



# Tucson Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

June 27, 2006 – Issue 42

Summer 06  
Week 4 of 13

## This Week's Share

Sweet yellow or white corn  
Heirloom tomatoes  
Armenian cucumber  
CalSweet watermelon  
Summer squash  
Okra  
Fresh black-eyed peas or red  
noodle beans  
Choice of garlic or basil

## Recipes in this Issue

Fresh Black-Eyed Peas and Rice  
(Hoppin' John)  
Creamy Black-Eyed Pea Spread  
Cucumber, Tomato, and Goat  
Cheese Salad  
Fresh Herb Vinegar



## Field Day at Farmer Frank's!

Philippe, TCSA volunteers Danielle and Amy, and member Eric Roller and his daughter, Claudia, spent a nice day touring the farm last Saturday. Pictured above are Farmer Frank and three members of his harvesting crew: Blanca, Tania, and Jorge.

## TCSA Contact

Philippe Waterinckx

## Newsletter Editor

Christa Selig

We welcome your comments, questions, and suggestions.

[www.tucsoncsa.org](http://www.tucsoncsa.org)

## INDEPENDENCE DAY – CSA PICKUP DAY

The CSA will be open same hours as usual on July 4th!

## Crooked Sky Farms' Watermelon Field Suffers Major Theft

Sunday night, over eight tons of watermelons (at least 2000) were stolen from one of Farmer Frank's fields. The watermelon field is located in a distant field--surrounded by subdivisions--several miles away from the farmhouse. Frank reckons that the thieves came in under cover of darkness with at least eight pickup trucks and took about one hour to steal the crop. The trucks also drove recklessly all over the field, inflicting extensive damage to both plants and furrows, and precluding any future watermelon harvests from the field for the rest of the summer. The theft represents an immediate loss of over \$8000, and a future harvest loss of another \$8000. This represents a very heavy loss for Farmer Frank.



The watermelons you are receiving this week are from the very same field: Philippe actually helped to harvest them between 5:00 and 7:00 am last Saturday. We will probably not have any more watermelons at the CSA until Farmer Frank's other watermelon field in Duncan begins producing in late July.

Other than seeing less watermelons for a while, we will not notice much difference in our weekly shares. Frank has promised to compensate us for the loss by supplying us with other vegetables instead.

## Trip to Crooked Sky Farms

We had a lovely day at the farm. Farmer Frank chauffeured us all in his "limo" (an electric golf cart that seats eight people) through crops of corn, okra, squash, tomatoes and more, with frequent stops to allow us to harvest as much as we wanted to take home with us. We then ate yummy squash-blossom quesadillas, fresh tomato and basil salad, grilled corn and watermelons prepared by Frank's crew. That's the same crew who harvests our produce: Kelsey, Tania, Blanca, and Jorge (Ophelia wasn't there that day). Super friendly farm assistant Gilmo the farm cat was also on hand to greet visitors between brief errands to catch gophers.

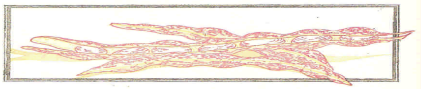


Mystery eggs photographed by Philippe in the watermelon field pictured above, which, sadly, were likely trampled and destroyed during Sunday's theft

## Next Monthly Payment Due



For those of you on the monthly payment plan, the second monthly payment is due by next **Tuesday, July 4**. Thank you in advance for your timely payment.



**What’s New: Fresh Black-Eyed Peas**

Freshly shelled black-eyed peas are a real luxury, because the pods are tough and the small beans are held tightly inside. But the reward is definitely worth the effort.

Fresh shell beans are usually precooked before being combined with other ingredients. Simmer the beans in water to which has been added half an onion, a few sprigs of thyme, and a bay leaf. Pay close attention to the cooking time, as fresh beans cook much more quickly than dried ones. Test them often and remove them from the heat just as they are starting to become tender. If you let them cool slowly in the cooking liquid, they will become completely tender and more flavorful.

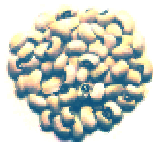
Fresh shell beans in their pods can be stored in the refrigerator for several days. Good air circulation is important to prevent mold. Once shelled, the beans should be covered or put in a plastic bag and refrigerated no longer than overnight. Cooked beans will keep a day or so in the refrigerator, submerged in their cooking liquid.

**Fresh Black-Eyed Peas and Rice**

Hoppin’ John is what this dish is called in the American South. Slaves introduced the famous “pea” pilau on the rice plantations of the South Carolina low country, and it’s closely related to common African and West Indian concoctions. Carolina cooks put their stamp on Hoppin’ John through local ingredients, particularly the field peas and long-grain rice, the type grown originally in the low country. Many people treat it as a side dish, but it can also be on the center of the plate, accompanied by a summer salad.

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|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1/2 cup long-grain white rice | 1 pound (1 cup shelled) |
| 1 cup water                   | fresh black-eyed peas   |
| Salt and pepper               | Unsalted butter         |
|                               | A few sprigs savory     |

Put the rice in a saucepan with the water and bring to a boil. Salt the water and add the black-eyed peas. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes, until the rice is just cooked; the peas will be tender as well. Stir in a little butter and some freshly chopped savory leaves. Taste for salt; add a few grinds of pepper. Serves 4.



**Red Noodle Beans Tip**

Use red noodle beans much as you would use green beans. They don’t need to be shelled.

**Creamy Black-Eyed Pea Spread**

Heidi DeCosmo, TCSA member

Remove the fresh beans from their shells (children are good for doing this job!) and rinse them. Bring water to a boil and simmer the beans until tender, about 10 minutes. You may want to add some onions, garlic, herbs of your choice, and a dash of salt to the water to flavor the beans. Try the beans cooked with some bacon, mixed with rice, in a soup, and in bean salads.

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 cups cooked fresh black-eyed peas |                           |
| 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil |                           |
| 1 garlic clove                      | ¼ cup packed basil leaves |
| 1 tablespoon lemon juice            | ½ teaspoon sea salt       |
| ¼ cup packed parsley leaves         | Cayenne to taste          |

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor and pulse until smooth. Add cayenne and additional salt to taste. Serve with crackers, pita chips, as a spread on sandwiches, or as a base for bruschetta.

**Cucumber, Tomato, and Goat Cheese Salad**

Heidi DeCosmo, TCSA member

- |                                      |                                     |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 cucumber, sliced                   | 2 tablespoons goat cheese, crumbled |
| 2 ripe tomatoes, cut into wedges     | ½ teaspoon sea salt                 |
| ¼ cup fresh herb vinegar (see below) | ¼ teaspoon ground pepper            |

Combine all ingredients in a bowl and toss gently. Refrigerate for one half-hour before serving. Makes 4 servings.

**Fresh Herb Vinegar**

Heidi DeCosmo, TCSA member

Make your salad dressings explode with flavor using infused vinegar, and add a fresh, bright taste to salads, sauces & dips.

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| 1 garlic clove, sliced thin                |
| 6 sprigs fresh basil, cilantro, or oregano |
| 1 cup seasoned rice-wine vinegar           |
| ¼ teaspoon crushed black peppercorns       |

Sterilize a glass bottle either by submerging it into boiling water for 5 minutes or by running it through the dishwasher. In a small saucepan, heat the vinegar to a simmer. Place the remaining ingredients into the sterilized bottle. Using a funnel, slowly pour the vinegar into the container, and allow it to cool. Seal the bottle tightly, and store it at room temperature for at least 24 hours prior to using. Vinegar will last 2 months in a cool dry place. Makes 1 cup.

**Heirloom Tomato Tip**



Farmer Frank advises members NOT to refrigerate their tomatoes, unless you happen to do so in a wine cooler set at 60 or 65 degrees. Instead, eat your tomatoes as soon as possible, and keep them stored on the countertop in the meantime. Heirloom tomatoes are extremely delicate, and storing them at temperatures below 55 degrees will destroy their flavor.