

## Storage Tips & Tricks

**Basil**- Fresh cut the end of the stem and trim the leaves from the bottom of the stems, . Place the stems into fresh water. Keep the jar or vase on the counter. Basil should be stored at room temperature. Cover the basil with a plastic bag but do not tighten. Change the water daily or every couple of days. Trim the ends of the stems again. Basil should last up to a week.

**Winter Squash** -To store fall or winter squash: Winter squash should be stored at room temperature in a dry location like the kitchen counter or cupboard. Some Tips- Use winter squash in place of pumpkin in your favorite muffin or bread recipes. Peel and cut into squash chunks- and roast with root vegetables or with apples Simple Roasted squash. Slice the squash in-half lengthwise from the stem to the bottom. Scoop out the seeds and place the squash face-down in a shallow pan with a little water (just a thin layer of water or cider will work) or without. Roast for about 40 minutes (until fork tender), then turn the squash face-side up, add a little butter season with and either cinnamon or sage, Sweeten a little with brown sugar is desired and roast until completely done, another 10-15 minutes. Roasted Squash Seeds pumpkin seeds, pulp removed, rinsed, dried salt Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Spread pumpkin seeds in a single layer on shallow baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt Bake for about 45 minutes, checking and turning occasionally, until light golden brown.

**Apples**- apples should be stored in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator away from other produce as they emit ethylene gas. For the best flavor bring the fruit to room temperature for serving. Store fresh cauliflower: keep in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Prepare cauliflower within a couple of days for the best flavor. Cauliflower will keep up to a week. 35 Best Cauliflower Recipes | What to Make with Cauliflower | Recipes, Dinners and Easy Meal Ideas | Food Network

**Brussel Sprouts** – Use them within a couple of days. They look like little cabbages. They are in the same family, however not the same vegetable. They can, develop a strong cabbage flavor if stored for too long. 13 Delicious Brussels Sprout Recipes to Try (realsimple.com)

**Potatoes**-keep potatoes in a cool, dark, dry, place, in a paper bag. Potatoes should never be refrigerated.

**Fennel**- wrap fennel in a paper towel and place in a plastic bag. Keep in a warmer part of the refrigerator, like the door or in a drawer. Store the bulb separate from the stems and the fronds. [www.foodnetwork.com/how-to/packages/food-network-essentials/what-is-fennel-and-how-to-cook-it](http://www.foodnetwork.com/how-to/packages/food-network-essentials/what-is-fennel-and-how-to-cook-it)

**Onions**- store onions in a cool dry place. Do not store in plastic.

**Carrots** – remove the tops from the root and store separately using the greens within a couple of days. Roast root vegetables together and add some cubes of butternut squash to the pan too. 30 Best Carrot Recipes & Ideas | Recipes, Dinners and Easy Meal Ideas | Food Network

**Lettuce**: lettuce must be dry before storing. Lettuce is best stored wrapped in a dry paper towel in a plastic container or plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.

**French Horticultural Beans** - the beans will come to you dry. Store in an airtight container in a cool dry place or prepare the beans and freeze. To prepare beans to be added to a dish you will first, boil them for 3 minutes remove from the heat. Allow the beans to sit for 10 minutes. Drain and rinse the beans and add back into a large pan. Cover 2" above the beans with fresh water and bring to a boil add a ½ Tablespoon of salt and lower to a simmer. Cover and simmer for up to 45 minutes. Stir occasionally and test for tenderness. If you have more beans than you can use this week, they can be frozen and they can also be canned. I often cook dried beans and freeze them in portions to use in pasta or rice dishes.



## Week 3 Holiday Harvest 2023—December 15th

You may have seen Rebekah's post this past week. The tractors are being put under cover, some at other farm locations. Strawberries are covered, those planted on plastic are covered with row cover, not on plastic they are covered with straw. Cover crop has been planted on many of the fields. All of this reminds me of a book that was a favorite of the Farm Bureau a few years ago. It was called "Sleep Tight Farm" and at this time of the year, we are almost there. It is a cute story that some of our youngest CSA members may enjoy. While the fields are put to bed the production team that is much smaller now will continue to work and get ready for the 2024 season. Firewood is on the to do list and pressing cider remains a job that is done fairly often. Seeds are being ordered, soil tests are being done, greenhouses are being cleaned so they are ready for new plantings next year.

In some of your shares this week there will be dried beans once again. The list might read that they are pinto beans. The seed company calls them French Horticultural Beans. They also look very much like an Italian Borlotti or Cranberry Bean. We are including one of our favorite recipes for a Cranberry Bean Gratin. This addition to the share makes life a little simpler. The dry beans can be stored in a cool dry place, or they can be prepared and frozen waiting to be added to a recipe in the winter. So, after our journey ends you can look forward to having something from the farm to serve in the cold winter months. It might be time to think about adding beans to your diet in place of other protein when possible. We could consider it a baby step toward better health in 2024. We all try to reflect on the year as it comes to a close and we look forward to making next year even better. I have written about the Blue Zones in the world in the past. It is where people seem to live the longest and diet has been sighted as the reason. To make the beans in the share a complete protein add brown rice. When looking at the best diets for the longest life, add the leafy greens from the shares and even a potato. Nuts and seeds can be added to have what is being called "the five pillars of a longevity diet on four continents." Maybe the new book, The Blue Zones, by Dan Buettner should be on our wish list this holiday season.

I cannot say it enough, it is December and there are fresh greens in our shares. And what about the tomatoes and even basil this week. Many farms and farm markets are closed for the season. We are not only open, but we are also still producing. Hat's off to the production team, once again.

If you have any questions, contact [Trish@alstedefarms.com](mailto:Trish@alstedefarms.com) or call 908-879-7189 she is there to assist you. If you have anything to share, send to [jenn@alstedefarms.com](mailto:jenn@alstedefarms.com).

Until next week, enjoy the freshness!

*Jenn Borealo*

## Cauliflower Pilaf

This is a recipe that was sent to me a few years ago. CSA member Nadia Karden sent in this recipe to share. Since cauliflower is in all of the boxes this week, I thought it would be great to share with all of you. This sounds like a family recipe, one that is handed down with directions and not exact measurements. 1c rice will produce 3 cups cooked. This recipe reminds me of a chicken and rice recipe I have prepared. At this time of year, with all that we have to do, we are all looking for a simple meal to prepare. This can be done in steps and then once put together dinner will be ready in less than a ½ hour! “This recipe is cultural, but I believe it is some form of pilaf, but one of my favorites. If you can make rice, you can make this dish.” “Granted I don't have a cup of this and a pinch of that, but it is very simple. You can use cubed beef, lamb, or chicken as the meat for this dish and you will need 1 cup of rice and one head of cauliflower.”

Cut the cauliflower into small pieces and lay on a cookie sheet. Use enough vegetable oil to coat each piece of cauliflower and add salt and pepper. Roast in the oven at 350 until a golden color. I check the cauliflower at least one time to make sure it is not sticking to the pan. A quick shake of the pan should do it.

Brown your choice of meat in a small amount of oil. Once browned, add enough water to boil until tender. Save this broth for later and make sure you have strained it.

Once you have your cauliflower and meat ready, here is how to assemble in your final pot. Preferably a pot you use to make rice. Take 2 tablespoons of the rice and sprinkle at the bottom of the pan. Now layer the meat on top of the first small layer of rice. The remainder of the rice goes on top of the meat. Now place the cauliflower pieces on top of the rice. You will need two cups of liquid. The broth plus water. Add salt to taste. You can tell if your dish will be ok by tasting a little bit of the liquid. Bring this to a boil, and then turn the heat to low, put a tight lid on it.

This should take no longer than 20 to 25 minutes for the rice to cook. Turn your pot upside down onto a platter. Serve with plain yogurt or salad on the side. I like to put a little bit of parsley on top of the pilaf for color. For a Vegan dish eliminate the meat and yogurt. Add beans and vegetable broth and serve with a salad.

## Holiday Harvest Week 3

Apples

Basil

Carrots

Kale

Parsnips

Brussels Sprouts

Cilantro

Broccoli

Rutabaga

Kidney Beans

Cauliflower

Bok Choy

Lettuce

Pink/Red Tomatoes

*\*\*Your actual CSA share contents will be listed on the label inside of your box and may differ from this list. Your share contents are based on your individual preferences and customizations that you make on your Harvie profile, as well as changes in availability.*

### Cranberry Beans

Dried cranberry/pinto beans can be frozen and prepared another time

1 1/2 c Cranberry beans pick through to remove stones and leaves darkened beans, rinse and drain

5 c water

1/4 c olive oil

1/2 t Rustic Herbs, Herbs de Provence, or Tuscan herbs

Add the ingredients to a large saucepan. Bring the mixture to a rolling boil for 15 minutes. Cover and simmer on very low heat for an additional 20 minutes. Check the texture.

Remove from heat and cover for 30-40 minutes. Add salt to taste. Beans should be ready to use in the recipe or they can be frozen, continue preparation at a later date

### Cranberry Bean Gratin

Olive oil

3 c. cooked cranberry beans

3/4 c. cooking liquid

¼ c dry white wine

extra-virgin olive oil

1 carrot finely chopped

1 medium onion, diced

3-4 cloves garlic, chopped

3-4 leaves chopped fresh sage

1 ½ c. chopped, kale, spinach, arugula from the share

2 ripe tomatoes, coarsely chopped or canned, diced

1 t fresh thyme leaves

freshly ground black pepper

2 slices hearty sour dough or country bread, processed to equal ¾ c crumbs

1-2 T butter

Preheat the oven to 350. Heat 2-3 T of olive oil in a large, heavy skillet. Add the carrot, onions, garlic, and cook, over low heat, for about 6 minutes add sage and season with salt and cook for an additional 4-5 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. Add the leafy greens and tomatoes. Continue to cook for another minute or two. Sprinkle with thyme leaves. Stir in the beans to combine, and transfer to a baking/gratin dish. Add bean cooking liquid. It should cover most of the vegetable mixture. Melt the butter in a sauté pan. Add the breadcrumbs and allow to toast. Sprinkle the breadcrumbs over the casserole, bake, 40- 45 minutes.