



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 239 ~ May 17, 2010 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Spring '10 - Week 12 of 13

Harvest list is online

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Many more recipes on
our online recipe archive

Summer session is 2 weeks away

If you haven't already done so, remember to get your summer subscription in before we run out of space! The priority registration for current members is over and new and former members are now being subscribed. As of today, May 17, there are 30 Tuesday shares and 100 Wednesday shares left.

Volunteers needed!!!

With several of our crew gone for part of the summer, we need volunteers to fill in for helping to unload the truck and to set up on both pickup days. We also need volunteers to staff the front desk. If you're interested, see Sara or Philippe at the CSA.



This week during pickup hours come listen to Kim Fox's plans for her amazing bicycle Food Trek to Europe this summer. Donations or in-kind support to Kim will ensure that fresh and enriching ideas, beyond the American perspective, will benefit our community's local-sustainable food system.

Newsletter Editor

Philippe Waterinckx

FRESH FROM THE FIELDS



After the bounty of winter and spring, the end of the spring session is often somewhat anti-climactic. The transition between spring and summer crops can be a challenging time at the farm, especially if the weather is not co-operating. Spring crops are coming to an end while summer crops are not quite ready. For example, this year the cucumbers are late because of the cool spring we've had, but it's already too hot for the greens.

But if you could only see the fields, you'd know that the promise of summer bounty is about to be fulfilled. Summer is a harsh season in southern Arizona, yet it is also a very rewarding one. Nothing heightens the pleasures of summer better than the freshness of a watermelon, the aroma of roasted sweet corn and, of course, the flavor of sun-ripened heirloom tomatoes.

The summer squash are ready, both yellow squash and Mexican grays, with more varieties to come later in the season. The wheat has been freshly harvested, and green and gold beans will soon be ready to be picked. Tomatillos are still ripening on the vines. There will be fewer Armenian cucumbers this year, and more of the slicer-type, English cucumber. It seems that members were a bit overwhelmed with the Armenian cucumber avalanche of last year and the farm has decided plant fewer Armenians this year.

And the tomatoes, aaah, the tomatoes! They will be plentiful. Farmer Frank planted five acres of them, or 32,000 plants, about four times as much as last year, and more varieties too! The first ones should start appearing in our shares in two to three weeks.

We've had a long stretch with few onions this past winter and spring, but they are now out of the ground and ready to roll: Grand Canyon Sweets, Vidalias and of course, Crooked Sky Farms' very own delightful Glendale Gold onions.

Melons will have a strong presence again. Frank has selected 14 varieties, including cantaloupe and different varieties of watermelons.

You've already sampled the latest crop of potatoes, both the Red LaSoda and the Yukon Gold harvested in April. Those have been sorted by size and are being stored at the farm. We'll see them in our shares for a while. We are getting the smaller ones first as they don't store as long as the larger ones.

Last summer we didn't get much corn. This year, the farm has planted twice as much of it. Corn harvest usually starts in June. During the first few weeks, there are often corn borers in the ears of corn, which make them a bit unsightly, but after a while the tiny Trichogramma wasps get to work and make them disappear. They just need a few weeks to catch up, just as the ladybugs and lacewings do with the aphids in spring. Integrated pest management in action!

GONE FOR PART OF THE SUMMER?

During summer, many members drift in and out of town. If you're looking to sell part of your summer share, or buy part of a share from a member, use of our bulletin board (above the trading table). We have ready-to-go cards which you can complete and pin to the board. If you're on Facebook, you can also use our Facebook page to connect with other members who might be looking for a buyer or a seller.

Wheat Berries, Simplified

Paula Borchardt, Tucson CSA

Those bags of wheat berries sitting on your shelf don't have to be intimidating or time consuming! Here's an easy way to take care of them.

Rinse the wheat berries in a mesh strainer under running water. Skim off the chaff: put the wheat berries in a bowl of water, briskly stir the wheat berries with a spoon, and use a small strainer to skim off the chaff that floats to the top of the bowl. Alternate stirring and skimming until no more chaff floats to the top of the bowl. The little black mustard and/or amaranth seeds are harmless. Soak overnight in the bowl of water. Cook: drain the water, add fresh water (about 4 cups water per cup of wheat berries), and cook in a slow cooker on low for 6 hours.

Editors Note: At this point you can drain any water left with the wheat berries, cool, and store in the fridge for up to a week. Use the wheat berries as a base for a hearty grain salad, a breakfast porridge, and many other sweet or savory dishes throughout the week.

Tuscan Wheat Berry Soup

Simon Stump, Tucson CSA

(Recipe from Lela Cesari Ciampoli, Italian cooking instructor)

7 oz dry wheat berries
7 oz pinto beans (dry or canned), (lentils work in a pinch)
1 small red onion
1 carrot
1 stick of celery
1 teaspoon of tomato sauce or paste
Olive oil
Salt and pepper
Rosemary and parsley

If using fresh beans, soak them in 3 cups of cold salted water for 12 hours. Boil them for a half hour. Once the beans are cooked, place half the beans in a blender with as much of their cooking water as is needed (if using canned beans, add bean juice from the can), to mix to a smooth homogenous liquid. Dice the carrot, celery, herbs, and onion to a very tiny dice (do not puree it if using a food processor). Sauté vegetables in a large saucepan in a generous amount of olive oil. Once the vegetables have changed color, add tomato sauce. After about 10 minutes, pour in the pureed and whole beans. Add salt, pepper, herbs, and wheat berries. Cook for about an hour, occasionally adding additional bean water (or water) as needed. Soup is best if you remove it from the heat and let it sit for at least an hour after it has cooked.

Stuffed Artichoke

Philippe, Tucson CSA

Note: Adjust this recipe as needed for as many artichokes as you have. It is best to prepare them all at once, since they take so long to cook! Save leftovers for a treat later in the week.

1 artichoke
1 small onion
2 garlic cloves
Oil, vinegar, salt, pepper, herbs

With a sharp knife, remove the top third of the artichoke as well as the stem. With scissors, cut the remaining sharp tips off the leaves. Using your thumbs, separate the leaves as much as you can. Don't hesitate to apply force – artichokes are tough babes! Peel an onion, cut it in half, and slice it into 1/3" thick strips. Peel two cloves of garlic and cut them into 4 to 6 slices each. Insert the garlic slices and ends of the onion strips among the leaves. Pack in as many as you can! Place artichoke in a small saucepan. Fill the pan with water halfway up the height of the artichoke. Pour 1/4 cup oil and 1/4 cup vinegar over the top of the artichoke. Sprinkle the artichoke with salt, pepper, and thyme, Italian herbs, or Herbes de Provence (or any seasoning of your choice). Cover, bring to a boil, and simmer for 1 to 1-1/2 hours. Serve hot, warm or cold, by itself or with a garlic-butter dip.

Grapefruit Curd

Adapted from How to be a Domestic Goddess
by Nigella Lawson

Citrus curd, most commonly associated with lemon or lime, is a delicious way to transform citrus. Use any citrus you like. Tangelos and grapefruits will work well on their own as they have a nice, tart flavor. If you want to use sweeter citrus, make sure to use half lemon juice to keep the tart flavor. The curd will freeze well for future use.

6 tablespoons unsalted butter
3 large eggs
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup citrus juice
About 1 tablespoon citrus zest

Melt butter in a saucepan over low heat. Add the rest of the ingredients, stirring well to prevent burning and clumps. Cook, stirring, until the mixture has thickened to a mayonnaise-like consistency. Pour into a jar, where mixture will continue to thicken into a spreadable curd. Refrigerate and use within 1 week, or freeze.