



A monthly publication for members of the Olympia Food Co-op and its surrounding communities

May 2019

## May

### *Spring Greens & Pesto Varieties*

A few days ago I was in the produce aisle, and a shopper was telling me about receiving her weekly CSA share (that stands for community supported agriculture, and is a box of fresh produce from a farm). She shared that the early spring boxes always have a lot of greens, and that it can be hard to eat that many. As you probably know from my previous newsletters, greens are my absolute favorite vegetables, but there are times in the spring (especially if you get a CSA share or have a garden) where there really are A LOT of greens to eat. I started thinking about the best ways to use a lot of greens at once, and of course pesto came to mind. Many people have only had pesto made with basil and walnuts, but you can make pesto with most types of greens and many nuts or seeds. Pesto is great the traditional way on pasta, but it is also a fantastic condiment to put on a bowl of rice, beans, and veggies, on sandwiches or in wraps, on your favorite protein, or as a base for a pizza. So this newsletter is dedicated to spring greens and the delicious variety of pestos you can make with them. Pesto freezes well, so if you make a batch that's too big to eat at once, pop some in the freezer to use later as a quick flavor enhancer for meals.

*Erin, Olympia Food Co-op  
Produce Manager ■*



### Springtime Pesto

*Reprinted by permission from  
StrongerTogether.coop*

#### Ingredients

- 4 cups lightly packed arugula
- 1/2 cup lightly packed fresh parsley leaves
- 1 clove garlic
- 1/3 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup frozen peas, thawed
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 pound whole wheat penne pasta

#### Preparation

1. Process the arugula, parsley, garlic, Parmesan and peas in a food processor until they form a smooth paste, stopping to scrape down the sides of the bowl twice. Add the lemon juice, salt and olive oil and process, scraping down

as needed, to make a smooth, creamy pesto. Place the pesto in a bowl, and stir in the lemon zest.

2. Cook the pasta according to package directions; drain and toss with the pesto. Serve with additional Parmesan cheese, and freshly-ground black pepper to taste.

#### Serving Suggestion

Spread this light, fresh pesto on a prepared pizza crust and top with goat cheese before baking or broiling, and cut in small triangles for a seasonal appetizer. Add halved cherry tomatoes and snips of fresh herbs or garlic scapes if you like.

#### Nutritional Information

340 calories, 10 g. fat, 5 mg. cholesterol, 290 mg. sodium, 290 g. carbohydrate, 9 g. fiber, 13 g. protein ■

## How to Make Spring Pesto: A Guide from Bon Appetit

*From bonappetit.com*

There's nothing quite like a good pesto: Fresh, vibrant, green, with just enough richness (thanks, cheese and nuts!) to keep things from feeling austere. We slather it on bread, sauce our pasta with it, and use it as a dip for veggies.

There aren't many rules to making pesto, but they are important ones. First, the greens should be fresh and rinsed clean—nobody likes a sandy sauce. Using perky, not-wilted greens ensure that your pesto will be smooth, not gummy. As for what greens to use, the sky's really the limit. If you can eat it in a salad, you can pesto it. Okay, well, except for actual lettuce. That's a little too delicate to purée; stick with sturdier greens, like peppery watercress. Let the season's bounty be your guide. The flavors of spring are delicate (tender fresh herbs, like parsley and tarragon); grassy, like spinach; and funky-oniony, like garlicky ramps and chives. Tempering the more intense alliums with another green can help stretch the batch and make it more palatable. Chives and parsley go together particularly well.

Spring's most compostable ingredients are also pesto-perfect: Well-rinsed carrot tops and radish tops cut down on waste and blend together well. Don't forget about peas, which are particularly good this time of year. Lastly, lemony sorrel is a great pick for sauce. It's astringent and juicy, and can stand up to stronger ingredients, like red chile flakes and mint.

To keep the color of the sauce bright, you can blanch and shock the hardier greens, like chard and ramp tops. The quick boil will take the edge off, and the subsequent dunk in ice water will stop the cooking process and keep things verdant. Second, pesto begs for something fatty to round out the greens. Traditional basil pesto calls for pine nuts and shredded Parm, but feel free to mix it up. Walnuts, almonds, and sunflower seeds are all great options. Our carrot top pesto recipe even uses macadamia nuts. Just be sure to dry-toast them in a skillet or in an oven, and wait for them to cool completely before pulverizing in the food processor. You can choose any cheese you'd like, but we're big fans of harder, aged cheeses that impart a salty, funky note. Coarsely grate the cheese, and add it to the pesto once it's almost done processing, so it doesn't get too obliterated by the machine's blades. Don't forget the salt and pepper. ■



## Freeze Pesto So You Can Take Out Just What You Need

*By Sheela Prkash from thekitchn.com*

The problem with the ice cube tray method is that your frozen pesto cubes are all exactly the same size. Sure, maybe that's not an issue when you're making a big pot of pasta and you just grab a handful of cubes. But what if you only need half a cube to defrost and slather on your sandwich? Or what if you just want a little to dollop on your soup? As a household of two, I come across plenty of occasions when a whole cube of pesto is too much.

So instead I grab a small baking sheet (like a quarter sheet pan or even the tray in my toaster oven) and line it with wax or parchment paper. I dump the freshly made pesto out onto it and spread it evenly to be about 1/4-inch thick. Then I gently press another piece of wax or parchment paper onto the spread pesto and stick it in the freezer for a few hours to firm up. Once frozen, I place the pesto sheet in a small zip-top freezer bag, label it, place it in the freezer. When I need pesto, I pull out the bag and break off as much or as little I need. Plus, the pesto defrosts extra fast since it's a thin sheet instead of a dense cube. ■

## Mixed Greens Pesto

*From Sacramento Natural Foods Co-op • sac.coop*

- 3 cups greens, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup fresh herbs
- 2 T toasted nuts or seeds
- 1 large garlic cloves
- 2 T Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

Put all of the greens and herbs into a blender or food processor. Pulse until the leaves are well chopped, but not puréed. Add the garlic, Parmesan, salt and half of the olive oil and pulse until combined. Taste, and add more salt and olive oil if desired. If not using immediately, put into a jar and pour a thin layer of olive oil on the top. ■