

K's Kitchen: Experimenting with fennel

By Kathryn Reed

Don't worry, Joy assures, me. She tells me there are always recipes in the box so if I'm not familiar with something, it won't be any big deal.



Well, last week's community supported agriculture box came with fennel and no recipe. I don't cook with fennel unless a recipe calls for it and I don't remember what recipe last called for it so I couldn't go find it.

I emailed Joy and her sister, Teri, asking for help. Back came a link to a recipe I had just come across. I kept searching on the Internet – mostly because I was curious to learn about different ways to cook this vegetable. Something kept at me to find one where the fennel could be served cold.

Below is my adaptation of many that I read.

I chilled it overnight, which seemed to bring out the flavors more.

First we had this with breakfast, and the next night with dinner. Being in England earlier this month showed me how yummy it is to eat what Americans would consider non-traditional breakfast foods at the first meal of the day – things like roasted tomatoes and sautéed mushrooms.

Serving this fennel dish – just a couple tablespoons on each plate – for breakfast provided a cool, crisp complement to the eggs and potatoes.

I used the round cucumbers because that's what came in the CSA

box. But any would do. Instead of three round, use one regular one.

A special treat for Sue and me was using the honey from the Lancaster hotel – where we stayed in London. The hotel on the edge of Hyde Park brought a half million honeybees to its roof in 2009. The honey is then used in some of the hotel's restaurants.

Fennel-Cucumber Salad

2-3 fennel bulbs

3 round cucumbers

1 T honey

1 T rice wine vinegar

Thinly slice the white part of the fennel so they are in rings or half rings. Thinly slice the cucumbers, then cut in half. Add honey and rice wine vinegar.

Mix well.

Chill a few hours or overnight.