CARROT FISHING NET

INGREDIENTS: 1 (4-inch) carrot length at least 1-1 2 inches wide, 1 /2 cup salt and 2 cups water at room temperature.
TOOLS & SUPPLIES: 6-inch knife, ice pick, wood skewer and a small bowl.
TIPS & TIMING: Soaking time to soften carrot is at least 8 hours. The cutting takes 10 minutes per net. Shop around for very fat carrots. The fatter the carrot the longer the net will be. Finished nets last a week.
USES: To accent a seafood platter or to drape over a presentation of a whole fish. The nets look attractive when trailed off deck of a Daikon sailboat and, as described below, can be hung like a hammock between green pepper palm trees.
1. Trim carrot section into a rectangular block, conserving as much of carrot's thickness as possible. Edges of cuts can be rounded. Mix salt and water; soak carrot in brine at least 8 hours to soften, unrefrigerated.

2. When carrot is pliable pass ice pick lengthwise through center of block. Replace ice pick with skewer.

3. To cut weave pattern make many parallel cuts rather close together and absolutely straight up and down as described below. If blade angles slightly to right or left you will cut holes in the net. It is also important to hold your blade straight out so its cutting edge is parallel to cutting board. At end of each cut lift blade straight up rather than slicing back out of cut. There is actually only 1 cut; straight down through top surface of block to skewer. Then knife is lifted up and out, carrot is turned so another surface is on top and cut is repeated. The weave is quite simple. Number sides of block: 1 is top, 2 is right side, 3 is bottom and 4 is left side. Begin 1/8 inch in from 1 end. Cut straight down to skewer. Turn block over so side 3 is on top. Cut down to skewer directly over first cut. If skewer hadn’t stopped blade you would have just cut a 1/8-inch thick slice off end. Now turn carrot so side 2 is on top. Move down length of carrot another 1/8 inch and make cut to skewer. Lift blade out, turn block so side 4 is on top and cut down directly above cut you just made on side 2. That's it. Now you repeat pattern down length of carrot: 1:3 move, 2:4 move, 1:3 move, 2:4 move. If you lose your place, just remember no full cut on any side is ever immediately followed by another full cut. Just look for 2 half cuts on a top side to begin again with a full cut.
4. To peel carrot into a sheet you'll be cutting toward your hand. If this upsets your concentration, hold block with a cloth in your hand. Leave skewer in carrot. Lay knife along side of carrot. Cut into carrot using a gentle but steady pressure and a short sawing motion. Rotate carrot into blade and pare off corners of block, shaping it into a cylinder. Let corners fall away in pieces, they are not part of net. Now lay blade on length of this cylinder and cut under its surface no deeper than thickness of a nickel. Using same combination of rotating carrot into gently sawing blade, give carrot 3 or 4 gradual revolutions until you have peeled a sheet away and are cutting near skewer.

5. Set knife down; remove skewer. The net is done. If you want little round cork floats attached to end of your net, then complete cuts between remaining round sections of core. If cork floats don't interest you, simply slice core piece off. Handle net gently. If it doesn't stay open, peeling cut was too thick. Let stiff net rest on a dish, uncovered for a half a day and it will become much more flexible.