



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 300 ~ August 1, 2011 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Summer 2011

Harvest list is online

The Back Page

Thai Melon Salad
Cucumber Noodles
Briam
Pasta with Eggplant and Pesto Sauce
Basil Walnut Pesto
Melon and Serrano Ham

**Many more recipes in
our online recipe archive**

Pork shares!

We are now taking deposits for pork shares. All naturally raised pork. A pork share typically includes 1lb of ground, 1 lb. of Italian sausage, 1 lb. of breakfast sausage, 1 lb. of bratwurst, 1 lb. of bacon, ¾ lbs. of chops, and 2-3 lbs. of roast.

Reserve your share now at the front desk with a \$20 deposit. They will be available for pickup in mid- to late August.

CSA Account tip: Changing your subscription.

Want to know when is your next pickup? Simply logon to your CSA account. The summary window on the top right will tell you when your next pickup is and what it will include.

From the summary window, you can also make changes to the contents of future shares by clicking on the "Change Subscription" link. You can add or remove produce, bread and cheese shares, provided you always keep one produce share in your basket.

You can also change your pickup day by clicking on the "Change location" link.

Just remember that changes can only be made between the day after your pickup and the 2:00 a.m. Saturday cut-off.

SWEET BASIL



Who doesn't love the sweet piquancy of basil? This favorite green, leafy herb—a favorite of so many cooks—was originally cultivated in India, but makes regular appearances in Italian and Southeast Asian cuisine.

Sweet basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) is the variety most often used in Italian food (and is also what we get in our CSA share). It differs from Thai basil, which is less sweet and tends to be more purple or dark green on the undersides of its leaves and stems.

Basil is commonly used fresh in cooked recipes. It is generally added at the last moment, as cooking quickly destroys the flavor. Basil leaves can be used for flavoring and spice in sauces, stews, and salads or as an accompanying herb for main dishes. And, of course, it is the most important ingredient in a traditional pesto sauce.

Basil has traditionally been used as a medicine to treat coughs, headaches, constipation, diarrhea, warts, worms, stomach ailments, and kidney malfunctions. It has also been used as an insect repellent. Oils from the basil plant are used in soaps, shampoos, and perfumes.

Aside from being a delicious herb, basil also has cultural significance around the world, according to sources on Wikipedia.org!

In Jewish culture it is believed to give strength to those who are fasting. In some European countries, basil is placed in the hands of the dead, said to give them a safe transition. In India it is placed in the mouth of the dead for similar reasons. In ancient Egypt and Greece, it was said to open the gates of heaven.

Some might say it still does.

For a taste of heaven, try adding a teaspoon or two of chopped fresh basil to your next glass of lemonade. Or add it to a chopped, frozen melon and blend for a heavenly, homemade sorbet!

Preserving basil

Basil can be kept for a short time in a plastic bag in a wine cooler above 50°, in a refrigerator wrapped in a damp towel, or for a longer period in the freezer after being blanched quickly in boiling water. It can be dried, but the dried herb loses a lot of its flavor.

A good way to preserve larger quantities of basil is to blend the leaves with olive oil in a food processor. Freeze the resulting basil paste in ice cube trays and then store the cubes in freezer bags.

Thai Melon Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This salad takes its inspiration from the classic Thai Green Papaya salad. It is a perfect dish if you end up with a less ripe melon. If your melon is very sweet, use half melon and half cucumber. It is usually a really spicy dish; use less chile if you want it milder.

1 melon (and/or cucumber), peeled, seeded and julienned or cut into thin strips
1 tablespoon dried chile flakes
3-4 cloves garlic
1 tablespoon fish sauce (or soy sauce)
2-3 limes
1 handful mint, finely chopped
1/2 cup roasted peanuts, chopped

Crush chile flakes and garlic together into a paste. Mix paste with fish sauce and the juice from two limes. Pour mixture over melon and stir well to combine. Sprinkle with mint, peanuts and thinly sliced limes to serve.

Cucumber Noodles

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is a great, refreshing side dish. If you want to make it into a simple meal, double the ingredients for the dressing and toss together with chilled soba noodles and cubed tofu or pre-cooked chicken.

2 cucumbers
2 tablespoons rice vinegar
2 teaspoons sesame oil
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon soy sauce
1/4 teaspoon grated ginger
1 tablespoon toasted sesame seeds, to garnish

Peel cucumber and discard skin. Continue using peeler, making long, lengthwise cuts to make 'noodles'. Peel, rotating cucumber until you reach the core of seeds. Discard seeds. Drain noodles in a colander while preparing dressing. Whisk all other ingredients together. Squeeze noodles to get rid of excess moisture. Toss with dressing and garnish with sesame seeds. Serve immediately.

Briam

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

1 small or three baby or Japanese eggplants, chopped into one inch cubes
1 bell pepper or mild chile pepper, cored, seeded and cut into one-inch pieces
1 pound potatoes, cut into one-inch cubes, peeled if needed (not generally needed for our CSA potatoes)
1 pound zucchini or other summer squash, cut into one-inch cubes
1 large red or yellow onion, cut into one-inch cubes
1 pound tomatoes, chopped, or one 15-ounce can diced tomatoes, undrained
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1 bay leaf
1/4 cup chopped fresh oregano, or 1 and 1/2 teaspoon dried
2 tablespoons olive oil
Kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix all the ingredients together in a large mixing bowl. Put into a large non-reactive (i.e., not metal) baking dish. Bake, uncovered, stirring occasionally, 1 ¼ hours until vegetables are very tender and a sauce forms in the pan. This is even better the next day.

Pasta with Eggplant and Pesto Sauce

Philippe Waterinckx, Tucson CSA

1/2 pound spiral pasta, cooked
2-3 cups eggplant, diced
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 cup basil walnut pesto (below)

Sauté the eggplant in olive oil until tender (about 10 minutes). Combine cooked pasta, eggplant and pesto. Serve immediately.

Basil Walnut Pesto

Philippe Waterinckx, Tucson CSA

1 bag/bunch CSA basil, woody stems removed
2 cloves garlic
2 tablespoon oil
1 handful walnuts
1/4 cup Parmesan or Romano cheese, grated
1 teaspoon salt

Blend all ingredients until you obtain a textured paste (slightly granular). Serve on top of pasta, sautéed summer squash, acorn or spaghetti squash, or use as a spread for sandwiches.

Melon and Serrano Ham

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Serrano ham and melon is a classic Spanish combination. The salty richness of the ham is a great contrast for the cool, sweet melon. Use whatever good quality smoked ham you can find easily. Or use a firm, salty cheese, like manchego, in place of the ham. Make it fancier by pureeing the melon with olive oil and sherry vinegar to make a gazpacho, then garnish each bowl with strips of ham or cheese.

1 small, or 1/2 large melon, cut into pieces
2 teaspoons sherry vinegar
2 teaspoons olive oil
3-4 long slices of ham or cheese, cut into pieces

Toss melon with oil and vinegar. Serve on a plate beside the ham or cheese.