

Date: 08/24/2024 08/25/2024

Location: Double Saltree Meditation Center

Topics:

1: Dharma talk: Requesting Turning of The Dharma Wheel

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Corn

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Corn and Broccoli Salad

Main content:

1: Dharma talk: Requesting Turning of The Dharma Wheel

Welcome to Double Saltree Meditation Center, everyone! Turning of the Dharma Wheel is a significant event in Buddhism, symbolizing the Buddha's first teachings after his enlightenment. This concept embodies the sharing of the Dharma (the Buddha's teachings) with the world and marks the beginning of the Buddha's mission to guide sentient beings towards liberation from suffering.

Significance of Turning the Dharma Wheel

The First Teaching: The act of turning the Dharma wheel refers specifically to the Buddha's first sermon delivered at Sarnath (near Varanasi, India), where he taught the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path to his first five disciples. This teaching is often seen as the foundation of Buddhist philosophy.

Symbol of Transmission: The Dharma wheel, or Dharmachakra, symbolizes the transmission of the teachings. The wheel has eight spokes, representing the Noble Eightfold Path, which guides practitioners towards enlightenment.

Cycle of Birth and Death: The wheel also represents the cycle of samsara (the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth) and the means of breaking free from it through the practice of the Dharma.

Compassion and Wisdom: Turning the Dharma wheel signifies the Buddha's compassion for all beings, as he sought to share the wisdom he had realized. It is an act of love and kindness, showing the importance of teaching others to alleviate suffering.

Practicing the Turning of the Dharma Wheel

To engage in the practice of Turning the Dharma Wheel, one can participate in various activities that embody the teachings of the Buddha, including:

Listening to Teachings: Attend Dharma talks or teachings from qualified teachers. Listening with an open heart and mind helps deepen understanding of the teachings.

Reflecting on the Teachings: Spend time reflecting on the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path. Contemplate how these teachings apply to your life and practice.

Sharing the Dharma: Engage in sharing the teachings with others, whether through discussions, writing, or community service. This can be a way of turning the Dharma wheel and spreading wisdom.

Meditation: Practicing meditation helps to internalize the teachings and connect with the essence of the Dharma. Focus on the interconnectedness of all beings and the importance of compassion in your practice.

Engaging in Compassionate Action: Live the teachings by practicing compassion and kindness in everyday life. Acts of generosity and service can be seen as turning the Dharma wheel in a practical sense.

Celebrating Dharma Days: Participate in special events or celebrations in your local Buddhist community that commemorate the turning of the Dharma wheel, such as Asalha Puja (Dharma Day), which celebrates the Buddha's first sermon.

The Turning of the Dharma Wheel is a powerful symbol of the Buddha's teachings and the ongoing journey towards enlightenment. Engaging in practices that embody this turning not only deepens personal understanding of the Dharma but also contributes to the greater good by sharing wisdom and compassion with others. By recognizing the importance of this event and its teachings, practitioners can help perpetuate the cycle of learning and liberation that the Buddha set in motion over 2,500 years ago.

2: Buddhist Diet Health: Corn

Corn is a versatile and nutritious food that can be an excellent component of a Buddhist diet. It is not only delicious but also offers numerous health benefits that align with the principles of balance, health, and non-harming inherent in many Buddhist practices. Here are some key points about corn and its benefits in the context of a Buddhist diet:

Nutritional Benefits of Corn

1. Rich in Nutrients

Corn is a good source of essential nutrients, including:

Vitamins: It is high in vitamins B1 (thiamine), B5 (pantothenic acid), and folate (B9), which are important for energy metabolism and overall health.

Minerals: Corn contains minerals like magnesium, phosphorus, and potassium, which play vital roles in maintaining healthy bodily functions.

2. High in Fiber

Corn is rich in dietary fiber, which aids in digestion and promotes a healthy gut. Fiber helps prevent constipation, supports regular bowel movements, and can help lower cholesterol levels. A high-fiber diet is associated with reduced risks of heart disease and diabetes.

3. Energy Source

As a carbohydrate-rich food, corn provides a good source of energy. It can be a helpful component for those engaging in physical activities or those who need sustained energy for meditation and mindfulness practices.

In a Buddhist diet, there is an emphasis on simplicity and consuming whole, unprocessed foods. Corn, especially when consumed fresh or minimally processed (such as steamed, grilled, or in salads), aligns with this principle, providing nourishment without excess.

Corn holds cultural significance in many Buddhist and Asian cuisines. It is often used in traditional dishes and can be incorporated into various meals, making it a familiar and comforting food choice.

Corn is a nutritious, versatile, and culturally significant food that can play a valuable role in a Buddhist diet. Its health benefits, including high fiber content, energy provision, and antioxidant properties, support overall well-being while aligning with the principles of simplicity, balance, and non-harming. By incorporating corn into meals, practitioners can nourish their bodies and minds while fostering a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of all life.

3: Buddhist Diet Culinary: Corn and Broccoli Salad



Ingredients:

- 2 cups fresh broccoli florets (or frozen, thawed)
- 1 cup sweet corn (fresh, frozen, or canned)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar (or lemon juice)
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup or agave
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard (optional)
- Salt and pepper to taste

Steps:

1. Prepare the Vegetables

Blanch the broccoli: If using fresh broccoli, bring a pot of water to a boil. Add the broccoli florets and blanch for 1–2 minutes until bright green and tender-crisp. Immediately transfer to an ice bath to stop cooking and maintain color. Drain and set aside.

Prepare corn: If using fresh corn, cook it briefly in boiling water for 2–3 minutes. If using frozen corn, thaw it and drain any excess water. If using canned corn, drain and rinse before using.

2. Make the Dressing

In a small bowl or jar, whisk together the olive oil, apple cider vinegar (or lemon juice), maple syrup (if using), Dijon mustard (if using), salt, and pepper. Adjust the seasoning to taste.

3. Combine the Salad

In a large bowl, combine the blanched broccoli, corn (if using).

Pour the dressing over the salad and toss gently to coat the vegetables evenly.

4. Garnish and Serve

Garnish the salad with chopped parsley.

Let the salad sit for about 15–30 minutes to allow the flavors to meld, or serve immediately. It can be served chilled or at room temperature.