



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 248 ~ July 19, 2010 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Summer '10 - Week 8 of 13

Harvest list is online

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Many more recipes on
our online recipe archive

Heirloom Tomatoes-In-Bulk \$1.75/lb

This might be the last week we take orders! (Sorry we're not sure, but since we can't predict the weather precisely, we can't predict the harvest.)



Order them one week, pick them up the following week. Ask at the front desk!

\$25 per 14-15 lbs flat (~ \$1.75/lb).

A \$10 deposit will be asked if you take home the farm container, so for your convenience, bring your own cardboard box if you can.

Call For Bags

We are low on bags. Remember to bring your own if you can. Also, if you have extra bags to recycle, please give them to us (standard paper or plastic grocery bags only).

Also, did you know that major grocery stores now have bins where you can recycle your plastic grocery bags?

Newsletter Editor

Philippe Waterinckx and Kimi Eisele



OKRA

This season you're going to magically fall in love with okra. At least try? Yeah, yeah, it's fuzzy on the outside and sticky on the inside. But so are peaches, right? Kinda-sorta?

Okra, also called "lady's finger" or "gumbo," kind of looks like a lady's finger, except it's green and maybe thicker. This tropical vegetable, first found in Ethiopia and Sudan, is a member of the mallow family. It later made its way to the Middle East and India, where it remains a popular ingredient. Okra came to North and South America via the Atlantic slave trade. Its most popular iteration in America was in the thick meat or shellfish stew called "gumbo", from the Bantu "kingombo", still a culinary trademark in Louisiana and other Gulf Coast states.

Low in calories, okra is rich in Vitamins A precursors, Vitamins B6, and C, as well as in thiamin, folic acid, riboflavin, calcium, zinc and dietary fiber. Okra is also good for the gastrointestinal system and can be used to treat irritable bowels and ulcers. It can be eaten whole or sliced, steamed, sautéed, stewed or raw. It can also be dried and ground into a powder to thicken soups and sauces. Fried okra and pickled okra are delicious as well!

The characteristic "gumminess" results when cut okra contacts water. So, after washing it, be sure that it is completely dry before cutting it. While the gumminess doesn't bother some of us, for others, cooking okra pods whole and quickly can reduce it. Also, avoid overcooking; try okra cooked just al dente. Stir-frying or cooking it with citrus, vinegar, tomatoes or other acidic foods also minimizes gumminess. Or use it to your advantage – okra pretty much dissolves when it's sliced and cooked for a long time, such as in a gumbo or stew, where it thickens the consistency.

But if you just can't get yourself to eat okra, use it to liven up your hair! Slice and boil to create a thick liquid, then cool and use as a rinse...then—Poof!—you've got hair with body and bounce!

MORE MELONS?

I know, we've had a lot of them. Two melons per share per week is quite a load. Why so many? There are two reasons. Melons do well in this climate, so Farmer Frank always plants them, as they pretty much are a guaranteed crop. It so happens that this year is a bumper crop for melons, so there are more of them than usual. Which leads to the other reason: this year melons are also a backup crop. It seems to be a bad year for corn and cucumbers. The cucumbers have simply not delivered and the first corn harvest wasn't great (although we still have high hopes for the second corn harvest which is coming soon). So, in essence, the surplus melons are replacing the under-performing cucumbers and corn. Although Farmer Frank plants diversified crops to minimize such occurrences, they are to some extent inherent in the nature of a CSA.

TWO DELIVERIES PER WEEK?

It seems that a lot of people are thinking that we are only get one delivery per week for both pickup days. I wonder why that is? Maybe it is because they see all these boxes of produce piled up high inside the CSA on Tuesdays. When one looks at those piles of boxes, it does indeed look like a lot of produce and it is understandable that someone might think that all that produce is for two pickup days. However, it is not: those piles are gone by the end of the Tuesday pickup day. Anything left over is donated to charity. On Wednesday, the farm truck delivers fresh produce.

Quick Honeydew Sorbet

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Cut up and freeze your melon and you can have this easy sorbet any time you like.

4 cups frozen honeydew melon
1-2 cups apple juice
1 handful fresh mint (optional)
Sugar, as desired

Using the pulse button, mix melon and 1 cup juice in food processor or blender. Add more liquid as needed to make a soft sorbet. Add sugar, if needed and serve immediately.

Melon Salsa

Nicole Baugh, Tucson CSA

This colorful salsa is a nice way to use melon in a savory, rather than sweet, setting. It's good on chips, with quesadillas or served on top of chicken or fish.

1/4 melon, peeled, seeded and diced into 1/2 inch or smaller dice (about 2 cups)
1/4 jicama, peeled and diced into 1/2 inch or smaller dice (one generous cup)
3-5 tomatillos, husked and diced into 1/4 inch dice
1 small Glendale gold onion or 1/2 large onion, minced fine
1 large garlic clove, minced fine
1/2 – 2 serrano peppers, minced fine (adjust heat to your liking)
Juice of one lime salt, pepper and ground chile powder to taste

Combine everything in a non-metal bowl. Eat immediately, or let sit (refrigerated) for more heat and better flavor. The jicama can be replaced with more melon, but it adds a nice crunch. Other ingredients are also versatile – use tomatoes instead of tomatillos, add different peppers, throw in some cilantro – whatever you have on hand. This recipe may easily be scaled up to use an entire melon and a whole share of tomatillos.

Beet and Melon Slaw-new

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

In winter, I like to make this dish with carrots and citrus, instead of the melon. We don't normally get beets and melons in the same season, so it is a treat to be able to pair them together. Use your honey yellow melon for this dish, as the flesh is much firmer. You can cook your beets before you use them for this recipe or simply grate them raw.

1 bunch beets, cleaned and grated
1/2 medium melon, peeled, seeds removed and cut into a julienne or grated
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice or 2 teaspoons vinegar
1 pinch ground cumin

1 pinch ground coriander
1/2 cup yogurt, or 2 tablespoons olive oil
Salt and pepper
Cashews or pistachios, chopped
Fresh cilantro, chopped

Mix together first 7 ingredients and let sit for at least 30 minutes. Garnish with cilantro and nuts before serving.

Whole Wheat Zucchini Quick Bread

Original recipe by Jan Tzinski with modifications by Wendy McCrady for CSA.

2 cups flour (use fresh ground whole wheat flour from CSA wheat berries)
1/4 cup brown sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder (Wendy uses 2 teaspoons)
1 teaspoon salt (Wendy uses 1/2 teaspoon)
3/4 teaspoon baking soda (Wendy uses 1/2 teaspoon)
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon dried ginger powder
Pinch each cloves and nutmeg
1 1/4 cup soymilk, rice milk, or water
1 tablespoon + 1 tsp white vinegar
1 cup peeled & shredded zucchini (Wendy only peels if rind is tough.)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease an 8x8" baking pan or line with parchment paper. Combine dry ingredients in a bowl. Combine wet ingredients in a separate bowl. Do not combine yet! When the oven has preheated completely, pour wet ingredients into dry. Mix quickly and do not over-mix. (Fat free batters will come out tough if over-mixed!) Pour into the prepared pan and bake for 45 minutes. Use the toothpick test for doneness. Remove from oven and let stand 10 minutes. Loosen the edges with a spatula and remove from pan. (Remove parchment paper from bottom if used.) Let cool before slicing.

Quick Okra Pickles

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

One share okra (about 10-15 pods, on the smaller side)
3/4 cup vinegar, cider, rice or balsamic
1/2 teaspoon salt, more to taste
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes OR 1 teaspoon whole pickling spices
Good pinch of whole peppercorns
One nice clean jar that holds 8-10 ounces
Whole herbs if you have them, such as basil or dill (optional)
A few slices of peeled, vertically sliced onion (optional)

Clean the okra while leaving the pod intact. Pack into a clean jar, then add red pepper flakes, peppercorns, onions, and any whole herbs you have at hand. Boil the vinegar in a small saucepan and dissolve salt into the solution. Take off the heat and let cool for 3-5 minutes. Pour over the okra in the jar, seal with lid, and then store in the refrigerator. These make great snacks or additions to salads.