



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

May 9, 2006 – Issue 35

Spring 06
Week 10 of 13

This Week's Share

Parsnips
Sweet onions
Red Acre cabbage
Salad mix—new growth!
Choice of snow or snap peas
Viroflay spinach
Artichoke
Choice of mixed summer squash
or nopalitos

Recipes in this Issue

Scrambled Eggs with Nopales
Summer Squash Salad
Summer Citrus Slaw
Grilled Parsnip Pouch



Farmer Frank grows **Viroflay spinach**, an heirloom spinach and one of the largest, most vigorous and flavorful varieties around. Introduced in 1866, this French spinach was described by the French seed house Vilmorin Andrieux as “Monstreux de Viroflay,” the monster spinach of Viroflay! It is an important variety because it has been used to develop many modern hybrids.

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3e Rules

We've had a recent surge of new members, many of whom learned about us from Earth Day. As our CSA membership grows, however, the risk of pickup mistakes grows also. We have recently experienced shortages of cheese and veggies at the end of the day.

Please, therefore, pay special attention to the following items:

- **Check your name off on the check-in sheet.** This helps us figure out who has and hasn't picked up. It is also especially crucial to members who split shares so that they know if their partner has or hasn't been there.
- **Make sure you get the right cheese.** Please ask Philippe or a CSA volunteer to get it for you rather than taking it yourself from the 'fridge. Cheese logs are ordered in specific numbers and flavors: when you take the wrong log, you are taking somebody else's.
- **Pay attention** when there is a **choice** of veggies: **take one or the other**, but not both!
- **If you don't want a particular item, don't just leave it in the box, or don't trade it with another veggie in the boxes.** Please trade it in the trading basket or put it in the surplus basket. This way, another member can enjoy it.
- When using the **trading basket**, trade **portion for portion**, NOT item for item! A portion is your quota of a particular item as specified on the whiteboard. For example, an item would be ONE onion; a portion might be TWO onions. A portion of artichokes might be just ONE artichoke. You can trade your portion of two onions for a portion one artichoke. Do not trade two onions for two artichokes, or one onion for one artichoke.

Thank you for your help! This way, all members get their fair share of the goodies!

Trip to Crooked Sky Farms

Although we had hoped to make a trip to Crooked Sky Farms sometime in May, Farmer Frank is too busy with a particularly intensive spring crop, and he cannot take a day off until June. He suggested instead a trip in June, when things will slow down a bit, and the first of the sweet corn will be ready to be picked and roasted on the spot. Wanna go to Glendale in June? Stay tuned.

More Sweet Onion Ideas

Sweet onions have been developed primarily for use on **burgers**, where they are unquestionably superior to others. They also taste pleasant in a number of other combinations in their pristine state. Try them on slices of close-grained bread, well-coated with sweet butter, then sprinkle with salt and pepper for a first-rate **sandwich**; or combine with rare roast beef or thinly sliced Cheddar on dark rye.

If roasted in the oven or **on the grill**, sweet onions remain crisp and juicy. For the latter, wrap the onion tightly in foil and grill over moderately high heat, gauging about an hour for a medium-sized sweet onion. Serve in the foil and let diners peel, butter, salt, and pepper their own.

What's Special

Nopales (Cactus Pads) (also Nopalitos)

Nopales (pronounced no-PAH-les) is the Spanish name for Prickly Pear cactus pads. Prickly Pear cacti are members of the *Opuntia* genus, and they produce both *nopales*, a vegetable, and *tuna*, a fruit. Nopales are soft but crunchy, with the flavor of green pepper, string beans, and asparagus, all touched with a citric edge. They are often compared to okra, because of the sticky substance they release when cooked. Nopales are at their peak in mid-spring.

PREPARATION: With a swivel peeler, zip off the “eyes” and any stickers, a fast and easy job. Then shave the rim of each pad and trim off any dry or fibrous areas. All of this is as fast as peeling a cucumber, or faster. Rinse thoroughly to remove any stray stickers and some of the sticky fluid that will be exuded.

Scrambled Eggs with Nopales

3 servings

2 tablespoons pine nuts (pignolia) (**optional**)
 2 tablespoons butter
 ¼ pound nopales, de-stickered, rinsed, cut in ¼-inch squares
 (see Preparation, above)
 2 tablespoons peeled and diced medium-hot green chili-pepper
 7 eggs

Toast nuts, if using, in a skillet over low heat until lightly browned, stirring often; reserve. Melt 1 tablespoon butter in the skillet and stir in cactus; toss gently over moderate heat until crisp-tender, about 4 to 5 minutes. Stir in chili-pepper.

Blend eggs, adding salt to taste. Stir remaining butter into cactus and chilies; add eggs and stir often until set to taste. Sprinkle with pepper and pine nuts and serve at once.



Summer Squash Salad

Dressing:

1 clove garlic
 Salt
 ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
 ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Salad ingredients:

Summer squash
 Salad greens
 Herbs such as parsley and basil (**optional**)
 Chopped chives (**optional**)
 Capers (**optional**)
 Parmesan cheese

In a mortar or using the flat side of a large knife, mash the garlic to a paste with a pinch of salt. Put the paste in a small bowl or keep in mortar and whisk in lemon juice. Let sit for 5 to 10 minutes and then whisk in olive oil.

Using a mandoline or sharp knife, cut the squash diagonally into very thin ovals. Combine salad greens with squash, herbs, chives, and/or capers (if using) in a bowl, season with salt and pepper, and toss with just enough vinaigrette to coat lightly. Garnish with shaved or grated Parmesan.

Red Acre Cabbage

Farmer Frank is also pleased to share with us Red Acre cabbage, a premium, top-notch red variety that can be used raw or cooked. Red Acre is a little sweeter than our regular green cabbage, which makes it particularly good for coleslaw. It matures 3 to 4 weeks later than green cabbage, which is why we're receiving our first ones now.



Summer Citrus Slaw

Heidi DeCosmo, TCSA Member

3 cups shredded **Red Acre cabbage**
 1 cup chopped **Viroflay spinach**
 1 **summer squash**, julienned (cut into thin strips)
 ½ cup shredded carrot
 ¼ cup chopped **sweet onion**
 ¼ cup orange juice
 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
 ¼ teaspoon Dijon mustard
 ¼ teaspoon **honey** (available from CSA)
 ½ teaspoon poppy seeds
 Pinch of pepper
 1/8 teaspoon sea salt

In a large bowl, toss together the cabbage, spinach, squash, carrot, and onion. In a small bowl, whisk together the juice, oil, mustard, honey, poppy seeds, pepper and salt to make a dressing. Pour the dressing over the vegetables and stir to coat. Refrigerate salad at least ½ hour before serving. Makes 6 servings.

Grilled Parsnip Pouch

Heidi DeCosmo, TCSA Member

2 medium **parsnips**, peeled and cut into 1-1/2 inch pieces
 1 **sweet onion**, peeled and cut into ½-inch slices
 2 **garlic** cloves, peeled and sliced
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 1 teaspoon chopped rosemary
 Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat gas grill to medium-high on right side and middle burners. Turn left burner to low. Cut a piece of aluminum foil to about 12 inches long. In a bowl, toss all of the ingredients together. Place the vegetables in the center of the foil. Fold in the long sides of the foil, and roll down to close the pouch. Close off the small ends by folding them up and sealing the pouch. Place the pouch on the left side of the grill (the one set on low heat). Cook for about 25 minutes or until lightly browned and tender. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.