



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Winter '09 Week 3 of 11

Harvest list is online

HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO ALL!



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Pistachios

Pistachios are related to cashews and mangoes. They are a good source of protein and are high in potassium. When unsalted, they are low in sodium. The pistachio kernel is surrounded by a shell which in turn is surrounded by a hull.

Crooked Sky Farms' pistachios are raw, with hull and shell. They are delicious raw but they can also be roasted (see recipe on back page).

December Holidays -Reminder

There will be no pickups during Christmas week and New Year's Week.

The last pickups of the year are on Tuesday, December 15 and Friday, December 18.

There will be no optional pickup on Tuesday, December 22.

After December 18, the next pickups will be on Tuesday, January 5 and Friday, January 8.

Newsletter Editors

Philippe Waterinckx

HOW TO GROW VEGETABLES WITHOUT CHEMICALS

Farmer Frank says that the key to growing things naturally is observation. On one of Frank's first farms, people used to spray pesticides; when he took the farm over he was told that he wouldn't be able to grow there without using pesticides because of the heavy infestation of army worms that mostly attack beets. He went ahead and grew his first beets, which ended up with worm rings around them. He tried to sell them as 'pesticide free' but as he says, "people still buy with their eyes," and want their veggies to look good, so he decided to abandon the beets, and ordered his man to disk-till the soil. Once the disking was done, Frank noticed that thousands of birds suddenly flew in and started eating the worms. He repeated the disking a few more times, and eventually the army worms were gone. "You try to observe what is going on," says Frank.

Frank also selects his plants with an eye to sustaining helpful fauna. For example, ladybugs are known for eating bad pests (although few people know that they only do so in their larval stage and not in their adult stage). "You can go and buy ladybugs at places like Home Depot," Frank says, "but you can't actually buy the ladybugs, you can only rent them – ladybugs are like homing pigeons, they will always return to where they were hatched, or at least try to, so they will leave your garden as soon as you release them if there is no reason for them to stay. The nectar of certain types of plants is what makes them stay. That's why we not only plant certain things at the farm, such as arugula, dill, carrots and mustards, but we also let them bloom and go to seed in the field, to provide food for the adult ladybugs and encourage them to stay and lay eggs. Once you have a generation of ladybugs born in your field, they are likely to stay. You see, there is a method to our madness," he says with a smile.

From the Crooked Sky Farms website

SUDDEN FROST DAMAGES SOME CROPS AT CROOKED SKY FARMS

Winter greens are generally resistant to mild frost, but only when the temperatures decrease gradually. When the thermometer at the farm dropped from 85 to freezing overnight, the greens had no time to harden and some of them got frostbite. The kale was hardest hit. Luckily, this is only a temporary setback. When greens get frostbite they can be cut back and they grow anew. In milder cases, only the outer leaves get frostbite and can simply be removed at harvest time.

DEALING WITH MUSTARD GREENS



We get two main types of mustard greens from Crooked Sky Farms: curly mustards and flatleaf mustards. Both are tasty and packed with beneficial nutrients, but they are also spicy. If their spiciness is too much for your palate, there are ways to deal with them. One is to simply blanch the greens in boiling water until they wilt before using them in a



recipe. Another one is to combine them with fatty foods, such as cheese, milk, cream, or lard. Both techniques are effective at counteracting the spiciness of spicy greens.

Examples of dishes that moderate mustard greens spiciness are mustard greens gratin, lasagna, scalloped potatoes and greens, and squash and greens in coconut milk. These recipes, along with many others, can be found in the Tucson CSA online recipe archive.

Beet Sushi

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

The vibrant color of cooked beets looks a lot like the raw tuna used in sushi rolls. Tossed with a little bit of vinegar and sugar, beets provide an unexpected, but delicious vegetarian alternative to fish. You can make actual sushi rolls, which require a bit of manual dexterity and fancy chopping techniques, or you can toss all the ingredients together in a salad and simply garnish with crumbled nori.

2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
2 teaspoons sugar
2 ½ cups cooked short grain rice
4+ sheets nori (seaweed wrappers), whole for rolls and crumbled for the salad
1 bunch beets, cooked, peeled and cut into ½ inch strips
2-3 small carrots, sliced into matchsticks for rolls or diced simply for a salad
½ bunch green onions, sliced in half lengthwise for rolls or roughly chopped for salad
2 teaspoons soy sauce
1 teaspoon wasabi paste

Mix the vinegar and sugar together, and stir until sugar is dissolved. Toss half of the mixture with the cooked rice and the other half with the cooked beets. Assemble rolls by spreading a thin layer of rice over the top ½ of a sheet of nori. Add the vegetables across the top half of the rice, then roll up, starting at the top end where the rice comes all the way to the edge of the nori. Ideally, you want the rice on the top of the roll to just meet the rice where it ends in the middle as you roll up your sushi. A sushi mat is helpful but not necessary. (There are more detailed instructions at various places on the web.) Seal the edge with water. Use a very sharp knife to cut into bite size pieces. Mix wasabi paste with soy sauce. If making a simple salad, use this for a dressing. If making rolls, use this mixture as a dipping sauce.

Candied Citrus Peel

Lori Adkison, Tucson CSA

This is an easy way to make candied citrus peels. Use a vegetable peeler or paring knife to peel long strips of zest. Try to avoid peeling the white pith along with the zest, it can be quite bitter. You can store the cooked peels in the fridge, in their syrup, or put them on a drying rack, sprinkle with sugar, and dry until brittle. Dried peels will store well in an airtight container. They make excellent additions to cakes and pies, granola and ice cream. The simple syrup that the peels are cooked in has a delicious citrus taste, too. Use it in cocktails or other drinks.

For about 1 cup of citrus peel you will need a simple syrup of:

1 ½ cups white sugar
1 ½ cups water

Put zest in a medium saucepan and cover completely with water. Bring to a boil over high heat. Drain water and repeat the boiling and draining two more times. Make a simple syrup by dissolving the sugar in boiling water and returning to a boil. Then add peels and return to a boil. Remove from heat, let cool and transfer to a jar for storage in fridge.

Collards and Quinoa

Laurel Lacher, TCSA

This is a simple side dish. Consider using this as a stuffing for winter squash, topping with cheese, if desired, and baking until squash is tender.

1 cup dry quinoa
2 cups water
1 bunch collard greens, stems removed and coarsely chopped
1 bouillon cube (veggie or chicken)

Put quinoa, water, and bouillon cube in a 2-quart pot and bring to a boil. Add collards, stir, and reduce heat to simmer.

Continue cooking 10-15 minutes until quinoa is done and all of water is absorbed.

Squash and Greens in Coconut Milk

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is a very simple, yet tasty recipe, with lots of room for innovation. If you like curry flavors, add more spices to the mix, sautéing them with the onions before adding the rest of the ingredients. You can also add tofu, garbanzo beans or cooked chicken for a complete meal, served over rice.

1 bunch CSA greens, cleaned and roughly chopped
About 2 cups peeled winter squash, diced small
1 inch fresh ginger, grated
1 onion, sliced thinly
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
2 teaspoons oil
1/2 can coconut milk
Red chile flakes, to taste
Soy sauce, to taste
Lime juice

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium high heat and add onion. Cook until beginning to brown. Add ginger, chile flakes and coriander and cook until fragrant. Add vegetables and coconut milk, plus about 1/4 cup of water. Bring to a low simmer and cook until squash is tender. Season to taste with soy sauce and a bit of lime juice.

How To Roast Pistachios

Philippe, Tucson CSA

For 2 cups of pistachios (in their shell):

Preheat the oven to 250 degrees F.

In a saucepan, add 1 teaspoon of salt to 1/4 cup of water and bring to a boil.

Add 2 cups of pistachios, bring back to a boil, and stir until all the water has evaporated.

Place the salted pistachios onto a cookie sheet in a single layer and cook in the oven for 1 1/2 to 2 hours.

Stir the pistachios every 30 minutes while they are being roasted, to ensure an even roasting.

Let cool and store in an airtight container.