



## Turnips, Anyone?

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*Jessica Walliser*

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Photo by Jessica Walliser

I always end up with the same problem. I plant too many of the veggies my husband doesn't like, and then I feel guilty when they go to waste. The garden is still full of beets and turnips. Probably his two least-liked veggies and I've got armloads. I love them, but even if I ate five of each of them everyday between now and Thanksgiving, I'd still have too many. But the carrots we all adore, well, I ran out of those three weeks ago.

Why I can't figure out how to plant three times more carrots and ten times fewer turnips, I'll never know. I haven't been able to successfully freeze root veggies (any tips?) so there's no help for me there, and I don't like pickled beets so that preservation method is not an option. I have stored them in the basement in the past and that's pretty successful, but we don't really have room for that in this house, what with the giant canoe, two kayaks, three bikes, and bedroom furniture camped out in our basement.

At some point, I usually start to pawn them off on friends. But, while non-gardening friends will pounce on tomatoes and even the occasional zucchini, I never seem to get any takers when I offer up beets and turnips. Obviously, they have never had them fresh from the garden (or they are taste-dysfunctional like my husband).

So I sometimes end up tossing them on the compost pile. While I do feel badly when I do this, I also know their "remains" will eventually go on to feed next year's garden. It's all part of the cycle of life in the garden, I know. Plus, it's a good feeling when you spread homemade compost on the garden in the spring, even if you have to say a little prayer for last year's fallen turnips as you dole it out.

This year, though, I've decided to take a different route. I'm going to donate my "unwanted" beets and turnips to my local food pantry. I called and they take food donations of any amount and are extra thrilled when it's something from the garden. My only hope is that the recipient enjoys eating them as much as I enjoyed growing them... even if there were a few too many.

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