

## Turnips

Not so long ago, I had a friend in Shiner present me with the best crop of **turnips** with the comment, "Do you know how to cook these? The only thing that I know to do with turnips is feed them to my horse, and I'm not too sure of the results of that." Now, he has one way to generate a good compostable fertilizer for the garden, but I do know how to cook "these things" in a way that highlights the best crop for February.

The simple way to handle these "baseballs" of the garden is to pull them as soon as the tops start to show above ground, and clean the soil from the plant. Separate the tops from the roots. You can actually peel them with a potato peeler, but the skin is thin and quickly cooks to a tender consistency if you choose to leave it alone. Slice thin, and place in melted butter or margarine in a skillet. Add a little salt, cover, and let cook on medium/low or medium heat until fork tender. The greens can be picked off the stems and wilted in steam with either butter or (the Southern favorite) bacon grease. If you get your crop in after the heat has returned, you may want to cut the bitterness with a squirt of lemon juice or a tablespoon of sugar.

Another culinary delight that disappears in the spring is pork. For a truly outstanding pork roast, try the recipe below. I promise that the turnips make this recipe one of the best roasts that you will ever make.

2-3 lbs. pork roast  
2 cups diced tomatoes  
2-3 garlic or shallots, minced  
1-2 medium onion, quartered  
1-2 large potato, quartered  
1 sweet potato, quartered  
3-5 ribs celery, chopped  
1-2 turnips, quartered  
3-5 whole carrots, scraped  
1 1/2 c. liquid  
1 c. beef stock  
Salt, pepper, vinegar, oil

Season meat with salt and pepper; sear in a hot skillet. Once browned, put into pot and set aside. Drain any grease from pan and then add a small amount of vinegar and stir to deglaze pan. Add chopped tomatoes and heat. Pour over meat and then add your liquid (beer or water) and the beef stock. Add your vegetables, then cover and roast at 350 F for 3-4 hours. Meat should be at least 145-160 F and all vegetables should be fork tender when done.

(Submitted by Sherri Wagner)