



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

June 6, 2006 – Issue 39

Summer 06
Week 1 of 13

This Week's Share

Silver Queen sweet corn
Heirloom tomatoes
Sugar snap peas—last harvest!
Sweet potatoes
Summer squash
Pinto beans
Herbs
Green leaf lettuce

Recipes in this Issue

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Pasta
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Rainbow Bean Salad



Black Mesa Ranch, our goat cheese supplier, wrapped up its kidding season on May 30 with the birth of one final doe,

Velocity (above), and three miscarriages. Velocity weighed only 4 pounds at birth, “but it was 4 pounds of personality with a tenacious will to live,” write David and Kathryn Heininger—hence her name, “because of her desire to speed into this life.”

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What's New: Heirloom Tomatoes

Welcome to our summer session! Farmer Frank has promised us lots of tomatoes this season, especially those tasty and delicate heirloom varieties. You'll be hard-pressed to find an heirloom tomato on the supermarket shelves: virtually all tomatoes sold today are hybrids that have been bred to possess traits that favor industrial producers rather than consumers, such as tomatoes that ripen all at once so they can be harvested at one time or tomatoes with thick skins that are less likely to bruise. Most heirloom varieties do not come in uniform shapes and sizes, which is one reason they do not ship well. As Deborah Madison writes in her book *Local Flavors*, “Good tomatoes don't travel. And because getting them at the peak of their flavor depends on picking them at their peak of fragility, tomatoes are more wedded to their site than other foods.”

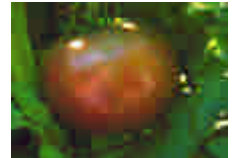
According to Bill Best in the Fall 1998 issue of *Appalachian Heritage*, the Amish and Mennonites are responsible for maintaining the continued growth of many outstanding heirloom tomatoes. Many of these farmers, however, have had to give up growing heirlooms and have had to start growing modern hard and tasteless types of tomatoes instead. Because they are forbidden by their religions to utilize certain forms of modern transportation and farm machinery, they can't grow their own tomatoes for shipping and must therefore grow commercial tomatoes in order to have markets and to sustain their otherwise simple way of life. Because of their dispersal into rural areas, they no longer live close to their markets and must therefore ship their produce long distances.

Want to get some firsthand experience getting to know heirloom tomatoes more intimately? The TCSA is seeking a **volunteer** to sort through the quantities of heirloom tomatoes we receive each week from Farmer Frank and to weigh and bag them into portions for distribution on CSA pick-up day. Please contact Philippe if interested.

Some of the heirloom tomatoes you'll see in your tomato mix this week include:

Cherokee Purple

Originally grown by the Cherokee Indians, this tomato, with its soft, pink-purple flesh and smoky-sweet flavor, has been grown since the late 1800s. One of the sweetest tomatoes available, with little acid.



San Marzano

The San Marzano is an excellent-tasting Italian paste variety known for its high yields. The deep red, pear-shaped fruit, typical of many paste-type tomatoes, is solid and meaty.



Persimmon

This vigorous and prolific heirloom, introduced around 1983, yields lots of fruit and has one of the better flavors of all orange tomatoes. It is meaty, very sweet, and has few seeds.



Juliet

Juliet is a small, red, grape/cherry variety of heirloom tomato.

Taxi

The taxi tomato produces its fruit for only a short period of time. The flesh is lemon-yellow, turning a deep yellow with maturity, and its shape is round to slightly flattened. Its dense, firm flesh holds together well when sliced, but it has a relatively tender skin. The taste is slightly savory, with medium acid and low sugar.

Elote

Adapted from *Cooking Light*, June 2006 (www.CookingLight.com)

Grilled corn on the cob is a popular street food in Mexico.

- 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons fresh lime juice
- 2 tablespoons finely grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ teaspoon chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground red pepper
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

2 ears shucked corn

1. Prepare grill. Combine mayonnaise and juice in a small bowl. Combine cheese and next 4 ingredients (through salt) in another small bowl.
2. Place corn on a grill rack coated with cooking spray. Grill corn 12 minutes or until tender, turning frequently. Remove corn from grill, brush with mayonnaise mixture, and sprinkle with cheese mixture. Serve immediately.

Chili Powder and Cumin-Rubbed Corn on the Cob

Adapted from *Cooking Light*, June 2006 (www.CookingLight.com)

Chili powder and cumin pair well with sweet summer corn. Soak the corn before grilling to prevent the husks from burning.

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| 2 ears corn with husks | ½ teaspoon ground cumin |
| 1-1/2 tablespoons butter, melted | ¼ teaspoon ground pepper |
| 1 teaspoon chili powder | 1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper |
| ½ teaspoon salt | Lime wedges |

1. Prepare grill.
2. Place corn in cold water, and soak for 20 minutes.
3. Combine butter and next 5 ingredients (through red pepper) in a small bowl; set aside.
4. Pull husks back from corn; scrub silks from corn. Brush butter mixture evenly over corn. Wrap husks around corn. Place on a grill rack, and grill 16 minutes or until done, turning occasionally. Serve with lime wedges.

Heirloom Tomato and Garlic Pasta

The sauce goes well with any kind of pasta, but long, thin noodles, such as spaghetti, spaghettini, or cappellini, are perhaps the nicest for this sauce.

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| 1 CSA portion tomatoes | ½ cup fruity extra-virgin olive oil |
| 3 cloves garlic | |
| 1 small bunch parsley or basil | ¾ pound pasta |

Cut out the stem ends and dice the tomatoes. Peel and chop the garlic and chop the leaves of the parsley or basil. Have all the ingredients prepared and ready by the stove. Put the pasta on to cook in rapidly boiling salted water.

Heat the olive oil in a heavy-bottomed skillet until quite hot but not smoking. Throw the garlic into the oil. Right away, before the garlic starts to brown, add the tomatoes and stir;

they will probably splatter a little. Add the parsley or basil and cook just a minute or two, until the tomatoes are warmed through and have started to relax. Season to taste with salt and pepper, and toss with the cooked pasta. Serves 4.

Heirloom Tomato Basil Salad

Heidi DeCosmo, TCSA member

- 6 cups cooked orzo pasta
- 1 cup quartered baby **heirloom tomatoes**
- 1 cup julienned (thinly sliced) red onion
- 1 cup julienned (thinly sliced) spinach or **green leaf lettuce**
- 1/3 cup chiffonade (thin strips) fresh **basil**
- 2 tablespoons crumbled feta or **goat cheese**
- 2 teaspoons olive oil
- ¼ cup flavored rice wine vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt

In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients. Mix well and marinate for at least ½ hour before serving. Makes 8 cups.

Rainbow Bean Salad

Heidi DeCosmo, TCSA member

Enjoy the bounty of summer in this refreshing bean salad. Try roasting the corn on the cob and then adding to the salad. Pinto beans are a good source of protein, vitamins and minerals. One cup of pinto beans provides one quarter of the US Recommended Daily Allowance of protein for adults.

For the salad:

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| 1-3/4 cups cooked pinto beans | ¼ cup chopped green onions |
| (about ¾ cup dry) | |
| ½ cup diced red onion | 1-1/2 cup steamed corn kernels |
| ½ cup diced heirloom tomatoes | |
| ½ cup diced green peppers | 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro |

For the dressing:

- ¼ cup fresh herb vinegar or seasoned rice-wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper

To **quick-soak** the beans, add 5 cups of hot water for every ½ pound of beans; heat to boiling, and let boil 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat, cover, and set aside for at least one hour or up to 4 hours for a full hot soak. **To soak overnight**, cover beans with cold water and refrigerate.

After quick-soaking or soaking the beans overnight, discard the soaking water and cover the beans with fresh water. Bring to a rapid boil and reduce heat to a simmer. Cover and cook until tender but not mushy, adding water if necessary. Simmer for about 2 to 3 hours.

In a mixing bowl, combine the salad ingredients and toss gently to combine. In a smaller mixing bowl, combine the dressing ingredients. Pour the dressing over the salad and mix well. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes prior to serving. Makes 8 servings.