



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 135 ~ April 29, 2008 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Spring '08

Week 9 of 13 (Crooked Sky)
Week 5 of 9 (Agua Linda)

Planned harvest list is [Online](#)

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Nopalitos (Prickly Pear Pads)

Nopalitos have a delicate tangy, asparagus-like flavor. During spring, we sometimes get nopalitos from Crooked Sky Farm, and, lucky for us, they come already paired and despined (by hand). Below are some simple ideas on how to prepare them.

First, slice pads in strips. Steam or boil for 10 minutes. Drain and rinse in cold water.

1. Serve with lemon or lime juice.
2. Stir fry with other vegetables.
3. Serve as a salad with finely diced tomatoes, onion, cilantro and jalapeños and season with vinegar, salt and lime juice.
4. Grilled: coat nopalitos with olive oil, then with pepper, salt, and other spices. Grill until tender and slightly browned. Season with lime juice and a little olive oil. It's best to grill the nopalitos before slicing them.
5. Mix with scrambled eggs, and sprinkle with salt and pepper and chile flakes or powder.

Newsletter editor

Philippe Waterinckx

SUMMER SESSION REGISTRATION IS OPEN (June, July and August)

April 28 to May 31: registration for renewing and former members.

May 16 to May 31: registration for waitlisted members.

To avoid lines at the front desk, you can mail us your contract and payment, or drop them off in the Drop Box next to the sign-in sheet.

Subscription details and the contract form are online, under *Join > Subscriptions*.

WHERE DO TUCSON CSA EGGS COME FROM?

Tucson CSA eggs are of a quality and freshness that cannot be found in mass-produced eggs. Our eggs are truly free-range, i.e. the hens really do roam in large open areas where they primarily eat wild foods off the ground (bugs, grubs, plants, etc.). They are however, not organic, since they are fed supplemental non-organic chicken feed.

Josh's pasture-raised eggs come from his farm near Wilcox. Josh rotates his cattle and hens on alfalfa fields (much like at the Polyface Farm described in Michael Pollan's book *The Omnivore's Dilemma*). The delicious flavor and intensely dark yolks of Josh's eggs result from the predominance of rich greens in the hens' diet.

Estancia Farm eggs are from their orchard in Dragoon that also supplies us with apple cider. Their hens are fruit-fed rather than pasture-fed. They receive the apples and pears that aren't fit to be sold or made into cider but make great poultry food.

We also receive eggs from other CSA members who raise happy free-range hens. We've called them "backyard eggs" in the past, but we're now giving them their own individual names so that CSA members will get the best possible information about the eggs:

Jacob's Pride eggs are from Debbie who raises goats on Jacob's Pride Farm in Marana.

Mary's eggs come from her farm in Tucson. Mary also raises heritage turkeys and has a miniature cow named Bonnie who produces milk.

Lori's duck and hen eggs are from her farm in Tucson.

CSA CREW HIGHLIGHT: WENDY

Wendy McCrady first learned about the CSA on *Tucson Community Earth Day 2006* and immediately signed up. It only took a few months before she became a volunteer and now we can barely get her to go home. She often says that the CSA produce reminds her of the huge family garden in Sierra Vista when she was young.

Wendy works mostly behind the scenes: she keeps the backroom organized, organizes curbside pick-ups when we need them, produces the newsletter now and then and performs a number of crucial administrative tasks. She is also a keen environmentalist and she never ceases to impress us all with the creativity and dedication she applies to reuse, recycle, and leave as small an ecological footprint as she can.

Wendy credits the CSA with renewing her interest in canning, something she hadn't done since she was a child helping her mother. At a spontaneous sampling she held last year, members commented they hadn't tasted watermelon rind pickles since their own childhoods. She loves to create delicious vegan recipes and likes finding uses for every part of the CSA share. In her refrigerator and pantry, you can find candied grapefruit pith, dried carrot leaves, and dried cornsilk, alongside olives she gathered from local trees and cured herself. Feel free to ask her for ideas on uses for your CSA share.



Grilled Fava Beans

TheFoodSection.com



This recipe is a good way to skip the labor-intensive shelling and skinning of fava beans.

First, season the raw beans generously with salt and toss with olive oil. Place the pods on the grill and cook until blackened and soft. As the pods pop and blister on the outside, they steam within.

When they have sufficiently charred on both sides, remove the pods from the grill, let cool, and then pry them open to reveal the beans, which may be slipped from their thin skins or eaten whole, skin and all. The salty, meaty beans are as tasty as they are easy to prepare.

Three Bean Salad with Nopalitos

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This salad is a take on the traditional canned three bean salad. The different colors and sizes add interest, but you can use just one type of bean for convenience.

2 nopal pads, grilled or broiled and cut into bite size pieces

- 1 cup cooked white beans
- 1 cup cooked kidney beans
- 1 cup cooked black beans
- ½ bunch green onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients and stir well to mix. Let salad sit for at least one hour before serving.

Parsnip Carrot Bisque

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 2 small potatoes, chopped
- 3 parsnips, chopped
- 3 carrots, chopped
- 1 bunch green onion, chopped
- 1 inch fresh ginger, grated
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 can coconut milk
- 1 pinch nutmeg
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium high heat. Add veggies and ginger and stir to coat. Add coconut milk plus one can water. Bring to a boil, then simmer about 20 minutes until veggies are tender. Add nutmeg,

salt and pepper. Puree soup in blender in small batches and serve garnished with nutmeg.

Bechamel Sauce and its Partners

Steamed spring time vegetables covered with a quick and classic French béchamel sauce make an easy and delicious side dish. The technique for making this sauce is fairly straightforward and there is plenty of room for variation.

- 2 tablespoons butter (or oil)
- About 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 cup liquid (milk, cream or soy milk, or stock)

Melt the butter in a heavy bottom sauce pan over low heat. Sprinkle in flour and stir to combine. Cook, stirring, for about 3 minutes. Slowly add liquid, stirring quickly with a wire whisk or fork. Add any additional ingredients and stir until sauce is thick and smooth. Add more liquid if the béchamel becomes too thick. Remove from heat and season with salt to taste.

Use this béchamel as a base for the following dishes:

Parsnips with Curry Sauce

Steam parsnips and/or carrots, until tender. Prepare basic béchamel sauce, adding 1 teaspoon Garam Masala powder after liquid is stirred in. Pour sauce over steamed parsnips and serve.

Favas in Parsley Sauce

Prepare fava beans. Make basic béchamel sauce, adding chopped parsley along with salt, after sauce has been removed from heat. Stir favas into the sauce and garnish with more parsley to serve.

Creamy New Potatoes with Green Onion

Steam new potatoes and chop 3 stalks of green onion. Prepare basic béchamel sauce, adding onion and about 1 teaspoon of lemon juice after removing from heat. Break potatoes into halves and cover with sauce.

Roasted Beets in Dill Sauce

Roast beets until tender, remove skins. Prepare basic béchamel sauce, adding 1 teaspoon dried dill leaf after liquid is stirred in. Pour sauce over beets and serve.

Nopalitos in Red Sauce

Boil and drain nopales. Prepare basic béchamel sauce, substituting ½ tablespoon flour with ½ tablespoon mild chile powder. Stir nopalitos into sauce and serve over corn tortillas.

Nopalitos in Cheese Sauce

Boil and drain nopales. Prepare basic béchamel sauce, adding ¼ teaspoon of nutmeg and ½ cup of grated Cheddar or Swiss cheese. Stir nopalitos into sauce and serve with steamed carrots and boiled potatoes.

