



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 172 ~ January 19, 2009 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Winter 08-09

WEEK 7 of 12

Harvest list is online

(<http://www.tucsoncsa.org>)

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More recipes online

(<http://www.tucsoncsa.org/recipes/>)

Urban Farming with Kim Fox

Join Tucson's own urban micro-farmer and food activist, Kim Fox, to learn the basics of vegetable and herb gardening, fruit production, raising chickens, composting, vermiculture, seed saving and more!



Kim has over 25 years of farming and gardening experience. She has traveled to over 20 countries observing foodways. Kim was featured on PBS "Arizona Illustrated," and is also a regular guest on GCN radio program "The Easy Organic Gardener."

Demonstrations and hands-on course work at Pachamama's Garden (downtown Tucson): February 8, 2009, 1-4:30pm. Cost is \$35, with limited space.

For more information and to register, call 520-622-1917.

Newsletter Editor

Kimi Eisele

BUILD A HOME FOR BEES: WINTER PREP FOR SPRING POLLINATORS

Have a little extra time on hand this winter? It's the perfect time to build a small house in your yard or garden for solitary bees.

Though we often think of bees as living by the hundreds of thousands in large colonies, over 90% of all bee species are *solitary bees*. They live on their own, so to speak, and are critical pollinators in our region when they emerge in the spring.

Some bee researchers suggest that the economic value of pollination and fruit formation offered by solitary bees outweighs that of honey and wax produced by honeybees.

Solitary bees come in a variety of shapes and colors—from black to metallic green, even blue or red. Mason bees, plasterer bees, digger bees, sweat bees, and carpenter bees are all common solitary bees.

Over 1000 solitary bee species exist in the Sonoran Desert. While honeybees and bumblebees will gather pollen from any kind of plant, solitary bees are often *oligoleges*, and only gather pollen from one or a few kinds of plants. Creosote is one such plant for some solitary bee species in the Southwest. Some 23 species are cactus bees, offering important pollination for our famous cacti.

Some solitary bees do build nests in groups, particularly when there is a choice spot. Still, solitary bees tend to be non-aggressive since they do not have a large nest of offspring to protect.

Each female creates her own nest for offspring—in the ground, in cracks in the wall, or in wood. After gathering nectar and pollen for food, she forms it into a small ball upon which she deposits an egg and then leaves. Once the egg hatches, the larva eats the pollen ball and begins its transformation into an adult. In the spring, the bee emerges and the cycle repeats.

You can easily build a home for solitary bees out of non-treated 4-by-4" scrap wood. Using any sized drill bit between 1/8" to 5/16," drill holes about 90% through the wood, about 1/2 inch apart for each bee nest. Place homes in your yard or near your garden at a southern or eastern facing exposure and enjoy watching them hover!

For more information about solitary bees and bee houses, visit:

<http://www.dry-ideas.com/2008/05/make-your-own-solitary-bee-house.html>

http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Beekeeping/Solitary_Bees

(Sources: National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service, Wikipedia, and The University of Arizona Africanized Honey Bee Education Project).



Italian Bean and Potato Soup with Greens

Lorraine Glazer, Tucson CSA member

1 14-1/2 ounce can diced tomatoes
8 ounces white tepary beans, soaked and boiled to tender or
2- 15 ounce cans cannellini beans, undrained
1 teaspoon olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
2 medium cloves garlic, peeled and minced
1 small bell pepper, stemmed, seeded and finely chopped
3/4 teaspoon dried Italian herb seasoning, crushed
1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary or 2 teaspoons fresh chopped
rosemary
1 large red potato, about 8 ounces, diced
2 cups vegetable broth
1 cup water
1 share braising greens, chopped
Optional: Grated Parmesan or Romano cheese

Mash about half the beans with a fork and set this aside. In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add onion, cover pan and cook five minutes, stirring occasionally. Add garlic, bell pepper, Italian seasoning and rosemary, cover, and continue cooking about five more minutes. Stir in tomatoes with their liquid, mashed beans, whole beans, the potato, the broth and the water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium low, cover and simmer 25 minutes. Stir occasionally. Stir in the greens and cook 10 minutes. Sprinkle with grated cheese before serving.

Curried Wheat Berry Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

3 cups cooked wheat berries
1/2 onion sliced
1-2 cups diced, mixed vegetables (sweet potatoes or winter squash are especially good)
1/2 bunch chard, roughly chopped
1/2 cup apple juice
2 tablespoons oil
2 tablespoons curry powder
1 apple, diced
1/4 cup raisins
1/4 cup almonds or cashews

Sauté onions in oil over medium high heat. Cook until lightly brown, then add other vegetables and curry powder and cook until tender. Stir in wheat berries, apples, raisins. Serve topped with chopped nuts.

Wheat Berry Muffins

Lori Adkison, Tucson CSA

2 Eggs
2/3 cup plain yogurt
1/3 cup vegetable oil
2/3 cup cooked wheat berries
3/4 cup all purpose flour
3/4 cup whole wheat flour

1 tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
Zest from 1 orange

Beat together eggs, yogurt and oil until well blended. Stir in wheat berries. Mix together dry ingredients and stir into wet ingredients. Fill muffin tins 2/3 full and bake for 20 minutes or until they test done. When muffins are cool, drizzle with orange glaze.

Orange Glaze:

1/2 cup powdered sugar
1 tablespoon orange juice
Whisk juice and sugar together until smooth.

Vegetable Hash

Inez Whipple, Tucson CSA member

2 medium potatoes, scrubbed and cut into 1/2" cubes
1-2 tablespoon olive oil
1 medium onion, chopped
4 veggie breakfast "sausage" links (optional)
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/8 teaspoon or less cayenne pepper
1/4 teaspoon ground sage
1 large bunch winter greens, washed and chopped 1 small tomato
or a small handful of cherry tomatoes, chopped
salt and black pepper to taste

Heat the oil over medium heat in a non-stick frying pan, add the potatoes and cover. Cook the potatoes until they are about halfway cooked through, then add the onions and links, if using, and continue cooking. When the onions are translucent, add the spices and cook for another minute or two. Cover and cook until the potatoes are pretty much cooked through and then add the greens, the tomatoes, and about a tablespoon of water. Cover and cook until the greens are cooked. Salt and pepper to taste. Stir the mixture until everything is thoroughly combined and serve. Serves 2-4 persons.

Slow Cooker Risotto with Swiss Chard

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
1 3/4 cups uncooked Arborio rice
2 (14 ounce) cans reduced sodium broth, vegetable or chicken
1/2 cup dry white wine
Dash salt
1/2 bunch Swiss chard, rinsed clean, well-dried and coarsely chopped

Heat olive oil in small skillet. Add onion and cook until softened, 4 to 5 minutes. Place in slow cooker. Add rice and toss well to coat. Stir in broth, wine, salt and Swiss chard. Cover and cook on high 2 to 2 1/2 hours or until all liquid is absorbed.