

# Box 6 of 25



# August 15th 2008

**Rainbow Carrots**  
**Baby Dill**  
**Fennel**  
**Romaine Lettuce**  
**Garlic**

**In The Box**  
**Nectarines**

**Cucumber**  
**Red Potatoes**  
**Golden Beets**  
**Spinach**  
**Calendula**

## The Carrot Changes Hues Throughout History

The first carrot was plucked out of the ground early in our history. Fossils containing pollen from wild carrots have been identified as belonging to the family *Apiacea* and have been dated back to the Eocene period (55 to 34 million years ago). It was also found growing wild 5,000 years ago in Afghanistan, where it's cultivation began.

Carrots, originally grew in a variety of colors, with hues including white, pale yellow, purple, red and black. Temple drawings in Egypt depicted the carrot in hieroglyphs circa 2,000 B.C. as a purple root vegetable said to have healing powers.

In the 1500's the Dutch Royal Family adopted the orange carrot as a royal symbol for The House of Orange. Dutch agricultural scientists and growers used a mutant yellow carrot seed from North Africa to develop an orange carrot that was less bitter than the current varieties of the period. This is the standard color of the carrot that we find around the world today.

### Nash's Rainbow Carrots

In your box this week you will find a colorful bunch of carrots. These beauties are the result of ongoing trials to develop carrots with increased nutritional value, as well as a variety of flavors and textures. Scott Chichester says, "I prefer rainbow carrots cooked instead of raw. The flavors are more complex than our orange varieties and cooking them really brings that out."

The rainbow carrots at Nash's Organic Produce are the result of a partnership with *The Organic Seed Alliance* and *Seeds of Change*. Nash Huber explains, "these trials needed to be situated in a climate that provided consistent quality and growing conditions, and the Dungeness Valley had exactly that." The rainbow carrots are in their fourth year and will continue to be cultivated into their own unique variety by selecting the ones that have desired characteristics. The selected carrots are then grown for seed which will be used in following years. This ongoing cycle leads to improvements in flavor, nutrition, and color.

The nectarines in your box come from *Sunny Slope Ranch* in Yakima. Sunny Slope Ranch is owned by Jimmie Wellman and Rebecca Hunt, a husband & wife team. They grow a wide variety of certified organic fruit. To ripen your nectarines, place in a paper bag for a few days, then enjoy the mouth-watering taste of Yakima Valley stone fruit. Visit the farm at [www.sunnysloperanch.com](http://www.sunnysloperanch.com)

# Fennel and Dill, the Saga Continues

By Ankur

After centuries of misunderstandings, I am still bombarded with eager confusion between fennel and dill. So, let's take a few moments to set it straight. According to the British "Fennel Disambiguation Society", in a small pamphlet first published in 1861, fennel is a large perennial herb, indigenous to the Mediterranean and now found all over the world. Some cultivars of fennel -- like what you see in the box before you -- develop a large succulent bulb, while others are prized for their seed, licorice flavor and are often confused with anis. Both dill and fennel come from the *Umbelliferae* family, and share a scandalous tendency to hybridize given the opportunity. Dill, a small annual plant, was considered "a wretched smelly thing", fit only for spicing soups, pickles, and salads.

Remember, our information comes from a group of die-hard "fennel-heads". Now, on to the recipes. One kind reader asks, somewhat meekly, "Can I bake it? Is that okay?" The answer is a resounding YES. You can bake it, broil it, braise it, fry it, sauté it, steam it, and grate it. It's in the box for you to do Anything You Want.

## *Simple Grilled Fennel and Carrots*

Your oven is already on at 400. Since fennel's flavor is strong, especially as freshly harvested as yours is, it needs little combination on the plate. Lay the bulb flat on the counter with its long tresses hanging over the edge. Trim the greens where the tubes hit the bulb, and thinly slice through the crunchy white zone to the hard root center. Toss the slices with a teaspoon of olive oil and dashes of salt and pepper. Lay the dressed fennel on a baking tray and slide it into the left half (very important) of your pre-heated oven. Do not stack or crowd the fennel: they deserve our respect.

Return to your laboratory to wash and trim your carrots. They are small, sweet, and tender. (What you're about to do may not work as well with larger and slightly tougher table carrots, or even the bunches later into the fall). Take the whole carrots, washed and un-peeled, and toss in the same bowl where you had the fennel (fewer dishes, happier cooks, peaceful world) with a teaspoon of olive oil, and dashes of salt and pepper. Add a few drops of balsamic vinegar without telling a soul.

## *A Quick Dilly Salsa*

This is the essence of summer flavor. Cool cucumber, pungent garlic and the warm spice of dill. This salsa is easy and serves as a salad dressing, a side dish (mixed into plain yogurt), a dip (for roasted vegetables), or a mix for your potato salad.

Chop together with love and attention to the small details:

2 cloves of garlic  
1/2 bunch of dill  
Half your cucumber

The cucumber should be peeled if the skin is tough, and diced into small cubes. Mix everything with standard salt and pepper and a little bit of lemon juice. If you want to extend the sauce into a side dish, take your salsa and stir it into some yogurt, dusting with paprika as you finish

## **Eat the Flowers**

That's right, the calendula. Turn off the television, sit on the back porch looking up at the mountains, and pull the petals out, one by one. Toss them atop your already prepared salad of shredded spinach, torn lettuce, and grated golden beets. You peeled the beets before grating them, if I recall. If there are any of the sumptuous Sunny Slope nectarines left by the time dinner rolls around, you could slice one up, fry it in melted butter for a minute or two, and top the salad with that.

We **recycle Farm Share boxes** and clean grocery bags. Please drop off recyclables at our farmers' market locations or Nash's Farm Store.

Questions, Comments, Suggestions? [mateo@nashorganicproduce.com](mailto:mateo@nashorganicproduce.com) or (360) 681-NASH (6274)