

Reasons for the Seasons

Produce Tips for Placer County Consumers

Local Season-
Winter



PARSNIPS

Parsnips are a cold-weather root vegetable that resemble a top-heavy, ivory-colored carrot. In fact, the carrot and the parsnip are relatives. Parsnips have a mild celery-like fragrance and a sweet, nutty flavor.

Nutrition Benefits

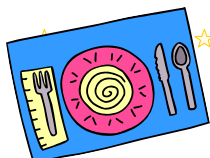
- ◆ The sweetest of all the root vegetables.
- ◆ Have more vitamin C than their cousin, the carrot.
- ◆ More vegetable protein than potatoes.

They are a good source of:

- ◆ Folic acid
- ◆ Potassium
- ◆ Fiber

Serving Tips

- ◆ This hardy veggie is easy to prepare and makes an excellent addition to soups and stews.
- ◆ To bring out their sweetness, accent parsnips with nutmeg, ginger, mace, or cinnamon.



Family Meal Ideas

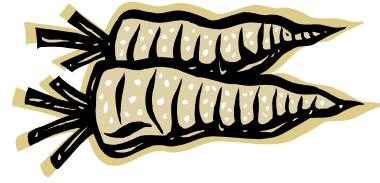
Children learn basic cooking skills and to appreciate a variety of tasty foods, when they are involved in mealtime preparation. So, get the kids involved in helping prepare a meal.

- Good kitchen helpers usually make good food tasters.
- Children learn best by doing, not watching.
- Let every eater have an opportunity to help plan a day's menu.
- Take turns rotating meal planning to satisfy everyone's taste buds.

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PARSNIPS



Locally Grown Varieties

All American, Hollow Crown, Gladiator, and Harris Model

Shopping Tips

- ✓ Parsnips range in color from pale yellow to off-white.
- ✓ They can grow up to 20 inches long; they are the most tender when about 8 inches.
- ✓ Very large parsnips tend to be over mature and have a tough woody core.
- ✓ The root should be firm and fairly smooth.
- ✓ An overabundance of hairlike rootlets is undesirable. Soft, withered parsnips are likely to be fibrous.
- ✓ Parsnips with moist spots should also be avoided.



Handling and Storage

- ◆ Like carrots, parsnips keep best in a perforated bag in the refrigerator crisper.
- ◆ They can last for up to three to four weeks.
- ◆ If the green tops, or parts of them, are attached, remove them before storing, or they'll draw moisture from the roots.

Preparation

Unlike carrots, parsnips are almost always eaten cooked, as they tend to be quite fibrous. Be careful not to overcook them. Their flavor is sweetest when just tender. Brief cooking also helps to preserve nutrients. Just before cooking, cut off the root and leaf ends; trim any major rootlets or knobs.

- ◆ **Baking:** Place whole or cut-up parsnips in a baking dish with a cover. Cooking time: 20 to 30 minutes in a 350 degree oven.
- ◆ **Boiling:** Drop whole or cut-up parsnips into a pan of boiling water and simmer until tender. Cooking time: 5 to 15 minutes.
- ◆ **Microwaving:** Cut parsnips into large chunks and place them in a microwavable dish with 2 table-spoons of liquid. Cover with a lid or vented plastic wrap. Cooking time: 4 to 6 minutes.
- ◆ **Steaming:** This method is by far the best way to cook parsnips, as it brings out their sweetness without them getting mushy. Place trimmed, well-scrubbed parsnips in a steamer and cook over boiling water. Cooking times: For whole parsnips, 20 to 30 minutes; for cut-up pieces, 5 to 15 minutes.

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PERFECT PARSNIP PATTIES

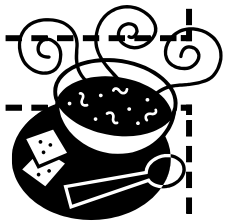
(4 SERVINGS)

INGREDIENTS:

4 medium parsnips	1 egg white, slightly beaten
1 egg yolk	1 cup soft whole wheat bread crumbs
Salt and pepper	Non-stick cooking spray

DIRECTIONS:

1. Coarsely chop parsnips and steam until tender. Mash thoroughly in a bowl.
2. Mix in egg yolk and salt and pepper to taste.
3. Form into patties.
4. Dip patties into egg white and coat with bread crumbs.
5. Spray non-stick cooking spray and cook until golden brown.
6. These can also be baked in a 375 degree oven until golden brown. Serve.



RADICAL ROOT SOUP

(4 SERVINGS - 1 CUP)

INGREDIENTS:

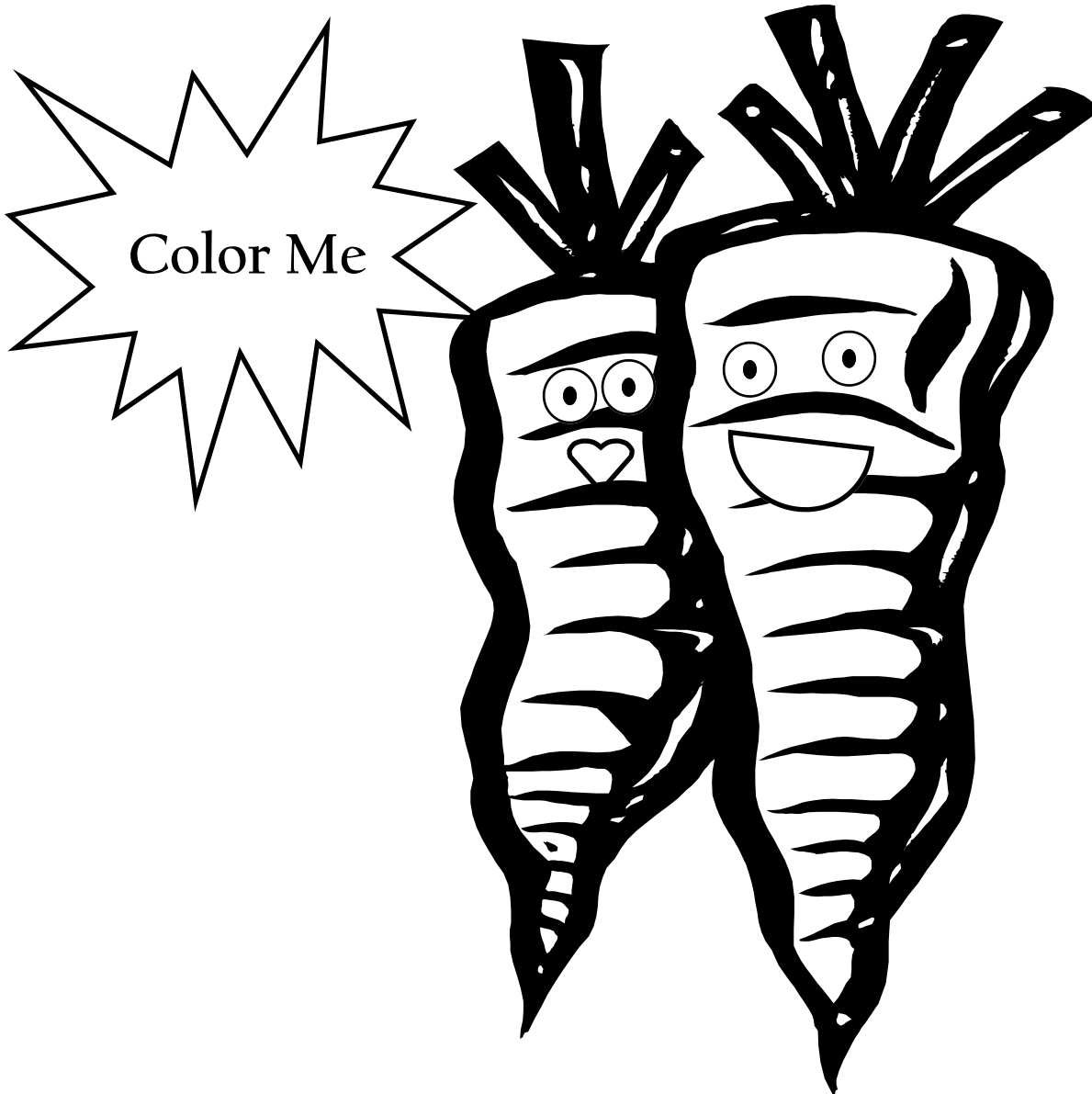
1 pound parsnips	Salt
3/4 pound potatoes	4 tablespoons butter, softened
1/2 pound carrots	Freshly ground pepper
1 onion	1/4 cup milk

DIRECTIONS:

1. Peel parsnips, potatoes, and carrots; cut into 1/2-inch cubes.
2. Cover vegetables with water in saucepan, add onion (peeled) and 1 teaspoon salt; bring to a boil.
3. Cover pan and cook slowly until vegetables are barely tender, about 10 minutes.
4. Drain, discard onion, then puree vegetables and milk with butter. Add salt and pepper to taste.
5. Serve immediately or reheat over simmering water for 20 minutes.

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