



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

January 17, 2006 – Issue 19

Winter 05
Week 6 of 12

This Week's Veggies

Garlic
Broccoli
Red La Soda Potatoes
Cilantro
Acorn squash
Tatsoi
Onions
Salad greens

Recipes in this Issue

Focus on Red La Soda Potatoes
Potato, Onion and Cilantro Soup
Stovetop Baked Acorn Squash
Broccoli Tips



Photo courtesy
CoveredBridgeProduce.com
This week our tatsoi, also known as rosette bok choy, comes to us in its native rosette-shaped state. Tatsoi is very rich in calcium and vitamins (twice as nutritious as bok choy) and has a good strong taste that is considered superior to bok choy. Tatsoi is excellent in stir-fries and salad mixes.

TCSA Contact

Philippe Waterinckx

Newsletter Editor

Christa Selig

We welcome your suggestions, comments, contributions, and questions:

www.TucsonCSA.org

Local Premium-Grade Honey Now Available at TCSA

Did you know that in her short, six-week lifespan, a honey bee travels up to 6,000 miles to produce one-tenth of a teaspoon of honey? Starting this week, we are offering two flavors of local honey, citrus and mesquite, from Jim Hawk of Southwest Honey Supply, a Tucson family-owned business that collects premium-grade honey from regional beekeepers. Our **citrus** honey is made by bees that roam the orange groves of Eloy near Picacho Peak. The honey is very clear with a distinct orange-blossom flavor and is not subject to crystallization. (The Eloy groves, however, are soon to be destroyed to make room for subdivisions.) Our **mesquite** honey comes from the Red Rock and Marana area. It is darker and more turbid with a more earthy flavor. It has a lower water content than the citrus honey, however, so it does have a tendency to crystallize over time.

Both honeys are pure, meaning that they are not blended or artificially hydrated. They are coarse-filtered and heated just enough to make filtration possible. The coarse-filtration method allows some pollen to remain in the honey, which makes it an allergy-relief product: exposure to minute amounts of pollen helps to build up resistance to pollen allergies.

Coming This Summer: Ginger and More Artichokes

Farmer Frank just planted some ginger for the first time ever. If all goes well, we should get some ginger root some time this summer. Stay tuned!

Frank is also currently planting artichokes for the summer. He is planting more than previous years and is spacing out the planting times in order to get several harvests. Artichokes were very well received last summer, but we had them only once. We should get more this summer.

Mid-Session Second Payments Are Due!

We're now halfway through the winter quarter! If you split your quarterly payment into two, the second half is now due. Please pay promptly! Your timely payment allows Farmer Frank to get our summer crops underway.

Community Harvest Shares for Low-Income Seniors

Please call (203-6500) or e-mail (tucsoncsa@tucsoncsa.org) Philippe (or let him know in person!) ASAP if you are interested in:

- Making a single, tax-deductible donation to help purchase a share for a low-income senior.
- Increasing the cost of your own share to help purchase a share for a low-income senior (suggested increase: 10 percent).
- Donating some time to help with the Community Harvest Share program.
- Donating an item for a silent-auction fundraiser to support the Community Harvest Share program.

Many seniors have lowered immune systems that would benefit greatly from access to the same vegetables that we enjoy at the CSA.

Red La Soda Potatoes

“There are over 400 varieties of potatoes grown at the moment, but ask for any one of 396 at your supermarket and you will be met with a rude comment or, even worse, a vacant stare,” writes Bert Greene in *Greene on Greens* (Workman Publishing, 1984). Indeed, one of the potato varieties we get from Farmer Frank, the Red La Soda, is considered commercially unviable, even though both it and the Dark Red Norland are the dominant, high-yielding varieties of red-skinned potatoes in the West. La Soda’s deep eyes, for example, make the potato difficult to peel, and it loses its bright red color in storage (hence its reference as a “fresh-market” potato). Because the Red La Soda is resistant to tipburn (browning of the edges or tips of leaves), however, as well as to wind, heat, and drought damage, it is well-suited to our southern Arizona climate (heat, as you might imagine, presents the biggest challenge of growing potatoes in southern Arizona).

Red La Sodas, however, don’t need to be peeled: in fact, much flavor resides in the potato skins themselves, and since Farmer Frank doesn’t use chemicals, you needn’t be concerned about fungicides, pesticides, and other undesirables concentrating in the skin. (If you feel compelled to peel them anyway, don’t throw the skins away—use them to add flavor to a soup stock.)

Uses

Due to its low starch content, the Red La Soda has a creamy texture and is good for boiling, because it holds its shape when cooked. Its firm, waxy texture is perfect for gratins and potato salads. (By contrast, the buttery Yukon Golds we receive from Farmer Frank are good bakers and fryers, due to their higher starch content, which gives them a more granular or mealy texture.)

Nutritious Value

Potatoes have fewer calories and more nutrients than rice, pasta, or bread. Contrary to specious rumor, the potato is not fattening in the least; butter and cream are! A naked medium-sized potato has less than 100 calories, and boiling reduces the calories to a scant 80. The reason they are low in calories that potatoes are 75 to 80 percent water. High in vitamin B (including niacin, thiamine, riboflavin, and pyridoxine), the potato is really good for you—as well as being good to eat.”

Potato, Onion and Cilantro Soup

Philippe

2 onions
3 cloves of garlic
5 potatoes
6 cups of vegetable stock
1 bunch of cilantro
2 tablespoons of oil

In a large saucepan, sauté the onions and garlic in oil for 5 minutes or until limp, then add the potatoes and stir-fry for another 10 minutes or until mixture begins to brown.

Add the stock, cover, and simmer for another 15-20 minutes, until the potatoes are soft. Remove from heat. Add chopped cilantro. Blend.

Return the soup to the pot and season to taste with salt and cayenne.

This soup is delicious either hot or cold.

Broccoli Tips

- Don’t throw away any leaves remaining on the stalks—they’re sweet and delicious, and there’s no reason not to use them.
- The stems are quite edible. With their delicate flavor and uplifting color, broccoli stems are quite choice. Use them as a vegetable or as part of a vegetable mixture, be it a soup, salad, or stir-fry. They’re exceptionally good—and pretty—with turnips and rutabagas. Peel them thickly, cutting just below the tough outer layer of skin with a paring knife. Slice them into rounds, diagonals, matchsticks, thicker batons, or small squares. Boil in salted water until tender-firm and season as you would broccoli florets.

Stove-top Baked Acorn Squash

Philippe

Cut an acorn squash in half from stem to tip and remove the seeds. Place cut side down in a saucepan. Add ½ inch water and bring to a soft boil. Cover and simmer until soft, about 15-20 minutes. Serve with butter, salt and pepper, or sweeten with a spoonful of honey or brown sugar and a dash of cinnamon, nutmeg, or allspice.
