



Published in

[The Leonard Lopate Show](#)

# Melissa Clark's Tips for Using Your CSA Vegetables

f



A CSA share means a lot of fresh, organic vegetables, but it can be hard to always know how to prepare them.

Jul 31, 2014

---

If you get a CSA share, you might find yourself stumped, wondering how to cook vegetables like kohlrabi and bok choy and broccoli rabe. Leonard picked up his CSA bag this morning, and **Melissa Clark** is here to share her ideas for how to use the summer's fresh vegetables. She's a *New York Times* **Dining Section columnist**

[http://topics.nytimes.com/top/features/diningandwine/columns/a\\_good\\_appetite/](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/features/diningandwine/columns/a_good_appetite/)

and cookbook writer, and her most recent cookbook is ***Cook This Now: 120 Easy and Delectable Dishes You Can't Wait to Make***

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1401323987/wnycorg-20/> .

Clark said that what's great about community supported agriculture is that you're buying directly from a farmer, and they bring the produce to you—or to your neighborhood, where you can pick it up. Getting a CSA share means you're helping the farmer have enough money to plant the crops and harvest the crops, and to plant a variety of plants. If you'd like to find one, do an Internet search to find one close to you. In NYC, you can visit [justfood.org](http://justfood.org) for information.

Melissa Clark opened up Leonard's bag of CSA vegetables from Katchkie Farm and here's what she found and her suggestions for what to do with it!

**Swiss chard:** Sautee it with garlic and olive oil and some pine nuts and mix it with pasta. Top it with parmesan cheese. Chop up the chard stems and grill them in a grill basket a couple minutes on each side.

**Broccoli:** Steam it and make a Vietnamese-style sauce with fish sauce, ginger, lemon grass, olive oil.

**Beet greens:** Add them to the Swiss chard and sautee with garlic and olive oil (or put on pasta, as recommended above). You can eat the greens from beets, radish, mustard greens—just taste the greens first. If they taste good raw, use them raw (in a salad). Sauteeing the greens or blanching them will tone down any bitterness.

**Cherry tomatoes:** Are great salad tomatoes. If they're big, cut them in half or in quarters.

Take the perfect tomatoes and make salad, take any dinged up ones and make a sauce by simmer them in a pot until they cook down.

**Parsley:** Put it in a salad. Take the leaves off the stems, toss them with sliced radishes, and with feta, pecorino, or parmesan, some toasted pine nuts or almonds. Or you can use it to make pesto—add it to the basil leaves or even use it in place of basil.

**Carrots:** Peel them or not. Take a bite and if it's bitter, peel the carrots. Otherwise just wash them. Grate them into salad.

**Onions with greens:** Don't throw out the greens! They're like scallions. Peel the onions, slice them, and grill them with the greens. You can also chop up the greens (grilled or not) and use them in a dressing.

**Corn:** grill it. Peel back the greens, take silk out, wrap the corn back up, and put it on the grill. It steams nicely in the husk. Or you can shuck it entirely, throw naked cobs on the grill, and coat them after they're cooked with butter and parmesan cheese, a little onion.

**Kale:** To make kale chips: Wash kale. Dry it thoroughly—spin it in salad spinner, then lay it out on dish towels for a couple hours (or just dry it very well by hand). Toss it with oil and really rub the oil into leaves (you can use any oil). Sprinkle it amply with salt. Put it on one layer on baking sheets. Don't overlap or pile up the leaves. Roast at 325 or 300 degrees and when they start looking ever so slightly brown (about 10 minutes), take them out of the oven. Store them in an air tight container. You can also try [Dr. Drew Ramsey's recipe for kale chips](http://www.wnyc.org/story/309069-dr-drew-ramseys-kale-chip-recipe/) <<http://www.wnyc.org/story/309069-dr-drew-ramseys-kale-chip-recipe/>> .

**Kohlrabi:** a listener suggests treating it as like a potato and boil it, or steam it, then mash it with a little cream or olive oil. Uses it as a base for fish like sea bass. Another listener suggests trimming off outer rough skin, slicing it into planks, sprinkle them with salt, pepper, olive oil , and grill them. Melissa like to steam or roast it then purees it, or cut it into wedges and eat it raw.

**Lettuce:** You can cook it! Make a hot bacon vinaigrette and it'll wilt the lettuce. Or take a little butter, a little chicken stock in a skillet pan, add lettuce and cook it until it wilts, about 2-3 minutes. Eat it topped with parmesan cheese.

**Fennel:** Is perfect for salads if you slice it really thin. Take the outer layer off, slice it with a

mandolin, top with sea salt, lemon juice, olive oil. You can also grill fennel--cut it into big chunks, still attached at the root.

## THE LEONARD LOPATE SHOW

---

[Leonard Lopate](#) hosts the conversation New Yorkers turn to each afternoon for insight into contemporary art, theater, and literature, plus expert tips about the ever-important lunchtime topic: food.

Produced by [WNYC](#).

Donate