

Winter Gardening Newsletter

by Linda Gilkeson

March 23, 2009

Dig Your Carrots

This weekend, as I urged a friend to dig her remaining carrots while they are still sweet and crisp, she suggested it would be a good topic for a note...so here it is:

If you still have carrots, beets and other roots in your garden, it is a good idea to dig the remain roots by early April or as soon as it looks like there is going to be a spell of warm weather. Once it warms, the roots start to grow again in the spring. They lose their flavour and if left too long, they sprout fine roots along the main root and become woody as the flower stalk develops. If you dig them before this happens, they will keep in the refrigerator at least a month or two.

If you have used up your root crops by now, time to make a note on your garden plan to plant more this year.

Now that we have better idea of what has survived the winter, I think most people are finding that their root crops were undamaged, the kale and other hardiest greens are doing fine by now and there are signs of life among the chard, spinach, lettuce and radicchio. I think it is still too early to consign any plants to the compost pile so give the roots of apparently dead plant some more time to send up new leaves--even the most blackened and wilted may regenerate a good spring crop of greens from roots.

I lost about half of my purple sprouting broccoli and winter cauliflower plants to breakage from heavy snow--which, was miraculous considering how many storms of deep, heavy wet snow we had. I am watching the first forming heads of cauliflower and broccoli right now with great anticipation and I hope you are too.

Check out my web site: www.lindagilkeson.ca

You can read all of my previous messages on the Salt Spring Energy Strategy website:
www.saltspringenergystrategy.org