

### **The Climate Change Group met on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 to discuss our objectives.**

It has been agreed that we will be focussing on what we buy to eat at present. At the beginning of each month, we will be publicising the vegetables, fruit and fish that is in season to suggest how members can buy what is currently available. Our first hope is that members will use our suggestions to buy food which is produced in the UK in order to reduce the transport resources needed to provide us with our food. There are foods like rice, pasta and lentils which are produced in France, Spain and Italy which can be used to enhance recipes which mainly use locally produced food. Also, we would also like to encourage members to consider having regular meals which do not contain meat. Pork and chicken have less impact on climate change than ruminant animals.

It is important to mention that we are not suggesting that members should refrain from buy foods from other continents because trade needs to continue. Also, if members like the occasional leg of lamb, steak or joint of beef, they will make excellent occasional treats. We are hoping that products which require longer journeys, produce more greenhouse gases during production or use a large amount of land for production will be used less often than at present. It is also hoped that members will try their best to reduce their use of dairy products. In this way, members will be able to help reduce the affects of climate change, eat more healthy meals, save money and be proud of their contributions.

We hope to be able to link with other U3A Climate Change Groups to establish the carbon footprint of tinned and frozen foods. There are several published recipes which call for such ingredients to simplify food preparation. We need more relevant information to make informed choices. We hope that by showing manufactures that a large number of us care about how much our food is costing the planet, that they will be prepared to manage their manufacturing processes to reduce climate change.

### **Vegetables harvested in the UK during April**

#### **Asparagus**

Break the asparagus spear by simply running your hands down the stem until it brakes naturally, this will ensure all the remaining stem will be soft and ready to eat.

Steam or boil in salted water from cold and serve with melted butter sprinkled with fresh parsley or chives, white sauce or mayonnaise if eaten cold as a salad dish.

Baked asparagus - cut the stem as indicated above, toss with olive oil in an ovenproof dish, add a dash of lemon juice, pepper and grated parmesan, drizzle a little olive oil on top and bake for about 10/15 minutes, depending on the thickness of the stems.

#### **Basil**

Very versatile herb chopped with salad or stew or meat or fish dishes. If using in a stew beat the whole stem on your kitchen counter to release the full flavour before adding to your dish.

#### **Broccoli**

Steam or boil to accompany your other dishes.

Can also be prepared as cauliflower and the stems can be used as a base of a dish, fried along the onions and garlic.

**Lettuce**

Use in fresh salad.

If there is a surplus of lettuce, it can be made into a soup by frying a potato in melted butter or rapeseed oil, add an onion. Add the lettuce once the other vegetables are well coated after 5 minutes or so. Add the lettuce and let it wilt, cover with water, add salt and pepper and let it simmer for about 10/15 minutes. Blend and serve with crusty bread.

**Morel mushrooms**

Gently fry in olive oil with onions and garlic, salt, pepper and fresh herbs. It will take a little while as the mushrooms tend to be quite water logged and the water needs to evaporate. Watch carefully so your mushrooms do not burn.

Morel risotto - fry the onions, garlic and mushrooms in olive oil. Add the risotto rice, toss carefully and add water. Once the water has evaporated, turning the vegetables regularly, cover with white wine and parmesan and let the liquid evaporate again. Pour a mixture of water and lemon juice and let evaporate again. Your risotto should now be soft and ready to eat. Add parmesan again if desired.

**New potatoes**

Boil or steam and serve with melted butter and chives.

Potato salad - boil the potatoes and prepare a dressing of mayonnaise, lemon juice and a little olive oil, salt and pepper and fresh herbs. Add chopped cucumber, chopped tomatoes, cut spring onions and the potatoes cooled and chopped. Mix well and serve.

**Rocket**

Use as salad leaf.

Very nice served to top a pizza, a risotto or a pasta dish.

**Samphire**

Boil or steam or bake along with fish.

Very nice added to a potato salad once steamed or boiled.

**Chives**

Chives are lovely in salads, cut thinly and it will give a lovely mild oniony taste to your salad dressing.

Also, nice when cut thinly on top of fish before baking.

**Dill**

The same suggestions would apply as to chives, but dill is really, really suited to fish flavouring.

**Fish in season during April**

Bass  
Black Bream  
Brill  
Cuttle Fish  
Dover Sole

Flounder  
Gurnard  
Huss  
John Dory  
Lemon Sole

Monk Fish  
Plaice  
Pollock  
Turbot