



Good Food News

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Give to your sweetie AND the planet:

SUPPORT ORGANIC AND FAIR TRADE

This Valentine's Day, millions of well-meaning people will once again be buying roses and chocolates for their loved ones--not realizing that their gifts are likely tainted by toxic pesticides, child slavery, and labor exploitation. Education about organic/fair trade chocolate and flowers could help consumers make simple, satisfying choices that benefit communities around the world.

Chocolate has a dark side. Over forty percent of the world's chocolate comes from Africa's Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), where the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the U.S. State Department report widespread instances of child slavery and labor exploitation. (Hundreds of thousands of kids--who never get to enjoy chocolate--are handling dangerous pesticides and clearing fields with machetes.)

The chemical aspect of conventional chocolate production affects us all. Sun-grown chocolate, like coffee, destroys the canopy of shade that controls pests and weeds naturally. Full-sun crops require constant, massive chemical blitzing. Workers are the first but not the only ones exposed to these pesticides and insecticides--many of which are banned in the U.S. yet "imported" back in the chocolate. Communities suffer from poisoned air and water. Sun-growing also destroys habitat for near-extinct birds, as well as a complex ecosystem that's crucial to clean air, pest control and indigenous medicines.

Plus, most of our chocolate-buying currently supports a system that underpays cocoa farmers. To survive, communities level rainforests to make cattle pasture, furthering the permanent loss of precious biodiversity.

But chocolates do make great Valentine's Day gifts--as long as they're organic and fair-trade! The above-described status quo is so tragic because it's easy to avoid the chemicals and the human rights violations--with virtually no extra effort.

There are over a dozen superb brands of organic and fair trade chocolate at your local stores today. Free of chemicals, organic chocolate is decadently delicious. It costs a bit more than cheap mainstream

brands (which, aside from pesticides and slave labor, are full of unhealthy corn syrup and additives). But organic chocolate doesn't cost more than many upscale (yet conventional) designer brands you find at gourmet shops and department stores. Why pay a premium for fancy confections with no conscience?

These are not frivolous concerns. Such products are big business at holiday times, and where you funnel your gift-buying bucks can make the difference between toxicity, cruelty and destruction--or sustainability and humanity. North American consumption has an enormous impact on society and the Earth. Only consumers can change these systems that profit by our ignorance at the expense of virtually everything and everyone.

We don't have to support these practices. We can vote with our dollars and avoid spreading poisons when the point is to spread love. Thanks to organic producers, we can have our treats shadow-free--without sacrificing a thing--while shunning polluters and the greed that denies workers fair wages and conditions. Your Valentine to a loved one can also be the gift of a decent future for all our children--and a decent existence for someone's children today.

Why NOT choose differently, when alternatives are readily available? Wouldn't an organic, fair-trade chocolate bar taste sweeter than a cruel and toxic one? Surely your sweetheart would agree.

---adapted from an article by Robyn Landis www.theecoshopper.com

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• **Due to an overwhelming response, this popular workshop is so**
• **full that we've had to close the waiting list! But never fear, it's**
• **only temporary - we will be offering it again! Look for a notice**
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Food Share



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working with communities to improve access to affordable and healthy food - from field to table



Recipes

Borscht

Adapted from Twelve Months of Monastery Soups

- 2 red beets
- 2 carrots
- 2 potatoes
- 2 leeks (or onions)
- 1/2 head of red cabbage
- 10 mushrooms
- 2 tomatoes
- 3 1/2 quarts water
- 4 Tbsp. Olive oil
- Salt & pepper to taste
- Heavy cream or sour cream (1 tablespoon per serving)
- Finely minced parsley

Wash and peel the beets, carrots, and potatoes then dice them into small cubes. Cut the leeks, cabbage mushrooms, onion, and tomatoes into small pieces. In a large soup pot, bring water to a boil, then add the oil and all the vegetables, cover and cook over low/medium heat for about 30 minutes (or until all the vegetables are tender). Add salt and pepper and stir, let soup sit covered for 15 minutes. Reheat the soup for a few minutes and serve hot adding one-tablespoon of heavy or sour cream (optional) and some minced parsley to the centre of each serving.

Awesome Beets – serves 4

- 4 beets
- 3 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 orange
- 1 1/2 teaspoon vinegar
- 3/4 tsp. grated ginger
- 1/4 cup pecan halves, broken in half lengthwise

Scrub the beets, and cover loosely with tin foil. Place on a baking sheet, and drizzle with 1 tbsp. olive oil. Bake in pre-heated 425 degree oven until tender, which should take about an hour. Then cool them in the fridge, peel, and quarter them. Using a zester, remove 1/4 of the rind, and set aside. Cut half the orange in segments, and then cut them crosswise. Place in a bowl and add the juice from the other half of the orange. Add vinegar and ginger and whisk in 2 tbsps. olive oil. You can add salt and pepper if you want. Add the beets to the vinegarette and orange segments. Add the zest and the pecans, using some of the pecans as a garnish....Place in the fridge for at least half an hour for the flavors to mingle..



Featured this week: **BEETS**

The wild beet, the ancestor of the beet with which we are familiar today, is thought to have originated in prehistoric times in North Africa and grew wild along Asian and European seashores. In these earlier times, people exclusively ate the beet greens and not the roots. The ancient Romans were one of the first civilizations to cultivate beets to use their roots as food. The tribes that invaded Rome were responsible for spreading beets throughout northern Europe where they were first used for animal fodder and later for human consumption becoming more popular in the 16th century.

How to:

Don't peel beets until after cooking. When bruised or pierced, beets bleed, losing some of their vibrant color and turning a duller brownish red. To minimize bleeding, wash beets gently under cool running water, taking care not to tear the skin--this tough outer layer helps keep most of beets' pigments inside the vegetable. To prevent bleeding when boiling beets, leave them whole with their root ends and one inch of stem attached.

Beets' color can be modified during cooking. Adding an acidic ingredient such as lemon juice or vinegar will brighten the color while an alkaline substance such as baking soda will often cause them to turn a deeper purple. Salt will blunt beets' color, so add only at the end of cooking if needed.

Beets by any other name:

- beta vulgaris - Latin
- remolochas - Spanish
- betteraves - French
- barbabietole - Italian
- beterrabas - Portuguese
- rote Rüben - German
- choghandar (raw beets) - Iranian
- labou (cooked beets) - Iranian

Deliveries

For the week of **February 21**
 Coordinators orders are due by 5pm on
Tuesday February 14

For the week of **February 28**
 Coordinators orders are due by 5pm on
Tuesday February 21



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