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One of our youngest subscribers: This is Gloria of Overijse munching on some Swiss chard straight from the box. Thanks to mum Anne for the photo.



What's new

Welcome to all our new subscribers. We have doubled our subscription base in the past 6 months, so thanks to everybody for helping us to keep growing at such a rate. We rely purely on word of mouth, so it is very gratifying that over our first 18 months we have managed to come so far.

We continue to think of new ideas for the business, and this

newsletter contains again some of our new initiatives.

The new ideas include an extension to our recycling services, to include batteries, Brita water filters and light bulbs. These are free services to our customers. Just put the old items in your returned boxes and we'll make sure they are disposed of, or recycled correctly.

We thought that our boxes needed a bit of colour, so this Easter we have started a competition for decorating our boxes. We have stuck a picture on each box, and invite the kids to colour them in. The best will receive prizes, and our favourite will become the reason2.be homepage for a month!

Thanks Ben [contact me](#)

Eco-cheques

We are happy to start accepting Eco-cheques from now. We have confirmation from Accor and Sodexo that we can accept them for payment. If you have never heard of eco-cheques, here is a quick summary of what it's all about:

- **What are Eco-cheques**

Similar to the lunch vouchers/tickets restaurant, they are vouchers of a nominal value that allow people to buy ecological products and services. Each voucher has a value of maximum of 10 euro.

- **Who receives the cheques**

From 2010, employers can opt to give up to 250 Euros of cheques per year to each employee.

- **What are the benefits of eco-cheques**

For the environment; Only approved ecological goods and services can be purchased.

For employers; they are exempt from social security costs and tax, so provide a fiscal advantage.

For employees; they are exempt from tax, so are financially beneficial when considered as a net payment.

For Belgium, they stimulate the economy because they must be spent within a certain time period

- **How can you use them to pay for your reason2.be organic boxes**

Normally organic food & drink cannot be bought with eco-cheques. However, as we operate a sustainable business with waste management initiatives and work with ecological partners (e.g. Eco dry-cleaning) we are allowed to accept the cheques as payment. You can pay with them by leaving them in an envelope (with your name on) inside your empty returned box. We'll add them to your subscription account.



Our new box design



Box decorating this Easter

Instead of decorating eggs this Easter, why not decorate one of our cardboard boxes.

We've been sticking our cartoon pictures on the boxes, and invite all the kids to colour the pictures as they wish.

The best ones will receive

prizes after Easter, and **the best picture will become the reason2.be homepage for a month !**

Make sure the name of the colourer and age is written on the paper, and we'll judge the best pictures next



Our growing list of items to collect

Our free collections

For Charities

- Corks
- Printer cartridges
- Plastic bottle caps
- Reading glasses

For Recycling

- Batteries
- Brita water filters
- Light bulbs
- Glass (for sustainable club members)

For Reusing

- English books
- Toys and games

New recycling initiative Give something back



Our recycling initiatives are proving very popular, so we've decided to extend what we recycle. We already take for free plastic bottle caps, corks, printer cartridges and reading glasses for charities.

For recycling we also take used glass for customers that pay a small premium. We are now starting with the recycling of

britta filters, batteries and light bulbs. We will make sure they are disposed of correctly at the local decheterie.

Please remember, we have a few rules regarding the recycling:

Please no broken glass. This is because we reuse our cardboard boxes.

If we collect your glass, please rinse and dry the bottles and jars. Also please remove and dispose of the tops yourselves.

Please make sure the boxes can close properly with the glass inside. Otherwise we have problems to put them in the vans

Please only return "real" corks

Ben & Val with their trees



Tree planting with Sunbeams

We attended a tree planting event last month organised by [Sunbeams](http://www.sunbeams.eu).

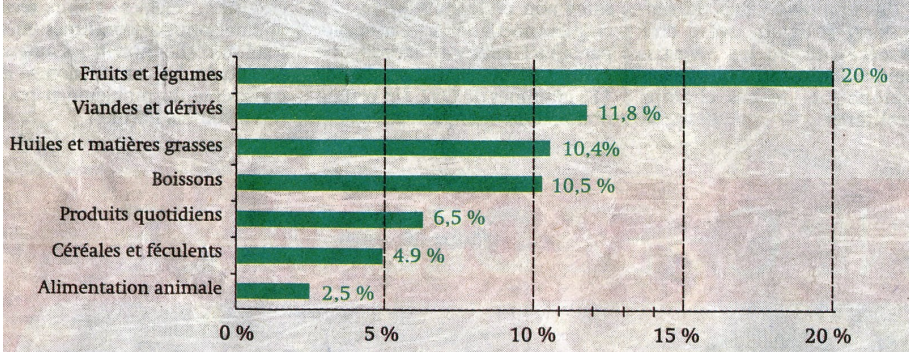
It was a complete success with a whole field being planted with 2200 trees in one day. The planting was all done by

volunteers, with many international schools attending. We sold Belgian organic apples and pears at the event, and were please to meet several reason2.be subscribers on the day itself.



If you would like to know more about Sunbeams and the work they do in Belgium, please go to there website at www.sunbeams.eu. They send out monthly newsletters with great tips for living ecologically

La consommation de produits biologiques dans l'UE



Bio on the rise in EU

According to latest statistics by bioforum,be, 20% of all organic produce sold in the EU is fruit and vegetables. This is followed by meat at 11.8%.

The sector has seen a 25% rise in sales since 2008, with 36,000 hectares in Belgium being used for production of organic fruit and vegetables

Reason2.be seasonal: Spring

Leeks



Leeks (*Poireau* in French and *Prei* in Flemish)

Leeks are related to garlic and onions, but have much subtler, and sweeter flavour. Leeks are grown widely across Europe and Asia and it dates back to Ancient times. They are available throughout the year, but are best in the spring.

Why?

Leeks are a good source of vitamin C, iron and fibre. They have similar health benefits as garlic which is good for the blood and heart function.

Make:

Leeks are a very versatile vegetable. They can be simply pan-fried with oil and butter, or included in a stir-fry with other vegetables. They can also be baked, roasted, braised or just eaten raw in a salad.

Spinach



Spinach (*Epinard* in French and *Spinazje* in Flemish)

Spinach is thought to have been first grown in Southwest Asia. It is a flowering plant belonging to the family *Amaranthaceae*

Why? Spinach is well known for its nutritional qualities.

Vitamins A and C are present in significant amounts, as are several antioxidants and folic acid.

Make: Wash the leaves and cook in a pan with just the water that clings to the leaves. Fold the cooked spinach over the top leaves. It's done when the leaves are wilted completely. Spinach is also popular sautéed with oil and garlic.

Rhubarb



Rhubarb (*Rhubarbe* in French and *Rabarber* in Flemish)

Rhubarb is actually a vegetable although is treated as a fruit. Only the stems are used as the leaves are actually toxic. Store it in the fridge and seal it in bag to keep it for a couple of weeks.

Why? Varieties of rhubarb have a long history of medicinal plants in Chinese medicine. It contains potassium, dietary fibre, calcium and vitamin C.

Make: Rhubarb is too tart to be eaten raw, so should be cooked with plenty of sugar. It goes well with both ginger and strawberries. Many people stew rhubarb (8-10 mins) or roast it. It is often used in crumbles, and jam.

Spring onions



Spring onions (*Ciboule* French and *bosuitje* in Flemish)

Spring onions have been grown for over 2,000, and are ever present in Chinese and Japanese cooking. Spring onions are simply white onions that have been harvested at a young age. They are available throughout the year, but are at their most tender in the spring.

Why? Spring onions are a source of vitamins B and C. They also contain an antioxidant (flavonoids) that is thought to protect against cancer and heart disease.

Make: After washing and trimming off the green tops, the bulbs can be sliced and used in salads. The green tops can also be used by cutting into small strips. They have similar flavor to onions but milder

Kohlrabi



Kohlrabi (*Chou rave* in French and *koolrabi* in Flemish)

Kohlrabi is a brassica and are of a similar taste and texture to a broccoli stem or cabbage heart. The name originates from German; kohl (cabbage) and rabi/rube (turnip). It is a popular vegetable in Northern Europe

Why? An excellent source of vitamin C, magnesium and phosphorus, which are useful in the absorption of calcium.

Make: They can be eaten raw as well as cooked. Chop it into chunks and boil for up to 10 minutes until it is soft. It can be added to soups and stews to give a thicker texture.

Cucumber (*concombre* in French and *stoofkomkommer* in Flemish)

Cucumber is from the same family as squash. It is a creeping vine that roots up from the ground. The fruit contains 90% water and are normally eaten raw or pickled.

Why?

The flesh of cucumbers contains ascorbic acid (vitamin C) and caffeic acid, both of which help soothe skin irritations and reduce swelling. The skin is rich in fibre and beneficial minerals.

Make:

Organic cucumbers do not need to be peeled, as they are unwaxed. They can be sliced, diced or cut into sticks. While the seeds are edible, some people prefer to scoop them out.

Cucumber



3 Seasonal recipes

Stuffed kohlrabi

Ingredients:

2 medium kohlrabi
Salt and white pepper
1 day old bread roll
1 onion
350g minced beef
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1 tablespoon chopped parsley
1 egg
75g rindless rashers bacon

Directions:

Peel the kohlrabi
Wash and chop the leaves and leave to one side.
Boil the kohlrabi in salted water for 20 minutes, then drain reserving about 6 tablespoons of the cooking water. Leave them to cool,
Cut a lid for each kohlrabi and spoon out the insides. Dice the insides
Soften the roll in cold water. Finely chop the onion. Squeeze

excess moisture from the roll.

Mix the minced meat with the chopped kohlrabi, the onion and the roll and season with salt, pepper and paprika. Work in the chopped kohlrabi leaves, the parsley and the egg.

Arrange the kohlrabi in a buttered ovenproof dish, fill each one with the minced meat mixture and cover with the individual lids. Top each kohlrabi with the bacon.

Pour the reserved stock into the dish and bake for 25 mins.

Stuffed kohlrabi



Champagne grilled leeks

Ingredients:

3 medium leeks
1 cup of champagne
1 cup of fresh thyme
1 cup of crumbled feta cheese
1 cup of chicken stock
2 tablespoons of olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Trim the tops and bottoms of the leeks, leaving about 2 inches of green above the

white part of the leek.
From the center of the trimmed leek, make several lengthwise slices toward the green of the leek. Rinse leeks thoroughly.
In large sauté pan, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Once the oil is hot, add the thyme and stir for 1 minute. Add the leeks and sauté for 3 minutes, until lightly golden on several sides.

Add the Champagne and chicken stock, then simmer for about 8 minutes or until the leeks until tender. Remove the leeks from the pan and set aside.

Continue to simmer the sauce remaining in pan until reduced by half.

Grill the leeks over a medium-hot charcoal fire for about 10 minutes, turning several times. Remove the leeks from the grill and slice in half lengthwise.

Grilled leeks



Creamed spinach

Ingredients:

1/4 cup butter
1/4 cup flour
1 cup milk
1 bag of spinach
salt and pepper
dash nutmeg

Directions:

Melt butter in pan over low direct heat.
Blend in flour until smooth.
Cook until mixture is smooth and bubbly.
Gradually add milk and cook, stirring, until thickened. Add spinach.

Cover and cook over boiling water, stirring occasionally, 15 minutes.

Season with salt, pepper, and nutmeg.

Creamed spinach



Storing guide: Spring vegetables

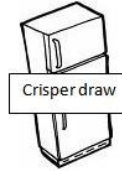
Kohlrabi



1 month

Tip: Use leaves as soon as possible

Spinach



5 days

Tip: Can also be frozen. Blanche first.

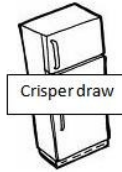
Rhubarb



2 weeks

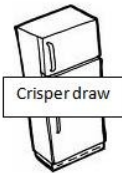
Tip: Can also be frozen after cooking

Spring onions



4 days

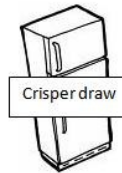
Leeks



1 –2 weeks

Tip: Store unwashed to keep longer

Cucumber

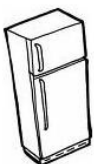


10 days

Tip: Store unwashed to keep longer

Key

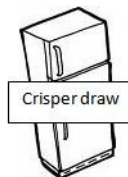
Keep in fridge



Keep out of fridge



Keep in crisper draw



Keep in plastic



Keep in paper bag



How to freeze vegetables

1. Wash the vegetables thoroughly in cool water and boil a pan of water - add a large pinch of salt to the water.
2. Trim, peel and cut into small portions if necessary.
3. When water is at a rolling boil, fill the strainer with veggies and plunge them into boiling water. Wait about 30 seconds, then dump them in the ice bath for 30 seconds to stop them cooking. This is called blanching and it is necessary to destroy certain bacteria while helping to preserve the colour, texture, flavor and nutrients.
4. Drain the veggies and put them into freezer bags. Store in the freezer for up to 6 months.

Note: Some vegetables are not suitable for freezing such as; Endives, cucumber, lettuce, radish. Root vegetables are better stored without freezing