

Choi

Choi (also spelled choy) has been cultivated in China for centuries and is now commonly found in markets in the United States. Choi is practically two vegetables in one: the leaves can be cooked and eaten like spinach, while the crisp stems—sweet and mild in flavor—can be used like celery or asparagus.

STORAGE

Refrigerate unwashed choy in a plastic container or loosely wrapped in a plastic bag. Choy keeps for over a week but is firmest and tastiest if used within a few days.

HANDLING

Just before using, rinse choy under cold running water and gently shake it dry. Cut the stems into 1-inch pieces and slice, shred, or tear the leaves. If you will be eating the stems raw, slice or julienne them.

Choi with Gingery Butter

This sauce has characteristically Asian-inspired flavors, but this recipe uses butter instead of oil for added richness. Don't be fooled by how simple this is; it is an interesting and wonderfully flavorful side dish. *Angelic Organics Kitchen* (adapted from *Judy Gorman's Vegetable Cookbook*).

Serves 4 to 6

2 medium choy (any kind),
sliced crosswise into 1-inch strips
6 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons soy sauce or tamari
1 tablespoon grated or finely chopped
fresh ginger
1 clove garlic, minced or pressed
(about 1/2 teaspoon)
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh
cilantro
salt
freshly ground black pepper

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the choy; cook until the choy is tender but still crisp, 2 to 3 minutes. Drain the choy in a colander and immediately run under cold water. Drain well.

2. Melt the butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the soy sauce, ginger, garlic, and choy; cook, stirring constantly, until the choy is well coated and heated through.

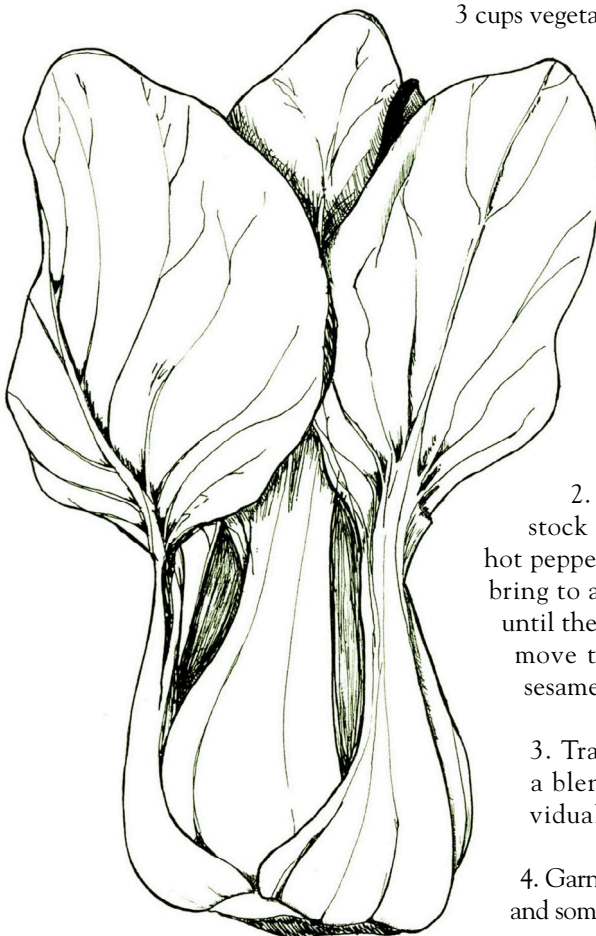
3. Remove the skillet from heat. Stir in the cilantro. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.

Creamy Choi Soup

This recipe takes the flavors of a Japanese clear vegetable soup and gives them a spin . . . in the blender . . . with a potato and a touch of sour cream. The soup ends up thick and slightly creamy—and, incidentally, a lovely shade of jade green. *Friend of the Farm*.

Serves 4

1 tablespoon peanut oil
1/2 cup chopped scallions (about 3 scallions), divided
3 cloves garlic, minced (about 1 1/2 teaspoons)
2 teaspoons coarsely chopped fresh ginger
1 pound choy (any kind), chopped
1 large potato, peeled, diced
3 cups vegetable stock or water
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground
black pepper
hot pepper flakes, to taste
1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
2 tablespoons sour cream



1. Heat the peanut oil in a medium pot over medium-high heat. Set aside a couple tablespoons of scallions for a garnish. Add the remaining scallions, garlic, and ginger to the pot. Cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute.

2. Add the choy and potato. Pour in the stock or water and add the salt, pepper, and hot pepper flakes to taste. Increase the heat and bring to a boil; cover, reduce heat, and simmer until the potato is tender, about 20 minutes. Remove the pot from heat. Stir in the toasted sesame oil.

3. Transfer the soup to a food processor or a blender and purée. Ladle soup into individual bowls.

4. Garnish each bowl with a dollop of sour cream and some chopped scallion. Serve immediately.

The Crop

Choi is a cool-weather crop that grows especially well in spring and fall. It is a kohl crop—related to cabbage, cauliflower, and broccoli—but it doesn't grow in tight heads. It looks more like white-stemmed chard. While chard is often harvested one leaf at a time, choy plants are cut just above the roots so all the leaves remain attached at the base.

Excerpted from *Farmer John's Cookbook: The Real Dirt On Vegetables: Seasonal Recipes and Stories from a Community Supported Farm* by Farmer John Peterson & Angelic Organics (Gibbs Smith Publisher). Check with your local farm or bookstore for availability. Additional recipes, charts, individual copies of this book, and quantity discounts available at www.AngelicOrganics.com/cookbook.

