



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 79 ~ March 19, 2007 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Spring '07 - Week 3 of 13

This Week's Harvest

Valencia Oranges
Chioggia Beets
Baby Leeks
Nantes Carrots
Swiss Chard
Turnip Greens
Savoy Spinach
Mexican Oregano



Backpage Recipes

Mexican Oregano
Drunken Beans
Swiss Chard and Dill Pilaf
Turnip Greens

Storing your greens

When you get home with your share, take a few minutes to sort your veggies. Wash your greens and store them in the fridge inside perforated plastic bags to maximize their longevity.

It is important to separate the greens from their roots (e.g. carrots, beets). Otherwise both roots and greens will wilt faster.

The easiest way to clean greens is to place them in a bowl of water and swish them around with your fingers. This allows any sand and dirt to become dislodged.



Savoy Spinach is curly leaf spinach with a wonderful almost nutty undertone

In the Field

It's been hot in Tucson. It's been hotter at Crooked Sky Farms. Because of the heat, the greens are being harvested before they all bolt to the skies. This explains why we are getting many greens in our shares this week. More greens have also been planted so we will get more before the summer.

At the Table by Judith and Bruce Billings, Tucson CSA members

"We joined the Tucson CSA last Monday at 4:30, came home, scrubbed 2 of the Yukons and put them in to bake while we laid brick on our front wall. Came in at 6 and cleaned the bunch of carrots, put them to simmer in the bottom of our steamer while I prepared the beet greens for the top. By 6:30 we had eaten the MOST wonderful veggie dinner. So tender and delicious. Boy, are we glad we joined."

Tell us how YOU experience the CSA. Email your essay to [tucsoncsa](mailto:tucsoncsa@tucsoncsa.org) at tucsoncsa.org

Black Mesa Ranch's Goat Cheese Shares to start in April

Black Mesa Ranch's award winning cheeses were featured in the latest issue of Edible Phoenix (available at the CSA).

The goats have kidded, the kids are being weaned, and there will soon be enough milk to make cheese. There will be four pickups this session: April 16, April 30, May 14 and May 28. Cost: \$20. Sign up at the front desk or via our website.



Before full production kicks in, David from Black Mesa Ranch will give us limited quantities of his available cheeses. So starting next week there will be opportunities to purchase individual cheese logs. This will give members a chance to try out the cheese.

The time of Valencia Oranges has come!

Originally from South Asia, the **Valencia orange** spread to Syria, Persia, Italy, Spain and Portugal, and later, to the West Indies. Spanish explorers took it to Florida and Spanish missionaries took it to California. Its name comes from the Spanish city of Valencia widely known for its excellent orange trees. In 1841, Californian agronomist William Wolfskill planted a crop of **Valencia oranges**. The subsequent success of this orange in Southern California led to the naming of Orange County. Cultivation of the Valencia in Orange County all but ceased by the mid-1990s due to rising property costs, which drove what remained of the Southern California orange industry into Florida. The Valencia orange tends to be more difficult to peel than other varieties, and, because it is one of the sweetest oranges there is, it is primarily used for juicing. It is a late-season fruit, therefore it is a popular variety when the navel oranges are out of season. Valencia oranges go through a natural process called "regreening" in the late spring and summer. This regreening happens when the fruit is left on the tree during the summer months; the warm temperatures cause a pigment called chlorophyll to return to the skin, causing a greenish tint. The color of the skin has no effect on the sweetness and flavor of the fruit.

One orange supplies a healthy dose of Vitamin C, which plays an important role in cancer prevention, healthy blood circulation and wound healing. Oranges are a good source of the crucial B-vitamin, folate, which is essential in preventing birth defects and fighting heart disease. They also contain an array of phytochemicals, which help fight age-related diseases.



Mexican Oregano

Oregano derives its name from two Greek words meaning "the joy of the mountain." It is a hardy member of the mint family that has been used for flavoring fish, meat and sauces since ancient times. It was long referred to as wild marjoram. Mexican oregano is as essential to chili powder as Greek oregano is to pizza. You may use the two types interchangeably, but using one specifically increases the authenticity of certain dishes. Mexican oregano has a more earthy flavor, with less hint of mint in the aroma. It stems from the plant *Lippia graveolens* (Verbenaceae) and is closely related to lemon verbena. A somewhat ungainly shrub, it grows up to five feet tall and wide. Its brittle branches are very narrow, stiffly arching and arranged in a seemingly haphazard manner. Mexican oregano has a sweetness and intensity that many gourmets prefer to the flavor of the true European or Mediterranean species. The leaves are a wonderful flavoring for fish, meatballs, sausage, tomato sauces, or any recipe requiring a strong oregano essence. Trim off some of the plant's thicker branches and utilize them as flavor-enhancing skewers for seafood or poultry shish kebobs or vegetable brochettes. In its native Mexico, the herb is sometimes called té de pais ("country tea"), because the dried leaves are brewed into an herbal tea.

Drunken Beans

From *The Border Cookbook*

If you have some pinto beans bags left from previous shares, here's a bean casserole dish that may hit the spot.

- 1 cup dried pinto beans
- 3 cups water, or more as needed
- 2 cups beer
- 2 ounces salt pork, chopped, or 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 medium onions, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, sliced
- 1/2 tablespoon vinegar, preferably cider
- 1 tablespoon Mexican oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, plus more to taste

Soak beans overnight. Drain. Place in saucepan. Cover with the water and beer and add remaining ingredients, except the salt. Bring beans to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to low and simmer the beans, uncovered for about 1 hour. Add water to keep 1/2 inch of liquid above the beans. Add the salt after the beans are well-softened and continue simmering until the level of the water is just above the beans. There should be extra liquid at the completion of the cooking time, but the beans should not be watery. If you wish, remove 1/2 to 1 cup of beans, mash them and return them to the pot for a thicker liquid. Serve warm.

Swiss Chard and Dill Pilaf

Rose Valley Farm Foodbook

- 3 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup long grain rice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3/4 teaspoon sea salt
- fresh ground pepper to taste
- 1 lb. Swiss chard, stemmed and washed
- 2 1/2 cups water or stock
- 6 Tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/2 cup fresh dill

Heat oil in a 4-quart heavy pot. Add onions and garlic and cook until soft, about 6 minutes.

Stir in rice, nutmeg, salt and pepper. Stir in chard and water or stock. Bring to a boil and lower heat.

Cover and simmer 15-20 minutes, until rice is tender. Remove from heat and stir in lemon juice and dill. Mix well.



Turnip Greens

At the intersection of living where our daily choices can make the difference between health and disease, turnip greens definitely give your health the green light. Turnip greens are supercharged with so many different nutrients, their consumption can help prevent or heal a wide range of health conditions. Turnip greens are a top source of carotenoids (vitamin A precursor), vitamin C, vitamin E, vitamin B6, folate, copper, calcium, and dietary fiber. Three examples of conditions for which they may be of special importance are rheumatoid arthritis, colorectal cancer and atherosclerosis.

Tips for Preparing Turnip Greens

Turnip greens can be prepared like mustard greens. For basic turnip green preparation, wash the leaves and fold each leaf in half with the top side of the green folded inward. Cut along the stem and remove. If you plan to cook the greens for a long time, such as when using them in soup, you can keep the leaves intact with their center stem.

A Few Quick Serving Ideas

- Serve sautéed turnip greens seasoned with some tamari, lemon juice and cayenne pepper.
- Make a simple meal with a little Southern inspiration. Serve cooked turnip greens with beans and rice.
- Healthy sauté of turnip greens, sweet potatoes and tofu, alongside your favorite grain.
- Use turnip greens in addition to other greens when making vegetarian lasagna.