



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 242 ~ June 7, 2010 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Summer '10 - Week 2 of 13

Harvest list is online

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*Many more recipes on
our online recipe archive*

It's Cheese Share Week!

For those who have a cheese share, remember to pick it up at the front desk. Cheese shares come on even-numbered pickup weeks (weeks 2, 4, 6, etc.).

Iskashitaa Citrus

Sometimes you may see crates full of citrus on the bench past the CSA produce line. Those are local citrus harvested by Iskashitaa Refugee Harvesting Network. Iskashitaa is a local non-profit aimed at helping the integration of refugees who arrive in Tucson from all over the world. One of Iskashitaa's projects is to harvest fruit from local backyards and farms that would otherwise go to waste, and to re-distribute it among the refugee community.

We sometimes get extra fruit from them, for our members. If you'd like to get extra grapefruit just grab some from the Iskashitaa crates. Donations to Iskashitaa are of course welcome (there is a donation jar next to the crates).

If you have a garden with surplus or unused fruit and you would like Iskashitaa to harvest it, contact them via www.iskashitaa.org.

The Tucson CSA also donates to Iskashitaa the unclaimed produce shares from the Tuesday pickup. The unclaimed shares from the Wednesday pickup go to Comin' Home, a local non-profit which supports homeless veterans (www.cominhome.org).

Newsletter Editor

Philippe Waterinckx

THE FIRST CORN



Crooked Sky Farm's sweet corn is here, and that's wonderful. Be warned though that during the first few weeks, the ears of corn may show some damage from corn borers, i.e. the small caterpillars of a moth. That's because Farmer Frank does not use pesticides. Instead he lets a natural predator, the Trichogramma wasp, handle the situation. Trichogramma is a tiny black wasp, almost too small to see with the naked eye, that lays its eggs inside the eggs of the corn borer moth. As the wasps hatch, they feed on the corn borer's eggs. However, it takes a few weeks for the wasp population to catch up with that of the corn borers, and that allows the corn borers to inflict initial damage to the corn crop. This doesn't mean that the corn is bad: you just have to eat around the damaged parts. The good parts will still be delicious.

We ask that you do not pry open to corn husks to check the ears when picking them up. We apologize if they are not perfect during the first few weeks of corn season. This is the nature of a CSA.

JOSH'S PASTURE-RAISED EGGS AND CHICKENS

Josh's farm, at the foot of Dos Cabezas mountain, is like few others. Josh raises his animals in a natural, sustainable and sensible way, just like Michael Pollan describes in his book "The Omnivore's Dilemma" when he talks about Joel Salatin's Polyface Farm. Josh periodically moves his animals to fresh pastures to give them constant access to fresh grass. His chickens spend their lives on pasture, eating grass and bugs, as well as Josh's own chicken feed mix, which includes GMO-free corn, oyster shells and an organic mineral mix. If Josh's chickens seem pricy, it's because they are raised humanely and naturally, a far cry from the inhumane conditions of large-scale chickens operations, even so-called free-range ones: did you know that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires that "free-range chickens" have access to the outside, but the definition of "outside" is very loose – there is no requirement for access to pasture, and there may be access to only dirt or gravel. Josh's chickens are truly pasture-raised and free-range. Thanks to plenty of exercise, an outdoors life and a natural diet, Josh's chickens are firm and flavorful, like chickens should be. When cooking them, avoid roasting them in the oven, or they may come out tougher or drier than you might expect. For wonderfully tender and moist meat, cook them using a moist heat method, such as braising, Dutch oven, clay oven, or stewing.

Josh's eggs are amazing, too, with their rich, dark orange yolks and firm texture! That's because his hens eat lots of greens, which also makes the eggs high in beneficial omega-3 fatty acids. If you've tried Josh's eggs, you know that there is no going back. Their quality is of an order of magnitude above even the best grocery store eggs. True, they seem expensive to those accustomed to cheap eggs. The sad truth is that cheap eggs, like cheap chicken meat, come from hens that live in terrible conditions. The USDA provides no legal definition of what makes an egg free-range, and free-range egg producers don't even have a common standard for what the term means. Many egg farmers sell their eggs as free range merely because their cages are two or three inches above average size, or because there is a window in the shed. Don't believe the pastoral pictures and labels you see on egg cartons! The reality is not what you are led to believe. When you consider the quality, nutritional value, flavor and production method of Josh's eggs, it becomes hard to claim that they are expensive. Consider the price of a dozen of Josh's eggs compared to the latte from your favorite coffee shop...

Browned Butter Peaches

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is a decadent but easy recipe. Serve these peaches with a scoop of plain vanilla ice cream or use them to top pancakes or crepes.

1 basket peaches, pitted and sliced into bite-size pieces
2 tablespoons brown sugar
2 tablespoons butter

Toss peaches with brown sugar. In a medium skillet, heat butter over medium heat, about 2-3 minutes, until fragrant and just beginning to brown. Place peaches in butter and cook an additional 2-3 minutes, until nicely caramelized on the bottom.



Sara's Stuffed Squash

Sara, Tucson CSA

In this recipe, wheat berries and lentils provide the protein and texture of cooked ground beef. If you like, you can substitute ground beef for the wheat and lentils.

1 large or 2 medium squash
1/3 cup wheat berries
1/3 cup lentils
1/2 cup shredded carrot (if available)
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tomatoes, chopped
1/2 teaspoon oregano
1/2 teaspoon thyme
1/2 teaspoon cumin
Salt and pepper to taste
Mozzarella or goat cheese for topping

Sort wheat berries and lentils to remove any debris. Bring 6 cups of water to a boil in a large saucepan and add wheat berries. Keep berries at a low boil for 30 minutes and then add lentils. Boil for another 30 minutes until tender. Keep an eye on the mixture and add water as needed, then drain any excess water once tender. Heat oil in skillet and sauté carrots, onions and garlic over medium high heat for about 5 minutes. Add herbs and spices, tomatoes and salt and pepper. Combine all ingredients in saucepan and cook, covered, over medium low heat for about 10 minutes. Cut squash in half lengthwise and use a spoon to scrape out seeds. Lay the squash cut side up in a baking dish and add a generous portion of the filling. Cover with cheese and bake for 30 minutes in a 350 degree oven.

Calabacitas

From www.recipezaar.com

1 large summer squash
1 tablespoon oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 ears of corn, kernels scraped off
1 tomato, quartered
2 chiles
1/2 cup cilantro or Mexican oregano, chopped
1 pinch salt
1/2 cup cheddar cheese or queso fresco

In a skillet, sauté onions in oil until tender. Add garlic, squash, and tomato; cook for another 5 minutes. Mix in chopped chilies, corn. Add cheese. Cover and simmer for 10-15 minutes (or bake 20 minutes at 350). Add cilantro before serving.

Picnic Potato Salad

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

2 pounds potatoes cut into bite-sized pieces
3 tablespoons white balsamic vinegar (divided use)
3 tablespoons smooth style Dijon mustard
2-4 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 cup finely chopped red onion
1 pound cherry tomatoes, cut in half
Salt and pepper
Chopped fresh basil to taste

Boil the potatoes until tender. Drain, spread on cookie sheet or large platter and sprinkle with 1 tablespoon white vinegar while still warm. Beat the remaining vinegar together with the mustard and slowly add olive oil to make a dressing, adding salt and pepper to taste. Separately marinate the tomatoes and the potatoes in the mustard dressing. Just before serving, combine the two, add the onions, and garnish with chopped fresh basil.

Grapefruit Seltzer

This is an incredibly refreshing drink in the summer heat and it can be made with any citrus. Much healthier than store-bought lemonade! Whenever you have more citrus than you can handle at any one time, squeeze it and freeze the juice in ice cube trays for a seltzer treat on another hot day. Add a bit of crushed mint or basil for an extra twist.

1 part grapefruit juice
1 part sparkling water
Agave nectar or simple syrup, to taste

Stir together juice and agave nectar, about 2 teaspoons per cup of juice. Add sparkling water and taste for sweetness, adding more nectar if desired. Serve over ice.