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How to get your kids to say "More turnips please"!

Posted by What's Cooking team, September 29th, 2011

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In Canada our climate often makes it difficult to eat fresh and local produce all year long. Once harvest time is over in the fall, we start the count down until we won't have any fresh garden vegetables left. Some veggies have a longer shelf life than others. Winter squashes, for example, can last several weeks, and root vegetables are also known for their endurance. That's why turnips are a great alternative when you are looking to add a new side dish to your repertoire.

The bitter flavour of the turnip is sometimes a difficult one to overcome, especially for the younger taste buds. Here a few suggestions for taking turnip and turning it into a dish that your whole family will enjoy:

Soup or stew: This is the easy route; just peel and slice your turnip in to 1/2 inch cubes and add them to any beef or chicken stew recipe, or any broth based soup. Their flavour will mix nicely with the flavours of other ingredients, and the kids won't even notice they are there.

Mashed: For many, turnip mash is a standard side dish at Thanksgiving. Probably because back in the day turnips were stored for months down in the root cellar, so still accessible in October. Grandma's recipe was straight turnips boiled in water and mashed... so bitter! But a modern spin on it calls for 9 chopped turnips, 1/4 cup of diced onion, and then once these are boiled until tender, drain and mash in a brick of cream cheese, a 1/3 cup of milk and a little salt, butter and paprika to your taste. It's yummy enough that the kids actually ask "more turnips please"!

Roasted: Another way to make turnips is to cut them into wedges (like fries) and coat them with a little olive oil, and spices of your choices (eg. herbs de Provence), do the same with other root vegetables, like potatoes and carrots, even rutabagas, then lay them on a baking sheet and bake in the oven them until golden.

Do you have a favourite way to cook turnips? Let us know!

The research team

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