



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Summer 2017

Harvest lists are online

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Time for a beef share?

We are gearing up for our next round of Josh's beef shares. Here is how it works: Josh raises a steer for us. He then takes it to Guzman Meat Processing (a family-owned packing facility in Cochise) to have it cut and packed (we actually decide on how to have it cut). When ready we go to Cochise to pick it up and bring it to the CSA where Sara, Paul and I divide it up in 35 to 40 shares. Notice that all the beef shares come from a single animal. This is quite different from, say, a pack of ground beef from the supermarket, which may include meat from over 1,000 animals.

Josh's beef is prime quality beef. Animals are well taken care of and are raised on irrigated pasture their entire lives, making them both grass-fed and grass-finished.

To order a beef share you make a \$20 deposit at the front desk (you pay the balance when you pick it up a few weeks later). A beef share comes frozen, weighs 8 to 10 pounds and costs \$7.50 per pound. Every share is slightly different, but typically includes two packs of ground beef, two steaks, one roast and one miscellaneous cut (stew meat, soup bones, short ribs, BBQ ribs, etc...). You select a share of our choice when you pick it up.

The beef shares should be ready for pickup by late August. The next round of beef shares will in the November.

How Dependable Are USDA Organic Standards?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) sets the minimum organic standards for farms to be Certified Organic and then ensures that those standards are met—at least on paper. In reality, the USDA has a history of looking the other way when giant “organic” operations flout the law. Recently, the Washington Post exposed a number of major certified organic brands that don't strictly adhere to organic standards. The Post and others also recently reported on what one lawmaker, who serves on a key USDA committee, called “uncertainty and dysfunction” at the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB).

These reports are troubling on multiple levels, especially to consumers who rely on the USDA organic seal to help them avoid pesticides, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), synthetic ingredients and foods produced using methods that degenerate soil health and pollute the environment.

There are about 25,000 honest organic local and regional producers, vs. a handful of big brands, mostly national, who flout the rules. And if consumers want stronger, not weaker organic standards, we need to demand them. Sadly, they are gradually getting weaker. In 2005, Congress passed a law that made it a lot easier for the largest food companies to create “organic” versions of their factory farm and processed foods, in order to cash in on growing demand for organics. Since then, many of the “organic” products Big Food has delivered to the big-box stores have failed to live up to consumer expectations.

According to the Washington Post, the worst “organic imposters” include:

- Egglard's Best eggs, marketed as certified organic by Herbruck's Poultry Ranch, come from hens that never go outside.
- Aurora Organic Dairy, which supplies organic milk to Walmart, Costco and other major retailers, doesn't adhere to organic standards that require cows to be outdoors daily during the growing season.
- Imported “organic” soy and corn aren't actually organic.
- Some “organic” foods contain a synthetic oil brewed in industrial vats of algae.

Add to the above a recent New York Times article on how samples of mac and cheese, including organic, contain phthalates (hormone-disrupting chemicals that migrate into food products from processing or packaging). It's easy to see how consumers could come to lose faith in the organic seal.

As an organic consumer, you know from experience that eating organic is essential to keeping yourself and your family healthy. Organic isn't perfect. But buying USDA Organic is one way consumers hope to avoid pesticides, GMOs and synthetic ingredients.

But now, Congress and the Trump Administration's USDA are threatening to make changes to the Organic Foods Production Act (OFPA) and the NOSB—changes that could weaken organic standards beyond recognition.

Congress needs to hear from consumers—often, and in large numbers—that we want stronger, not weaker organic standards that support small, authentic producers.

Southwestern Potato Tomatillo Hash

Mary Leuchtenberger, Tucson CSA

Chop potatoes and sweet potatoes small so they will cook quickly in this hash.

3 small potatoes, diced
1 large sweet potato, diced
1 small onion, diced
2 tomatillos, diced
1 large handful chopped amaranth greens
Shredded cheese

In a heavy skillet heat a thin layer of oil or lard. Add potatoes and onions and cook, stirring periodically until potatoes begin to brown. Add tomatillos and greens to pan and cook for a few minutes longer, stirring as needed. Remove pan from heat, top with shredded cheese and cover for a few minutes to allow cheese to melt.

Amaranth Greens Vichyssoise

<http://ediblebajaarizona.com>

1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 Tablespoon Butter or olive oil
3 Cups chopped leeks white and light green parts only
2 Cups New Potatoes peeled and quartered
2 Cups Zucchini diced
1.5 Cups amaranth greens
4 Cups Vegetable Stock
¾ Teaspoon Sea Salt
Freshly Ground Pepperto taste
8-10 Leaves Fresh Basil plus more for garnishing

Heat olive oil and butter in a large soup pot over medium-low heat. Add the chopped leeks and sauté them, stirring frequently, for about 5 minutes or until the leeks are translucent.

Add the potatoes, zucchini, amaranth greens, vegetable stock, salt, pepper, and basil to the pot and stir.

Bring the soup to a boil, then immediately reduce the heat to medium-low and allow it to simmer for 30 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender and cooked through.

Remove the soup from the heat and allow it to cool.

Spoon the soup into a blender and blend it on high until it is smooth and creamy. Serve with freshly cracked pepper and fresh basil leaves.

Thai Basil Chicken (or Tofu)-new

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

To many of us basil is so suggestive of Italian food that it is hard to think outside that box. Basil is widely used in Asian recipes though, and there are a wide range of dishes to explore when trying to use your basil shares. This recipe is pretty adaptable, use whatever protein you prefer and use coconut milk or broth to deglaze the pan. Any of the summer vegetables in our shares would make a nice addition to this dish, add firm veggies to the pan early and more tender vegetables towards the end of cooking.

Your choice of finely chopped chicken or pork or cubed firm tofu
2 tablespoons oil
About 1" fresh ginger, cut into thin slivers
1 small onion, thinly sliced

3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoons lime juice
1 tablespoon fish sauce (optional, use additional soy sauce if desired)
1 tablespoon brown sugar (optional)
Red chile sauce, to taste
2-3 cups mixed diced vegetables
1 cup coconut milk or broth
Large handful basil, cut into long slivers

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. If using pork or chicken add meat to skillet along with onions and cook, stirring frequently until meat and onions beginning to brown. Meanwhile, mix together soy sause, lime juice, fish sauce, sugar and chile paste. Add garlic and ginger to skillet and stir until fragrant then add firm veggies (sweet potato, squash, yard long beans) and soy sauce mixture. Reduce heat to medium and cover, cook for about 5-8 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. Add coconut milk or broth and stir well to deglaze bottom of pan, then add any tender veggies (greens, tomatillos) and tofu if using. Cover and cook for an additional 5-8 minutes. Stir in basil then remove from heat. Serve over rice or noodles.

Simple Fruit Tart

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA adapted from a recipe by Ina Garten

This is a great recipe for people who don't have time or want to fuss with a traditional pie dough. Also, the nuts in the crust and topping temper the glycemic index of the flour and sugar.

2 cups all purpose flour
¾ cup pecans, finely chopped (walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, even pistachios will work)
2/3 cup light brown sugar, lightly packed
12 tablespoons (1 and ½ stick) cold unsalted butter, diced into small cubes
1 egg yolk
2 pounds fresh fruit: Italian prune plums, regular plums, fresh figs, peaches, pears—anything juicy that will bake up jammy and sweet. Cut smaller fruit in quarters, larger fruit in sixths or eighths, depending on size. If you are using something like peaches, which have such a thick skin in our desert temperatures, skin them first.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Combine the flour, nuts and brown sugar in a bowl or a food processor. Add the butter and egg yolks and stir with an electric mixer, two forks, or the food processor. You will end up with a crumbly dough. Press 1 ½ cups of the mixture into the bottom of a 9" or 10" springform pan, or a tart pan, or a well oiled and floured pie or quiche pan. Use the trick of placing a second pan on top to even out the dough or just use the bottom of a measuring cup to press out the dough and make it even. Arrange the fruit on top in a rustic flower pattern. It's fine if the fruit is placed skin side down for example rather than lying on its cut side, this is not a fussy recipe. Sprinkle the rest of the crumb mixture over the fruit. Bake the tart for 40-50 minutes, until the fruit juices are bubbling. Remove from the oven and cool for ten minutes. If you used a springform or tart pan, remove the tart from it onto a plate. Serve warm or at room temperature.