



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 290 ~ May 23, 2011 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Spring 2011

Harvest list is online

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Many more recipes in
our online recipe archive

Saguaro Fruit Harvest at the Bean Tree Farm: preparation, syrup, sweets and a special liqueur

Saguaro harvest marks the beginning of summer's bounty, and the act of harvesting with gratitude is the traditional way to invite the return of monsoon rains.

Join the Sonoran Permaculture Guild on June 18 for a morning of activities: harvesting, preparing and thanking saguaros for their delicious, nutritious fruit; walking and learning about saguaro/ironwood forest plants and the importance of stewardship of the Sonoran Desert; promoting re-wilding urban spaces with edible and medicinal plants; feasting on local food and drink; and if mesquite, ironwood and palo verde beans are on the trees, a little bean pickin'.

When: June 18 - 8am-12pm
Cost: \$50 (includes lunch)

For more info and registration contact:
beantreefarm@gmail.com or go to
www.beantreefarm.com

Crooked Sky Farms Tour: Mark Your Calendar

Crooked Sky Farm will have an open day on Sunday, June 5th, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

We haven't yet received the final details of the event from the farm. Check next week's newsletter.

CARE FOR MORE CARROTS?

If you were with us last October, you may remember that Crooked Sky Farms crops sustained significant hail and flood damage. Most of the young winter crops were beaten to a pulp or washed away by flood waters. Nothing could be done but start from scratch and plant seeds again. The planting and harvesting schedule of the lost crops got set back by over two months. Consequently, we didn't get beets, turnips, carrots and other winter vegetables until two months later than usual. It also means that we are now also getting some of those crops later in the season than we are used to, including carrots. With so many carrots, the best strategy is to embrace the abundance. Try orange and carrot juice: they go so well together!

THE REVIVAL OF FOOD TRUCKS by Kimi Eisele



Drive south of 22nd street and suddenly you'll see taco trucks on every corner. These ubiquitous trucks often cater to workers, offering convenient lunchtime meals near the job site. But now, food trucks are more fashionable than ever, expanding their range and serving up more than just tacos.

In fact, it might be hard to find a plain old taco truck in some American cities now that the falafel, gourmet coffee, cupcake, and raw food trucks have found prominent parking places. In Los Angeles and New York, for instance, web sites list the top food trucks and offer maps on how to find them. Closer to home, the Downtown Phoenix Public Market offers Food Truck Friday every week at lunchtime (11 am. to 1 pm). Colorful trucks take over the market parking lot and serve everything from fancy hot dogs to grilled cheese sandwiches to artisan ice cream.

Designer, artist, and good food advocate Julie Ray is hoping for more food trucks in Tucson. She's created a Facebook page to help people know about existing food trucks and help vendors share information about how to operate one.

"I think food trucks are cool and I know other people feel that way," Ray says. I thought, why not create a resource center, a place to share information."

One of the biggest hurdles for food truck vendors, Ray says, is finding commissary kitchens (stationary commercial kitchens) in which to prepare foods. Mobile vendors are required by the Pima County Health Department to use such sites for their food preparation, she says.

Ray hopes her resources and research will help vendors pool together to share kitchens (though there is a limit to how many trucks can share a kitchen) and draw investors who might find a business opportunity in opening commercial kitchens and renting them to vendors at affordable rates.

Eventually, Ray, a graphic designer and web site developer, hopes to build a web site to provide information and she's planning future events such as a field trip to Phoenix to visit Food Truck Fridays.

If you're interested in joining the movement, Ray is looking for food truck vendors, investors, volunteers, activists, and volunteer researchers. Contact her at 891-8098.

For the latest on Tucson's Food Trucks, visit www.facebook.com/TucsonFoodTrucks. Also be sure to read Adam Borowitz's "Food Truck Diaries" in the Tucson Weekly, an ongoing reviews of Tucson's famous taco stands.

Sara's Calabacitas or Nopalitos

Sara, Tucson CSA

Here is a basic recipe that is great with either squash or nopales. Serve with some beans and tortillas for a quick meal. If using nopales you will want to pre-cook them. Simply dice and cook in simmering water for about 7 minutes, then drain and rinse.

3-4 small summer squash, sliced into half moons or 2 cactus pads, diced and cooked
1 tomato, chopped
1 small onion, sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons oil
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon dried oregano
Salt and cayenne pepper to taste

Heat oil over medium high heat and add onion. Saute onion for a few minutes then add garlic and spices. Cook, stirring continuously, until garlic and spices release fragrance. Add vegetables and oregano, cover and lower temperature to medium-low heat. Cook for about 5-7 minutes, stirring occasionally, until squash is tender. Salt to taste.

Beet, Nopalito and Citrus Salad

Philippe, Tucson CSA

1 large or 2 small beets
1 nopalito pad
2 grapefruit or oranges, peeled and diced
juice of 1 grapefruit or orange
1 small onion, chopped
1/4 cup cilantro or parsley, chopped
1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
1/4 teaspoon ground coriander
1 dash vinegar
Salt and pepper to taste

Steam or boil the beets until tender (approx. 30 mins.). Peel and dice. Steam or boil the nopalito pad for 7 minutes. Dice. Mix with other ingredients. Cool and serve as side dish or with tortilla chips.

Stewed Spring Veggies

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

3-5 baby artichokes, trimmed and quartered lengthwise
1 medium squash, chopped
2-3 new potatoes, chopped
1 sweet onion, diced
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 large can (28 oz.) chopped tomatoes
1 teaspoon thyme
1 teaspoon oregano or marjoram
Drizzle balsamic vinegar
Salt and pepper to taste

To trim artichokes, cut stems from base, remove tough outer leaves and trim off top 1/2-inch of vegetable. Cut each artichoke into quarters and place in water until ready to use. Prepare other veggies and combine all ingredients together in a large soup pot. Bring to a slow simmer and cook over medium low heat for about 35 minutes until all ingredients are tender. Drizzle with vinegar and add salt and pepper to taste. Serve over rice or pasta or polenta.

Fruity Beety

Submitted by Maggie Newman, Tucson CSA (from The New Laurel's Kitchen cookbook)

4 beets
3 oranges
2 tablespoons grated coconut
1 teaspoon honey
Juice of 1/2 lemon
Grated peel of 1/2 lemon
2 tablespoons currants (I substituted raisins)
1 teaspoon vinegar, if desired
Pinch salt

Wash beets and steam whole until tender; then peel. Grate on ripple-shaped grater or slice into long, thin sticks. Peel, seed and cut up oranges. Place half the oranges in blender with coconut, honey, lemon juice and peel, and blend 2 minutes. Mix all ingredients, balancing the sweetness with the additional vinegar if needed. Chill, letting the flavors blend for two hours or so.

Pickled Beets

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

1 bunch beet roots
2 cups vinegar
1 cup water
1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon total of all selected spices, to taste
Spice suggestions (use whole spices, not ground): Coriander. Allspice, Cardamom, Cloves, Mustard Seeds and Cinnamon Sticks.

Prepare beets by roasting or boiling. Peel beets and cut or dice in preferred serving sizes. Bring water, vinegar and sugar to boil until the sugar is dissolved. Add spices and reduce heat. Simmer to let spices develop flavor and steep. (Approx. 15 minutes.) Place beets in glass jar and cover with vinegar mixture. Store in the refrigerator. Will keep for two to three months. Pickled beets can also be canned and stored in the pantry if canning is in your skill repertoire. Any vinegar mixture left over when the beets are gone can be used as a base for marinades or dressings.