and mix flours, baking powder, sugar and salt in a large bowl. Add eggs to buttermilk mixture. Coat griddle with cooking spray. Combine buttermilk mixture with flour mixture until just wet. Drop ¼ cup of batter onto griddle for each pancake. Sprinkle each pancake with desired amount of blueberries. Cook on 1st side until golden brown (~4 minutes) then flip and cook other side.

Go Blue Berry Burgers

I got this recipe from Kate, a local food blogger (4obsessions.blogspot.com) and tried it with some lean local ground beef from TMZ Farm. Mmm mmm it works! Don't be alarmed by the weird color before cooking .

1.25 lbs lean, grass-fed ground beef
1/2 C frozen blueberries, thawed and chopped a bit, either with a knife or in a food processor.
1/2 t kosher salt
1/2 t fresh ground pepper
1/4 t garlic powder

Squish all ingredients together to incorporate the blueberry mush into the meaty mush. Don't get carried away and over squish it--just enough to get the job done. Shape into patties and cook on a grill, grill pan, or frying pan. Top with whatever you like--cheese, mushrooms, onions, condiments...Serve with LOTS of napkins.

Simple Strawberry Sauce

This is a great sauce for ice cream, other desserts, pancakes, and salad dressing (my favorite use.)

12 oz frozen Locavorious strawberries; 1 or 2 T brown or white sugar or honey; 2 T lemon juice

Combine everything in a large saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium-low heat, stirring, until the sugar dissolves. Partially cover with a lid and simmer, stirring once or twice, for about 10 minutes. Let cool. Now you can use as is, or toss in a blender and blend until smooth. Use as is or strain to remove the seeds. Nice options: use balsamic vinegar or red wine vinegar instead of lemon juice.

Strawberry Vinaigrette: 3 T Strawberry Sauce, 3 T red wine vinegar, 2 T Dijon mustard, 1 tsp pure maple syrup, 2 T extra-virgin olive oil, salt and pepper. Wisk together in a small bowl, or put all ingredients in a jar and shake 'em up.



For shares with rhubarb....

Strawberry-Rhubarb Crisp

A classic combination, there are many variations. Here's one I like.

Filling:

12 oz frozen rhubarb slices
12 oz frozen strawberries
1/3 cup sugar
3 tablespoons cornstarch
½ teaspoon grated orange or lemon rind (optional)
Dash of ground cinnamon (optional)
Cooking spray

Topping (this makes a lot of crisp topping; half the recipe if prefer more of a fruit focus)

2/3 cup whole wheat flour
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/2 cup oats
Dash of salt
6 tablespoons chilled butter, cut into small pieces

Preheat oven to 375°. Place frozen strawberries and rhubarb in a colander. Rinse with cool water, and let drain and thaw a bit while assembling other ingredients. To prepare filling, combine the first 6 ingredients in a medium bowl, stirring to coat and to break up any fruit frozen together. Spoon into a 9 x 9-inch baking dish or pie pan coated with cooking spray.

To prepare topping, combine flour and next 4 ingredients (through salt) in a medium bowl or food processor; cut in butter either with the food processor, pastry blender or 2 knives until mixture is crumbly. Sprinkle topping over filling. Bake at 375° for 40 - 45 minutes or until bubbly. Let stand 10 minutes.

Lizzy's Rhubarb Bread

From the children's book Elizabeth Whitney Williams & The Little Traverse Light. Williams, probably Michigan's first female lighthouse keeper, kept the Whiskey Point lighthouse in the 1870s, and then the Little Traverse Light. Seemed like a good recipe for local rhubarb!

Bread ingredients:

1 1/2 cups brown sugar
2/3 cup oil
1 egg
1 cup buttermilk
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 1/2 cups flour
~ 1 1/2 cups diced frozen rhubarb, lightly thawed

Topping:

1/3 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup chopped nuts
1 teaspoon cinnamon

Mix together all bread ingredients. Pour into two 6-inch greased and floured loaf pans. Before baking, mix together and sprinkle topping over batter. Bake at 325°F for 40 to 60 minutes or until an inserted broom straw [or toothpick] comes out clean. Makes two 6-inch loaves.



For shares with asparagus: Three Grain Risotto with Asparagus

Adapted from Cooking Light, April 2004.

- 1/8 teaspoon saffron threads, crushed - optional
- ~ 2 cups broth
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/4 cup finely chopped shallots (about 2 medium)
- 1/2 cup Arborio or other short-grain rice
- 1/2 cup quick-cooking barley
- 1/4 cup quinoa
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded mozzarella or other cheese
- 2/3 cup milk
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 12 oz Locavorious frozen asparagus
- 1 tablespoon pine nuts, toasted

Bring saffron and broth to a simmer in a small saucepan (do not boil). Keep warm over low heat.

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add shallots; sauté 3 minutes. Add rice, barley, and quinoa; sauté 2 minutes. Add wine; cook 2 minutes or until liquid is nearly absorbed. Stir in 1 cup water; cook 5 minutes or until liquid is nearly absorbed, stirring. Add broth mixture, 1/2 cup at a time, stirring constantly until each portion of broth is absorbed before adding the next. Towards the end of making risotto, steam or microwave asparagus until just heated; drain.

Remove risotto from heat; stir in cheese, then milk, lemon juice, salt & pepper. Mix in asparagus; sprinkle with pine nuts.

Green Veggie of Choice w/ Mushrooms and Bacon

In the “everything’s better with bacon” category, here’s a flexible, yummy side dish that works well with green beans, sugar snaps or asparagus. You can find local shiitake and oyster mushrooms at the farmers market still.

- 16 oz frozen sugar snap peas or 16 oz green beans or 12 oz frozen asparagus pieces
- 4 bacon slices
- ~ 1 1/2 cups sliced shiitake or oyster mushrooms
- 1/4 cup chopped shallots
- 1/4 tsp. dried crushed red pepper (more or less to taste)
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Dash of salt (optional)

Rinse and drain frozen vegetable of choice. Let rest/thaw a little in a colander while you prepare the rest. Cook bacon in a large skillet over medium-low heat until crisp; remove bacon, and drain on paper towels, reserving ~1 Tbsp drippings in skillet. Discard remaining drippings. Crumble bacon and set aside. Sauté mushrooms and shallots in hot drippings over medium-high heat 5 minutes or until shallots are tender. Add green beans or snaps or asparagus; sauté and gently break apart any veggies frozen together. Heat ~ 3 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Sprinkle in red pepper. Stir in crumbled bacon, black pepper; taste for salt.



Michigan Minestrone

Minestrone is a wonderful and flexible winter soup. Locavores get psyched - this recipe can be made with many local ingredients. It can be made vegetarian, vegan or omnivore style, too.

2 tsp olive oil	1 (14-ounce) can or ~ 2 cups broth (vegetable or beef)
1/2 cup chopped onion	5 T tomato paste
1/2 tsp dried basil	1/4 cup uncooked small pasta, such as little tube shapes
1/2 tsp dried oregano	~ 2 cups chopped frozen or fresh Swiss chard or greens
2 garlic cloves, minced	1-2 cups frozen Locavorious summer squash & zucchini
1 1/4 cups cubed peeled butternut squash (~ 1 medium)	1 cup frozen Locavorious green beans
1/2 cup chopped carrot	1-2 cups cooked or 1 can drained Great Northern Beans
1/2 cup diced fennel	1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
1 cup water	2 T grated Asiago cheese

Heat oil in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add onion, basil, oregano, and garlic to pan; sauté 5 minutes or until onion is tender. Add butternut squash, carrot and fennel; sauté 5 minutes. Stir in 1 cup water, broth, and tomato paste; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer 10 minutes or until vegetables are desired tenderness. Stir in pasta; cook 8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add chard and summer squash; bring back to a low boil and cook 3 minutes. Add beans; cook 2 minutes or until thoroughly heated. Stir in pepper. Serve topped with cheese.

Calabacitas

This simple yet delicious recipe comes from an old tattered copy of a page from The Rancho de Chimayó cookbook, highlighting traditional cooking in New Mexico. The Pueblos and Spanish settlers in the area would dry summer squash to use in the winter.

3-4 T corn or canola oil
16 oz Locavorious frozen summer squash (in the summer, use 4-6 medium squashes- zucchini and yellows)
1 medium white onion, chopped
16 oz Locavorious frozen corn kernels
1/2 cup chopped, roasted green chile (fresh, frozen or one of those little cans; New Mexico green or Anaheim peppers work best)
1-3 T water, or as needed
1/2 tsp salt
Grated cheddar cheese (up to ~ 3/4 cup, or omit for a vegan option)

In a large skillet, heat the oil and add the onion. Sauté over medium heat until it begins to soften. Add the frozen squash; sauté until it starts to get hot. Add the frozen corn, green chile, water and salt. Cook, covered, over low heat until very tender, about 20 minutes. Stir once in awhile. Another tablespoon or two of water can be added if the vegetables become too dry. Remove from heat and mix in the cheese if desired. Serve immediately.



Garlicky Hoisin Stir Fry with Snap Peas

Garlicky hoisin sauce ingredients:

1 1/2 T olive oil
3 T minced scallion (white parts only)
2 T minced garlic
1 t crushed red pepper flakes
3/4 cup hoisin sauce
1/2 cup water
1 1/2 T soy sauce
1 1/2 T sugar

Stir fry ingredients:

2 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
Meat eaters: 1 lb flank or boneless sirloin steak, thinly sliced
Veggie version: 16 oz extra firm tofu
1 bell pepper, seeded and thinly sliced
1 sweet potato, peeled, halved, and sliced 1/4 inch thick
1/3 cup water
16 oz Locavorious frozen sugar snap peas
3 scallions (green parts only), cut into 1 1/2-inch lengths
Cooked rice

For the sauce: heat a wok or skillet over medium-high heat. Add the oil and heat for 30 seconds. Add the scallions, garlic, and pepper flakes, and cook until fragrant, about 15 seconds. Add the remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens slightly, about 1-2 minutes. Set aside.

For the carnivorous version: wipe out the wok or skillet and re-heat over high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of the oil and heat for 30 seconds. Add the steak and stir-fry until cooked through, 3 - 4 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

Tofu version: press the tofu by placing it on plate lined with paper towels; place another plate on top and a can or jar to weigh it down. Squeeze out some water while you prep the rest of the recipe (~ 20 minutes). Cut into cubes.

Wipe out the pan again. Reduce heat to medium-high, add the remaining oil, and heat for 30 seconds. Add the bell pepper and cook, stirring, for ~ 1 minute. Add the sweet potato and water. Cover partially and cook, stirring occasionally, for 7 minutes. Add the frozen snap peas and cook for ~ 2 minutes, gently separating the pods. Add the scallions. Add the Garlicky Hoisin Sauce and increase heat to high. When it starts to bubble, add your protein of choice. Stir-fry only until warmed through, about 1 minute. Serve immediately over the rice.

Sichuan Green Beans

1 pound frozen Locavorious green beans
1 T canola oil, divided
1/4 cup chopped shallots
1 1/2 T minced garlic
1 T minced peeled fresh ginger
1/2 - 1 tsp crushed red pepper
1 T Chinese black vinegar or balsamic vinegar
1 T low-sodium soy sauce
1/2 tsp salt

Rinse green beans under cold running water to separate; drain. Pat dry with paper towels.

Heat a 14-inch wok or skillet over high heat. Add 1 1/2 tps oil to wok, swirling to coat. Add green beans to wok; stir-fry 3 minutes or until browned. Spoon green beans into a bowl. Add remaining 1 1/2 tps oil to wok, swirling to coat. Add shallots, garlic, ginger, and crushed red pepper; stir-fry 15 seconds or just until garlic begins to brown. Return green beans to wok. Add vinegar, soy sauce, and salt to wok; toss to combine and heat.