



# Tucson Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

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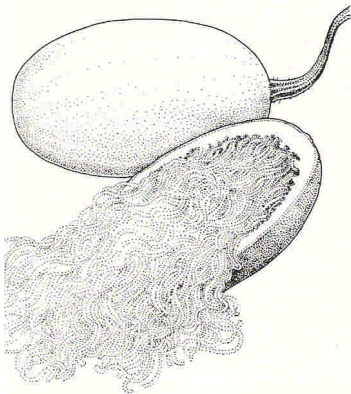
Spring 05  
Week 2 of 13

## This Week's Share

Butternut or spaghetti squash  
Garlic  
Onions  
Navel oranges  
Pinto beans and chili  
Red La Soda potatoes  
Salad mix  
Snap peas

## Recipes in this Issue

Spaghetti Squash with Tomato Sauce  
Butternut Squash and Goat Cheese Salad  
Butternut Squash Fries  
Sugar Snap Peas with Tarragon Mayonnaise Dip



**Spaghetti squash** is just plain fun to cook—open it up, and unwind an explosion of crisply tender, golden strands. The flavor is lightly sweet and mild to bland, which makes it the perfect foil for full-flavored sauces such as white clam, cheese, pesto, tomato, or garlic and herbs. Serve as you would spaghetti.

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## Rain at last!

On Saturday, it rained over Crooked Sky Farms for the first time in 143 days (since October 8). The farm received 1.5 inches of much-needed rain over a 24-hour period. The rain made harvesting very difficult due to the mud, but we are of course grateful for rain.

## USDA Proposes National Animal Identification System

John and Jo Dwyer of Angel Valley Organic Farm in Jonestown, Texas share with us the disturbing news that the USDA has intensified efforts to implement the National Animal Identification System (NAIS) in Texas. NAIS would require all owners of livestock to tag their animals with a computer chip to enable the USDA to monitor every animal. Any time an animal leaves the owner's property for any reason, the owner would have 24 hours in which to report to the USDA the animal's whereabouts. "If one chicken from your flock of 30, 50, 100, or even two should become sick, die, or simply run away," writes Jo, "you must report it within 24 hours or be slapped with a fine," possibly \$1,000.

**"This program mostly affects small meat and/or egg producers and backyard flocks,"** writes Jo. "The large corporate factory farms that shove at least 30,000 chickens—be the birds alive or barely alive—into small cages and stack them in warehouses would be required only one chip for their entire inventory. The purpose of NAIS is ostensibly to track sick animals. Considering the living conditions (if you call that "living") of factory-farm birds compared to the living conditions of free-range chickens at small, local farms, it isn't terribly difficult to figure out which of these places harbors more illnesses and which place would suffer most from such burdensome governmental rules and regulations and likely go out of business."

When Larry Butler and Carol Ann Sayle of Boggy Creek Farm in Austin, Texas expressed their concerns about the proposed regulations to an NAIS coordinator, they received the following response: "A tag placed in the neck of the day-old chicks holds up for the lifespan of the broiler. This is similar to price tags on clothing that have the plastic string and paper tag."

"Notice she refers to chickens as 'broilers,'" write Larry and Carol. "They have no regard for chickens as being viable, feeling creatures. Can you imagine what will happen if they pierce day-old chicks and our chickens are running around the pasture with tags hanging out of their necks??? Oh, I forgot—the people who think these things up are used to seeing chickens in tiny cages, debeaked and unable to interact with each other."

The draft strategic plan for NAIS recommends mandatory participation by 2008—**including Arizona**. The free-range goats at Black Mesa Ranch and our soon-to-be egg-layers would most definitely be affected by the proposed regulations. Learn more at [www.tofga.org](http://www.tofga.org) and [www.StopAnimalID.org](http://www.StopAnimalID.org).

## Parents Against Junk Food \$500 Essay Contest

Parents Against Junk Food is a campaign with a mission to stop the sale of junk food in US schools. The organization is asking children across the United States to send in essays about what is being served for lunch in their local schools—both the good and the bad. Submissions should be no more than 500 words. The winner will receive a \$500 gift certificate to Amazon.com. In addition, the top 20 essays will be posted on [www.ParentsAgainstJunkFood.org](http://www.ParentsAgainstJunkFood.org). Send your submission to [schoollunch@bcpress.com](mailto:schoollunch@bcpress.com).

## To Cook Spaghetti Squash: The Basics

Whichever method you choose, beware of overcooking, which yields soggy, dull squash. Spaghetti squash strands should have a slight crispness when properly cooked.

**To steam:** Halve squash lengthwise. Scrape out and discard seeds. Halve lengthwise again. Set pieces on a steamer rack over boiling water. Cook, covered, until a finger leaves an indentation in the shell, 20 to 30 minutes. Gently comb out the strands with a fork.

**To bake:** Prick whole squash in several places. Bake in a preheated 350°F oven until easily indented when pressed, 35 to 55 minutes. Set on cutting board and halve immediately, or it may overcook. Cool slightly and discard the seeds, then pull out strands gently with a fork until only a thin shell remains.

**To microwave:** Halve squash lengthwise; remove seeds. Set in a microwavable container, season, and then top with a little oil or butter. Cover and microwave 10 to 15 minutes, depending on size. Let rest 5 minutes. Remove strands gently with a fork.

### Spaghetti Squash with Tomato Sauce

Tomato sauces of all kinds are good with spaghetti squash. Toss the strands lightly with olive oil, salt, and freshly milled pepper, then pile them on a platter. Make a nest in the middle for 1 to 2 cups tomato sauce. Toss, then serve. Pass Parmesan cheese at the table.

## Roasted Butternut Squash Recipes

### Preparing Butternut Squash

1. Cut off top and bottom.
2. Halve squash lengthwise.
3. Scoop out seeds with a spoon.
4. Peel with a vegetable peeler or sharp knife.

### Butternut Squash and Goat Cheese Salad

**1** Preheat oven to 425°. Prepare 1 medium **butternut squash** (see above); cut into ¾-inch cubes. In a roasting pan, combine squash with 2 teaspoons **olive oil**; season with **salt** and **ground pepper**. Toss to coat, and spread squash in a single layer. Roast until fork-tender, 35 to 45 minutes.

**2** Transfer squash to a bowl; gently toss with ¼ cup crumbled **goat cheese** (1 ounce) and 5 ounces torn **salad greens**.

### Butternut Squash Fries

Preheat oven to 425°. Prepare 1 medium **butternut squash** (see above); cut into 1/2-inch-wide sticks. On a baking sheet, combine squash with 2 teaspoons **olive oil** and ½ teaspoon **ground cumin**; season with **salt** and **ground pepper**. Toss to coat, and spread squash in a single layer. Roast until fork-tender, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Sprinkle with 1 tablespoon each **fresh lime juice** and chopped **fresh cilantro**.

The arrival of freshly picked green peas is one of the events that define high spring. **Sugar snap peas** are a very recent hybrid that look like a slightly miniaturized version of English peas, with their dark green, full-podded look. The crisp, fleshy pods of sugar snap peas are much sweeter than those of other varieties. They differ from shelling peas in that the pods do not develop a tough, supportive lining (an alternative French name for them is *pois sans parchemin*, or peas without parchment). As a result, the entire vegetable is tender-edible.

**It was only as recently as 1979** that the sugar snap pea was perfected and marketed, primarily by one man, Calvin Lamborn. While tackling the problem of snow peas that buckled in processing at the Gallatin Valley Seed Company in Twin Falls, Idaho, he crossed a thick-podded mutant green pea with a snow pea and made breeding history. The resulting offspring, dubbed the *Sugar Snap*, won the coveted gold medal from All-America selections in the year of its release and an unprecedented response from home gardeners—a bit ironic, in that the cross was intended to solve a problem in commercial harvesting.

Generally speaking, you might consider sugar snap peas **comparable to asparagus** in terms of flavor and cooking methods. Whether warm or chilled, they are best suited to few and light-tasting accompaniments, such as lemon, ginger, shallots or green onions, cream or butter, or herbs such as basil, mint, marjoram, tarragon, or lemon balm. They are of course delicious raw as well.

**Do not overcook sugar snap peas!** Fast steaming, boiling, and stir-frying are the methods that best retain their bright green color, crispness, and sweetness. Cook only until the peas lose their raw bite. Figure about 2 minutes of boiling time or 4 minutes for steaming.

### Sugar Snap Peas with Tarragon Mayonnaise Dip

Bright sugar snaps are just the right size and texture for scooping softly creamy dips, preferably rather mild ones that allow the clean taste of the peas to come through. You can serve the peas raw or steam them briefly.

1 egg  
2 teaspoons vinegar  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon prepared mustard  
½ cup plus 2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
½ cup olive oil  
About 2 teaspoons minced fresh tarragon  
About 1 tablespoon minced chives  
Lemon juice to taste  
1-2 tablespoons hot water

1. Blend together the egg, vinegar, salt, mustard, and 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Slowly add remaining vegetable and olive oils.
2. Add tarragon, chives, and lemon juice to taste. Adjust seasonings to suit, then stir in hot water to blend and soften mixture. Chill several hours or longer.