

ROOT VEGGIES: RUTABAGA

Spanish: colinabo **Russian:** bryukva (брюква)

Root vegetables have been part of the human diet for nearly 5 million years. They can be harvested in the wild a number of varieties. Early American colonists and settlers were dependent on root vegetables for their ability to store underground during long, cold winters. Rutabagas are a cross between a turnip and wild cabbage and thought to have been created in Bohemia in the 1700's.



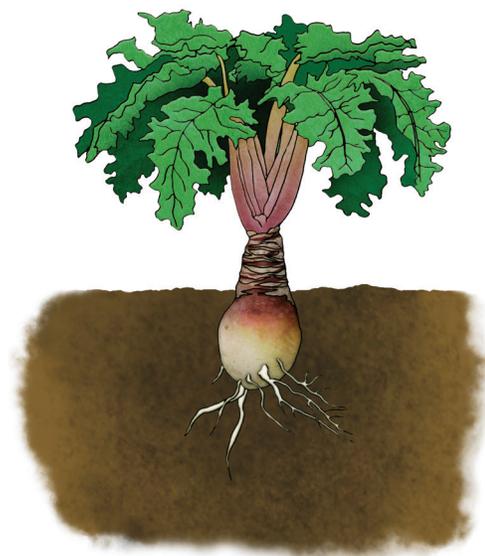
FIND OUT MORE:

<http://nwrec.hort.oregonstate.edu/rutabaga.html>

[http://www.harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/download/Fall/21712](http://www.harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/download/Fall/21712/Ed_News_Roots_Tubers.pdf)

[/Ed_News_Roots_Tubers.pdf](http://www.harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/download/Fall/21712/Ed_News_Roots_Tubers.pdf)

FROM SEED TO PLATE



Like any plant, there are five main components: roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds. Depending on the plant, we eat different parts. With root vegetables – we eat the roots! Roots maintain their function of anchoring the plant, absorbing nutrients and water and storing energy for the plant.

FIND OUT MORE:

http://www.harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/download/Fall/21712/Ed_News_Roots_Tubers.pdf

DID YOU KNOW?

You can “broadcast” fall rutabagas between sweet corn rows. Broadcasting means lightly sprinkling a handful of seeds without care to rows or spacing. The rutabagas will provide ground cover for the corn and you will save space in your garden!

<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/veggies/turnip.cfm>

IN THE GARDEN

Rutabagas are a great plant for your class garden! Due to their long growing cycle (~ 80 days) you can plant them in the late spring and harvest in the fall. There are multiple varieties: green, white, yellow, and pink hues.



SUN: Can tolerate half sun conditions.



WATER: Keep soil moist when plants are young. After germination, plants are hardier, but make sure to water regularly.



SOIL: Rutabaga grows best in fertile, well-drained soil with high organic matter content.



SEEDS: Rutabaga seeds germinate well; it is not necessary to plant extra as insurance.



PLANT: For a summer harvest, plant seeds as early as possible. For a fall harvest, plant in late July/early August.



SPACE: Plant seeds ½ inch deep, 3-4 inches apart in a row with 16-20 inches between rows.



CARE: If planting in cells, thin each cell to one plant to ensure proper growth.



HARVEST: Rutabagas are typically grown for a fall harvest and are best flavored when they are small or medium sized. Larger roots may become woody and fibrous. Spring planted rutabaga can be harvested in mid-late July, and late summer rutabaga (aka late season rutabaga) can be harvested in October.

STORAGE AND HANDLING

- Choose young and tender roots.
- Avoid roots that have blemishes, soft spots and cracks.
- Store in a vegetable crisper that maintains a cool temperature.

FIND OUT MORE:

<http://nwrec.hort.oregonstate.edu/rutabaga.html>

<http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/5000/pdf/5521.pdf>

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IN THE KITCHEN

Rutabagas are a kitchen secret – they add extra flavor, spice, and zing to dishes. Boil them with your potatoes for mashed potatoes; cut them into bite sized pieces along with carrots, onion, parsnip and potato for roasted root veggies – a great side dish with chicken; slice them very thin, sprinkle with salt, pepper and olive oil, and roast at 400 degrees for 15 - 20 minutes for rutabaga chips.

Try the classroom recipe at home, with this family-size version:

ROOT VEGETABLE PANCAKES

Serves 4-6

INGREDIENTS

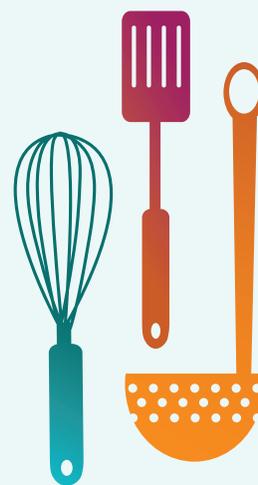
½ lb. parsnips, or a mix of root vegetables (like rutabaga, turnip, or beets)
 2 scallions or green onions, green parts chopped
 2 eggs
 ¼ cup of flour
 ½ tsp. salt
 ¼ tsp. pepper, or to taste
 2-4 Tbs. vegetable oil

Optional, to serve:

1Tbs. soy sauce and 1 tsp. rice vinegar (dipping sauce) OR plain yogurt

DIRECTIONS

1. Grate root vegetables. Chop scallions/green onions.
2. Whisk eggs in a medium bowl with the salt and pepper. Whisk in flour.
3. Stir in shredded root vegetables.
4. Heat oil in a medium pan or skillet.
5. Form the mixture into patties roughly three inches in size. You should be able to make about 6 patties. Place patties on pan, 2 inches apart. Not all patties will fit in one batch.
6. Cook for 2-3 minutes on the first side, then flip and cook for another 2-3 minutes until browned on both sides.
7. Continue cooking pancakes in batches. Add oil as needed.
- 8. Serve hot, plain or with dipping sauce or yogurt**



FAMILY CONNECTIONS

The family newsletter for root vegetables can be sent home at the beginning of the month. The newsletter is available in English, Spanish, and Russian. Print the first page only, or add photos and stories to the second page and print both sides for families.



GET PARENTS' ATTENTION!

- Attach the newsletter to the child by attaching a string of yarn to the paper and making a newsletter “necklace” or pinning the newsletter to an article of clothing.
- Attach the newsletter to a drawing or other piece of artwork created by the child
- Get a set of “Ask me about ____” stickers or nametags, or use blank nametag stickers to draw attention to the fruit or vegetable of the month. Send each child home with an “Ask me about root vegetables!” sticker for the root vegetables month.
- Offer tastes of the recipe of the month at a parent meeting, or when parents pick up their children from your site.



ABOUT HARVEST FOR HEALTHY KIDS

Harvest for Healthy Kids is a nutrition program designed to introduce children to a wide variety of fruits and vegetables through their meals and snacks and classroom activities. Monthly family newsletters engage families as partners in helping children to develop healthy eating habits. Harvest for Healthy Kids is a partnership between Mt. Hood Community College Head Start and the School of Community Health at Portland State University.