

Hoquiam Farmers Market News - Potato Salad Edition

Local News

Posted by: Anonymous

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Seasonal fresh produce is now on the Market tables. Abel Rios is making weekly trips to Yakima to bring us Asparagus, Snow Peas, & green Walla Walla onions. Judy has Kale from her garden now, and Rhubarb will be available soon.

We do not import out of state or out of country produce- as soon as good local produce is ready, we'll have it at the Farmers market!

Pacific Northwesterners know how to make the most of the summer season! Probably because we know how brief the season can be. Yes, there have been summers of too much drizzle, not enough sunshine. We could have coined the ancient phrase 'Seize the Day!', for those rare, sparkling days are more precious to us than jewels.

I was blessed to have a childhood filled with days of promise and play. Adulthood brought responsibilities, duties, schedules to be kept. Even the vacation days lacked the carefree aura that I only half remembered. Until one summer morning 20 years ago. A life changing morning. For once I had not set the alarm clock. I remember laying in bed listening to the birds chirping. Without opening my eyes, I breathed in the distinctive scent of early summer and was suddenly and completely transported back to childhood. There was that old thrill of what the day might bring, a sense of peace and belonging, the certain knowledge of happy adventures ahead. I tried my best to absorb this moment and made a vow to never again forget how summer should feel. I still slip into adult mode all too often, but I remember how to go back.

If you need a lesson in time travel back to childhood, buy yourself a Hammock. It isn't usually difficult to find 2 trees to stretch the hammock between, but for the treeless, you can buy a hammock stand. Do not be fooled into thinking that you must have a hot summer day in order to indulge in hammock time. Just find a comfy blanket and make a nest for yourself. Choose a book to read that does not require much of you. I have a special selection of favorites for my hammock time; the Harry Potter books, C.S. Lewis, Agatha Christie, Jane Austen, Anne of Green Gables, to name a few.

I have already made known my predilection for picnicking, which is an activity that blends well with hammock time. By the way, the Hoquiam Farmers Market has sturdy old-fashioned picnic tables made from hand-milled local trees. A fellow named Wes from Matlock brings them to us, and they have passed my extremely high standards for being picnic worthy.

A summer picnic menu is not complete without Potato Salad.

I realize that everyone has an idea of the perfect Potato Salad. I am a super-snob of potato salads, and make no apology for my prejudice. I read the food magazine recipes and scoff at their efforts to tweak perfection. Putting some foreign ingredient, like tarragon, into a potato salad is wrong. There, I've said it. Choose a great recipe and stay with it. Your family will love you and your reputation as a good cook will be secure. Another secret to great potato salad? Do not serve it chilled. Oh, the difference in taste and texture between a slightly warm or room temperature potato salad and a chilled P. Salad is the difference between night and day!!!

Since you asked, I will divulge my mother's Potato salad recipe! Truly, it is the very best!

Start with; Four to six large russet potatoes. Scrub well and place in a pot of hot water. Bring to a boil and let simmer for about 15-20 minutes. They are ready when a fork goes in without too much resistance. Do not overcook the potatoes. If they are overcooked, throw them into the compost and start over!

Plunge the cooked potatoes into a cold water bath. Drain, and use a paper towel to scrub away the loose skin.

Slice the warm potatoes into a large bowl. Do not let them cool too much, even though they will be hot to handle.

Here is the secret ingredient;

Toss one third cup of apple cider vinegar into the warm potatoes. Now you may let them cool.

Meanwhile, cook the eggs. You will want at least 8, because they add such a creamy goodness. If using fresh Farmers Market eggs, I have been advised to try two new methods of boiling so that they will peel easily. First- place the eggs into already boiling water. Second- use a tsp. of vinegar in the water. If neither method works, don't worry, they don't need to look pretty in the salad.

Add the chopped eggs to the potatoes and toss with a teaspoon of salt. Add;

one and one half cups of chopped celery

one large sweet onion

one cup (maybe more) of Best Foods mayonnaise, no substitute unless you are making your own mayonnaise!

Serve immediately. If you must make it ahead and chill it, then warm it in a microwave or bring to room temperature before serving.

After eating, go back to the hammock for another nap. You deserve it!

Barbara Bennett Parsons, manager of the Hoquiam Farmers Market

1958 Riverside, where Deidra's Deli serves a very fine Potato Salad.

Give us a call, we're never shy about sharing opinions or advice. 538-9747