



# Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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## Summer 2017

### Harvest lists are online

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Many more recipes on our website

#### Josh Beef Shares Ready Next Week

We drove to Cochise today (Monday) to get Josh's beef which has been packed and frozen by Guzman's Meat Processing.

This was the biggest steer we've ever gotten from Josh and we believe when can make another 10 shares out of it in addition of the 40 we have already pre-sold.

So, if you only just got back in town and didn't get a chance to reserve a beef share but would still like one, come to the front desk to make a \$20 deposit to reserve one.

Sara and Philippe will pack the individual shares later this week and they will be ready for pickup next week.

Next week we will also sell beef bones from that same steer, which we sell for \$1 per pound. Beef bones are excellent for dogs to chew on, or for making beef stock.

## Nopales (Prickly Pear Pads), And How To Prep Them



Nopal (from the Nahuatl word nohpalli) is a common name in Mexican Spanish for *Opuntia* cacti plant (commonly referred to in English as prickly pear), as well as for its pads.

There are over one hundred known nopal species endemic to Mexico, where the plant is a common ingredient in numerous Mexican cuisine dishes. The nopal pads can be eaten raw or cooked, used in marmalades, soups stews and salads, as well as being used for traditional medicine or as fodder for animals. Farmed nopales are most often of the species *Opuntia ficus-indica* or *Opuntia joconostle* although the pads of almost all *Opuntia* species are edible. The other part of the nopal cactus that is edible is the fruit called the tuna in Spanish, and the "prickly pear" in English.

Nopales are generally sold fresh in Mexico, cleaned of spines, and sliced to the customer's desire on the spot, they can also be found canned or bottled, and less

often dried, especially for export. Cut into slices or diced into cubes, nopales have a light, slightly tart flavor, like green beans, and a crisp, mucilaginous texture.

Nopales are most commonly used in Mexican cuisine in dishes such as huevos con nopales "eggs with nopal", carne con nopales "meat with nopal", tacos de nopales, in salads with tomato, onion, and queso panela (panela cheese), or simply on their own as a side vegetable. Nopales have also grown to be an important ingredient in New Mexican cuisine and in Tejano culture of Texas.

You can find nopales in gardens and streets all over Tucson and we encourage you to harvest and prepare your own. Look for young, thin, bright green pads. They taste best if they have been harvested in the morning. To harvest, hold each pad with a glove or folded newspaper as you cut it off the plant with a sharp knife.



To remove the spines, lay the pad on a cutting board. Hold the pad in place with a fork or tongs, and, using a swivel-bladed vegetable peeler or a small paring knife held at 45 degrees, slide it along the flat surface of the pad, cutting away any spines and their "eyes." Repeat on the other side. Also trim off the entire outer edge of the pad, including the base where it was attached to the plant. A sticky fluid may appear but will disappear when cooked, or it can be rinsed off.



You can also view this 1min 45sec YouTube video on how to despine nopales:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s\\_0b0-rrbWo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s_0b0-rrbWo)

## **Stuffed Bell Peppers**

Philippe, Tucson CSA

1/2 cup quinoa

Meat version: 1 pound ground pork (or Italian sausage)

Veggie version: replace meat cooked black beans, plus 1 beaten egg to bind the mixture.

4-6 bell peppers

1 pound tomatoes, quartered, or 1 pint canned tomatoes

1 onion, chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon thyme, Italian seasoning, or Herbes de Provence

Salt and pepper to taste

Boil 1 cup of water, slightly salted. Add 1/2 cup of quinoa. Bring back to boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for 15 minutes. Turn off heat and let the quinoa steam for 15 more minutes. Let cool. Cut out the stem end of the bell peppers, remove stem and seed core, and scoop out most of remaining seeds.

Season the ground pork with salt and pepper, add the cooled-off quinoa, and mix well. You can also add some herbs/spices for extra flavor. If you're making the veggie version, make the stuffing by mixing the quinoa, beans, egg and seasoning.

Stuff the bell peppers with the ground meat/quinoa mix. If you end up with extra mix, stuff more bell peppers if you have any.

If not, just make a few meatballs. If you have extra bell peppers, dice them and sauté them with the onions. In a large pot on medium heat, sauté the onions in olive oil until translucent. Add garlic, tomatoes, herbs, and salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 10 minutes. Place the stuffed peppers (and meatballs if any) in the sauce. Cover, bring back to a simmer and cook for another 45 minutes.

## **Grilled Nopalitos and Green Onion Tacos**

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Grilled cactus tends to be less 'gummy' than boiled or steamed cactus. If you are squeamish about the gummy factor, then this is the way to go. Plus, the slight burn on the onions and cactus makes the dish more complex and delicious. You can prepare the pads and onions under the broiler as well if you don't want to use the grill

1 bunch green onions

2-4 cactus pads

1 tablespoon oil

1 tablespoon balsamic or red wine vinegar

1 teaspoon ground oregano

1 teaspoon chile flakes

Salt and pepper to taste

6 corn tortillas

Goat cheese or other mild white cheese

Mix together oil, vinegar, chile, oregano and salt and pepper. Rub mixture over onions and cactus and let marinate while grill heats. When grill is hot place pads and green onions over an area with medium high heat. After three minutes remove onions and flip cactus pads. Cook pads until beginning to brown and slightly charred around edges. Remove from grill and slice into long strips. Serve wrapped in tortilla with green onions and cheese.

## **Poached Ginger Pears**

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

You can alter this basic recipe in any number of ways. Using red wine will give the pears a nice color, add different spices or use citrus, too.

2 cups white wine or apple juice

2 cups water

1/2 cup sugar

1-2 inches freshly grated ginger

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

4 medium or 6 small pears, peeled and halved

About 3/4 cup mascarpone, Greek yogurt or crème fraiche

1/4 cup slivered almonds

In a medium saucepan, bring wine or juice, water, sugar, vanilla and ginger to a boil. Add pears and reduce heat to medium low. Cook for about 15-20 minutes, until cooked through. Asian pears do not get tender like other pears, but they will still absorb the flavor. Remove pears from liquid, return liquid to a boil and cook until reduced to about 1 cup syrup. Use a spoon to core pears. To serve, place pears on a plate, drizzle with a little syrup, add a dollop of yogurt and sprinkle with almonds. Store uneaten pears in syrup in the refrigerator for up to one week.

## **Melanzane a funghetto (Eggplant Cooked in the Style of Mushrooms)**

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

2-2 1/2 pounds eggplant

1 teaspoon kosher salt

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon finely minced garlic

2 tablespoons finely minced parsley

Black pepper to taste

Peel the eggplant and cut into 3/4 inch dice. Place in a colander and salt. Let drain 30 minutes. Squeeze the juice out of the eggplant by rolling in towels. Heat the olive oil over low heat in a skillet. Add the garlic and sauté for a minute or so. Add the eggplant to the skillet and sauté over medium heat. At first the eggplant will appear to soak up all the oil. Keep turning the eggplant and shaking the pan. As the eggplant cooks, oil will reappear in the skillet. After 10-15 minutes, add the parsley and stir well. Add the black pepper and continue to cook for another 30 minutes until the eggplant is tender. Great as a side dish (top with roasted red peppers or cut tomatoes), as a topping for crostini, or on top of pasta or pizza. Top with a squeeze of lemon or lime.