



Greetings from Plant It Forward!

Roy N. has been a farmer all his life, having been taught by his mother beginning at the age of five. He grew up in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in the capital city Kinshasa. Roy's father is from Angola and his mother is from DRC. Roy has four brothers and two sisters. His sisters and two brothers live in DRC, one brother lives in Houston, and one brother is deceased.

When Roy was 28 he went to Angola to visit with his brothers. He was there for about 10 months when war broke out in the DRC and he could not return home. He was resettled as a refugee in Moscow, Russia and lived there for 10 years. He was not happy there and tried to get a visa for France, Belgium or Portugal but it was not possible. He settled in, learned Russian and worked various jobs for construction and electrical companies. He missed farming, but with a 3 month growing season in Russia it was not a viable profession. After a while, he started a business buying Russian clothes and sending them to France and Belgium to be sold.

Eight years ago he was granted asylum in the United States where he has gratefully settled in, learned English and met his wife, Charlotte. She has 2 children from a previous marriage and they have one child together, Jasmine. Roy worked various jobs in Houston until he found Plant It Forward and could finally return to farming. Jasmine loves to be on the farm with her father. She is seven years old and wants to play soccer and become a doctor one day.

Roy is the first Plant It Forward graduate to move onto his own farm at the University of St. Thomas. The first growing season at the St. Thomas Farm was challenging for him with rabbits and squirrels enjoying the delicious produce he was growing. He also had a back injury which slowed him down and prevented him from lifting more than 20 lbs. With physical therapy and support from the other farmers, the St. Thomas farm kept going. Roy returned to work full time a couple of months ago and the farm is looking spectacular!

For the future, Roy wants to continue learning. As part of his training at Plant It Forward, he attended a Beginning Excel class. He would also like to learn more about computers and of course more about farming in Houston. Before taking any classes, though, he wants to return to ESL classes at the beginning of the year to improve his pronunciation.

This week's Farm Share **may** include the following: kale, collards, lettuce mix, bok choy, carrots, radishes, Swiss chard, or southern giant mustard greens. Please keep in mind that this is only a projection and could change throughout the week as conditions change on our farms.

Enjoy!

Kassy Rodriguez, Community Supported Agriculture Manager



Roy at the Fondren Farm Friday harvest.



Roy with his brother at the City Hall farmers Market.



Roy's farm at the University of St. Thomas/Montrose.



Roy sharing information about PIE.

Recipes

Try out the recipes below or find more using our recipe finder: <http://plant-it-forward.org/farm-kitchen/favorite-recipes/>

Kale Chopped Salad with Maple-Almond Vinaigrette

For the Maple-Almond Vinaigrette:

- 2 Tablespoons creamy almond butter (or tahini)
- 2 Tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tablespoon real maple syrup
- 1 Tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

Whisk together almond butter (or tahini,) balsamic vinegar, maple syrup, and olive oil in a small bowl. Microwave for 15-20 seconds to help get almond butter smooth, if necessary. Set aside in the refrigerator.

For the salad:

- 2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 large shallots, thinly sliced
- salt
- 2 cups Brussels sprouts
- 4 cups kale, ribs removed and finely chopped (about 1 bunch)
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds
- 1/4 cup fresh grated parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries or 1/2 chopped fresh apple
- 4 strips bacon, cooked and crumbled

Heat olive oil in a medium-sized skillet over medium-high heat (6 out of 10.) Add half the shallots then fry until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Remove to a paper towel-lined plate to drain then repeat with remaining shallots. Sprinkle with salt then set aside.

Trim ends off Brussels sprouts then remove outer leaves. Shave sprouts very thinly on a mandolin or slice very thinly with a knife, starting at the green end and stopping just before reaching the white, hard end. The thinner the better. Toss to separate shreds then remove any big pieces of tough white core.

Combine shaved sprouts in a large bowl with kale, almonds, parmesan cheese, dried cranberries (or apples,) crumbled bacon, and fried shallots then toss with Maple-Almond Vinaigrette and serve.

<http://iowagirleats.com/2013/07/10/kale-chopped-salad-with-maple-almond-vinaigrette/>

Chard in Savory Provençal Sauce

This recipe is from Elizabeth Schneider's [Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini](#).

1 bunch Swiss chard
¾ cup vegetable broth
1 tbsp Ricard, Pernod, or other pastis*
1/8 tsp kosher salt (omit if broth is salted)
¼ tsp dried thyme
1/8 tsp fennel seeds
1 tbsp olive oil
2 garlic cloves
2 oil-packed anchovy fillets
½ tbsp. capers
Pepper

Preparing the chard:

Cut the stems off the leaves. Cut the stems diagonally into 1.5 in slices. In a sauté pan, combine the broth, Ricard, salt, thyme, fennel, and olive oil. Add 1 sliced garlic clove and bring to boil. Add the stems, cover and simmer for 10 min.

Stack the leaves and cut into ½ in strips. Raise heat to medium and spread leaves over stems. Cover and steam until tender, about 5-10min.

In a mortar, crush 1 garlic clove with anchovies and capers. Scoop a little liquid from the pan and add to the mixture, blend well, then add mixture back to the pan and simmer to blend. Add pepper to taste.

Serve hot or at room temperature. *If you do not have Ricard, Pernod, or other Pastis you can use 18 cup dry vermouth and double the amount of fennel seeds.

Five-Minute Collard Greens

1 pound collard greens, chopped
1 medium clove garlic, pressed or chopped
½ red onion, sliced

Mediterranean Dressing

1 tsp. lemon juice
1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
sea salt and black pepper to taste
1 ½ Tbsp. sunflower seeds
Whisk together in small bowl to combine. Set aside.

Optional Ingredients: sliced kalamata olives, pumpkin seeds, a few drops of soy sauce, cayenne pepper

Fill bottom of steamer with 2 inches of water. While steam is building up, slice collard greens leaves into 1/2-inch slices and cut again crosswise. Cut stems into 1/4-inch slices. Add collards, chopped garlic and red onion to steamer and steam for no more than 5 minutes.

Transfer to a bowl. For more flavor, toss collard greens with the dressing and any of the optional ingredients you desire while they are still hot.

<http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=recipe&dbid=323>