



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 458 ~ October 6, 2014 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Fall 2014

Harvest list is online

THE BACK PAGE

Oven-Roasted Okra
Briam
Fall Grain Salad
Hot and Sour Eggplant

Many more recipes on our website

BULK ROMA TOMATOES

We expect this to be the last week we will be taking orders for Crooked Sky Farms' Roma tomatoes in bulk. Tomatoes ordered this week are delivered next week.

Roma tomatoes are great for sauces, salsas, purées, canning, drying, freezing, etc.

Orders are pre-paid, at the front desk: \$25 for 15 pounds.

THANKSGIVING TURKEYS

Every year about this time, we take deposits for Thanksgiving turkeys. Like the eggs, beef and chickens, the turkeys come from Josh, whose farm is near Willcox. And like the chickens, the turkeys are pasture-raised. This makes them a bit leaner and much more flavorful than the supermarket variety. They're \$4.40 per pound and range from 14 to 22 pounds (most are around 16 pounds). You pay a \$20 deposit when ordering and the balance when you pick up the turkey the week prior to Thanksgiving week. (If you have very specific requirements for the size of your turkey, or don't want to be limited to just a few choices, you should come early when you pick up that week for maximum selection.)

A WEEK AT OUR TABLE BY SHAWN AND SUSAN HALVERSEN

We were on vacation during the last two CSA pickups, so we were looking forward to having fresh vegetables again. And what beautiful and colorful vegetables we picked up this week! Those peppers just sparkled, and begged to be made into dishes that would show off their colors, and the melon was huge, so we knew it was going to take us several days to eat it all.

We started right away on Tuesday evening making up a batch of what we're calling "Savory Confetti Tartlets." Small goat cheese – from Black Mesa Ranch, of course – tarts with a light flaky crust and goat cheese custard swirled with a variety of brightly-colored vegetables: some diced peppers, a bit of red onion, and a few peas. Really easy and tasty, but quite elegant, too.

The nature of a CSA being such that the produce is selected for you, sometimes there are items we find harder to use than others. Case in point is the roasted chilies. When we first joined the CSA, we had a difficult time using roasted chilies and often just put them in the freezer for "later." Naturally, "later" often didn't arrive. After several years, we've learned that our favorite way to use chilies (roasted or not), is to make a Chili Relleno casserole. Basically, layers of vegetables, topped with cleaned and de-seeded chilies and cheese, and baked until bubbling. Now, when we pick up a bag of roasted chilies, we know exactly what one of our dinners will be that week. This week, we made our casserole with Red LaSoda potatoes, onions, garlic, mushrooms, walnuts (we think walnuts are quite underused in savory baking), chilies, and Cheddar cheese. Seasoned with salt, pepper, and smoked paprika, it made for a great meal, especially since the roasted peppers this week were quite mild.

Our honeydew melon was less than perfectly ripe when we cut and cubed it, and, while it was still tasty, we used about half to make a nice melon salad – simply honeydew melon tossed with basil (or mint), the zest and juice from a lime, seasoned with a bit of salt and pepper and topped with fresh raspberries. A great combination, and the red and green colors looked so nice together. We've also made this salad using watermelon, adding feta cheese to help round out the flavors and make it into something a little more substantial.

Since the Savory Confetti Tartlets didn't use all the peppers, we decided to show them off by making a quick pepper and mushroom stir-fry. A little of the onions we've been getting, half a clove of garlic, a bunch of pepper and mushroom pieces quickly fried, then simmered for a few minutes in a fast and easy lime-peanut sauce. What a perfect way to show off the colors and the sweet taste of this week's peppers.

Oven-Roasted Okra

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is an easy way to make okra and you can prepare it according to your taste.

- 1 CSA basket okra
- 2 teaspoons seasoning mix (use Cajun spices, Mexican mole or chile mix, curry powder etc.)
- About 2 teaspoons oil or melted butter

Preheat oven to 450°. Wipe okra clean (do not use water, it will turn okra gummy). Toss okra with oil or butter, then sprinkle with seasoning mix of your choice. Toss again to coat. Spread okra on a baking sheet and place in the preheated oven. Cook for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until okra is browned in spots and tender.

Briam

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

- 1 large or three baby or Japanese eggplants, chopped into one inch cubes
- 1 bell pepper, green or red, 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 teaspoons dried
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt and fresh ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 375°. 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 1/2 hours until vegetables are very tender and a sauce forms in the pan. This is even better the next day.

Fall Grain Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Use whatever whole grains you like or use a mixture. Quinoa is one of the quickest to cook if you want to save time.

- 2 cups cooked grains
- 1 small winter squash (acorn, celebration or delicata)
- 1 large bell pepper, chopped
- 1 small onion or 1/2 large onion, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin
- 1/3 cups pistachios, chopped
- 1 handful cilantro, finely chopped
- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar

Cut acorn squash into long strips along valleys between ridges. Dice squash strips. Heat half of the oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add onions, peppers, squash and cumin. Cook, stirring occasionally, until squash is tender and veggies are browning, about 10-15 minutes (add water if needed to keep from sticking). Meanwhile, mix cilantro, the remaining oil and the vinegar and salt and pepper together. Once veggies are cooked, toss together with grains, cilantro mixture and pistachios. Taste for seasoning and add more salt and pepper if needed. Serve warm or cold.

Hot and Sour Eggplant

Jesi, Tucson CSA

This is a great recipe that uses fresh eggplant and seasonal peppers. There are so many ways this recipe can be varied by adding whatever fresh vegetables you have on hand. It's hard to mess this one up! This dish is quite spicy, so reduce the amount of hot peppers if you prefer yours mild.

- 4 small Japanese eggplants or 1 large eggplant, cubed
- 1 large bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 jalapeno pepper, chopped finely
- 2/3 block tofu, drained and cubed (optional)
- 5 tablespoons tamari
- 3 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 2 1/2 tablespoon honey
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 teaspoon chili oil, or to taste (or 1 1/2 teaspoon sesame oil plus 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes)
- 4 tablespoons sesame oil, for frying

Place the eggplant cubes into a large bowl, and sprinkle with salt. Let stand for 15-30 minutes. Rinse and pat dry with paper towels. In a small bowl, stir together the tamari, vinegar, honey, garlic and chili oil. Set aside. In a large wok or skillet, sauté the tofu over medium-high heat in some of the sesame oil until it begins to turn golden brown. Remove and set aside. Add the remaining sesame oil to the skillet or wok and fry the eggplant until it is tender and begins to brown, 5 to 10 minutes. Pour in the sauce, hot peppers, and tofu, stirring until the eggplant is evenly coated. Cook about 5 more minutes, stirring often, until the peppers have cooked and the sauce has reduced a bit. Serve with jasmine rice. Delicious modifications: Zucchini, mushrooms, bell peppers, or tomatoes make delicious additions to this simple recipe. Different varieties of seasonal peppers can be used interchangeably for varying flavors and degrees of heat.