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eat local caledon

Upcoming Eat Local Caledon Spring Festival

Still looking for seeds and seedlings for your vegetable garden? Eat Local Caledon is kicking off the growing season with a Spring Festival on **Saturday, May 23rd** at the Inglewood General Store from **10am to 1pm**. At the festival you will find a variety of seeds; tomato, herb and sunflower seedlings; a Build-Your-Own Herb Pot station; and a variety of spring harvest foods, including rhubarb, asparagus, maple syrup and dandelions. There will also be live music and a Mennonite Sausage BBQ. Hope to see you there!

Lasagna Gardening

If building a raised bed garden or using a roto-tiller seems too daunting or work intensive, there is another option for building a new garden called the Lasagna method. Lasagna gardening involves the layering of materials from the ground-up until you have a garden of sufficient depth.

Begin by placing cardboard or newspaper (at least 5 sheets thick) directly onto the ground. This layer will kill the grass and cover any rocks, as well as inhibit weed growth. Cover the newspaper with alternating layers of organic material such as compost, animal manure, soil, peat moss, leaves, grass clippings, seaweed, etc. (just compost will work fine too) until the desired thickness is reached. Finish with a top layer of mulch. Water until the garden is the consistency of a damp sponge. Move the mulch aside to plant your seeds or seedlings.

Remember that you will need a thicker garden if you plan to plant root crops in the first year as the newspaper layer is unlikely to decompose during the first year. By the second season, the newspaper layer will have rotted away.

For more information about Lasagna Gardening, refer to "Lasagna Gardening 101" at http://ourgardengang.tripod.com/lasagna_gardening.htm.

Rhubarb... a Taste of Spring!!

In-season from early spring to early summer, rhubarb is one of the great spring harvest foods.

It is native to Northern Asia, where it was used primarily for medicinal purposes as both a gentle purgative and for reducing fever. The English were the first to begin using rhubarb as a culinary ingredient, making it into pies and stewing it for custards. Rhubarb was introduced to North America in the early 1800's when pioneers brought cuttings over to plant in their gardens.

Rhubarb is often considered a fruit due to its common use in dessert recipes, although botanically it is a vegetable (closely related to sorrel). It is a good source of vitamin C and iron.

Rhubarb leaves are toxic due to a high concentration of oxalic acid salts and therefore should not be consumed by humans nor fed to animals.

For some ideas on cooking with this spring ingredient, refer to the Recipes section below.

You can find local rhubarb at the following locations:

Eat Local Caledon Spring Festival, Sat. May 23rd, 10am-1pm, at the Inglewood General Store
Lennox Farm Ltd., Shelburne, 519-925-6444, rhubarb available year-round, outdoor rhubarb (May-June), indoor rhubarb (fall-winter)

Sources: Foodland Ontario, Food Network Canada

Caledon Countryside Alliance Sustainable Caledon



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Carrot Cache

<http://www.carrot.com/carrotcache/index.htm>

Rhubarb Recipes

Easy Stewed Rhubarb

Servings: 3 cups

6 cups chopped rhubarb
1 cup granulated sugar
2 Tbsp. water

In large saucepan, combine all ingredients. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until sugar is dissolved. Reduce heat to medium low. Simmer, uncovered and stirring occasionally for about 15 min or until slightly thickened and rhubarb is in threads. Let cool. Can be refrigerated up to 5 days.

Rhubarb Cranberry Chutney

Source: Cathy Hansen, *Philosopher's Kitchen*

Servings: 4.5 cups

4.5 cups chopped rhubarb
2 cups brown sugar
2 cups white vinegar
2 cups chopped onion
3/4 cup dried cranberries
1 Tbsp. minced garlic
1 Tbsp. grated fresh ginger
1 1/2 Tbsp. mustard seed
1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp fenugreek seed
1/2 tsp. ground cloves
1/4 tsp cayenne (more if you like it hot)

Combine all ingredients in a large heavy bottomed saucepan and bring to a full boil. Reduce heat to a moderate boil and cook until mixture reaches a jam consistency (about 40 min.)

Arugula Salad with Strawberry Rhubarb Vinaigrette

Dressing:

1 cup chopped fresh rhubarb
1 1/4 cup chopped fresh strawberries
3 large shallots, coarsely chopped
1 Tbsp. sugar
1/3 cup red wine vinegar
3/4 cup canola oil
1/4 tsp Dijon mustard

Salad:

1 bunch arugula
12 whole strawberries
4 oz goat cheese

Simmer rhubarb, strawberries, shallots, sugar and red wine vinegar in small non-reactive saucepan until tender, about 10 minutes. Puree, strain into large bowl, and cool. Whisk in canola oil and Dijon mustard. Add to arugula, whole strawberries and crumbled goat cheese.

Baked Chicken and Rhubarb

Servings: 4-6

3 lb. chicken breasts and thighs or 1 whole chicken cut up
2 cups diced rhubarb (1/2-inch pieces)
1/3 cup sugar
1 1/2 Tbsp. cornstarch
1 1/2 cup water
2 tsp. lemon juice
1/4 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. nutmeg
rice for serving

Combine cornstarch, sugar, rhubarb and water in a saucepan. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture boils. Cook until clear and thickened, about 2 minutes. Add lemon juice. Cool.

Place chicken in a shallow baking dish. Brush with butter and sprinkle with salt. Bake uncovered in 375 degrees oven for 30 minutes. Spoon rhubarb sauce over chicken. Sprinkle with spices. Return to oven and bake 20 minutes longer. Serve immediately with sauce spooned over chicken. Serve with hot cooked rice.

Rhubarb Crumble

1/2 cup melted butter
1/2 cup flour
1 1/2 cups rolled oats
1 1/2 Tbsp. flour
2/3 cup brown sugar
3 cups raw rhubarb
1/2 cup sugar

Combine melted butter, rolled oats, first amount of flour and brown sugar. Firmly press 3/4 of mixture into a 9 inch pie plate. Cover with rhubarb.

Combine sugar and second amount of flour. Sprinkle over rhubarb. Cover with remaining crumb mixture. Bake at 350 ° for 30 - 40 minutes.

Serve warm with ice cream.

Rhubarb Frozen Yogurt

2 cups stewed rhubarb (refer to "Easy Stewed Rhubarb recipe above")
1/2 cup plain low fat yogurt
3 Tbsp. granulated sugar
2 Tbsp. orange juice

In food processor puree stewed rhubarb until smooth. Blend in yogurt, sugar and orange juice. Freeze in icecream maker or cover and freeze in shallow metal pan for 3 to 4 hrs or until almost firm. Break up mixture and process in food processor in batches if necessary until smooth. Freeze in airtight container for 1 hour or until firm.