



# Tucson Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

July 11, 2006 – Issue 44

Summer 06  
Week 6 of 13

### This Week's Share

Armenian cucumbers  
Red La Soda potatoes  
Summer squash  
Okra  
Garlic  
Green beans  
Heirloom tomatoes  
Shallots or lemongrass

### Recipes in this Issue

Agua Fresca de Pepino (Cucumber-Lime Drink)  
German Potato Salad  
Pickled Quail Eggs



**Now Available: Our Own Fresh TCSA Eggs!** Stephen, top, our new early-morning volunteer, showing off the first newly laid eggs from our own hens, raised specifically for the TCSA by Chris O'Brien, bottom, and his friend, Sarah.

**TCSA Organizer**  
Philippe Waterinckx  
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[www.tucsoncsa.org](http://www.tucsoncsa.org)

## Stay in Touch with TCSA Happenings and Announcements

We regret that some members didn't get their veggies last Tuesday, July 4, because they thought that we were closed. Please note that when an irregularity occurs in the pick-up schedule, we alert members by posting the information in several places: on our **Web** site, in our **newsletter**, in our **Monday e-mail**, and on the **whiteboard** at the CSA. Please check at least one of these sources weekly to stay informed of important CSA announcements.

Subscription to our Monday e-mails is **voluntary**: you are not automatically subscribed to the list server when you join the CSA. Please check your spam filter setting if you are no longer receiving our e-mails, as we recently moved our list server from Yahoo! Groups to our own server.

## New at the TCSA: Native American Botanic Chamomile-Blend Tea

Chamomile (*Matricaria chamomilla*) was introduced to the Americas and cultivated here by European immigrants. Native Americans were not as reluctant to use these new herbal remedies as were early missionaries and traders to use native herbs. Native people enjoyed beverages made from these little flowers. In this blend, Native American Botanic combines chamomile with the minty flavor of catnip (*Nepeta cataria*), the calmness of passion flower (*Passiflora incarnate*), and the mild dietary-supplement sweetener, Stevia Leaf (*Stevia rebaudiana*), for an enjoyable evening or relaxation beverage.



## In Season: Armenian Cucumbers

If you're new to the CSA, you may be a bit overwhelmed by the monstrous, strange-looking cucumbers that have been appearing in our shares these past few weeks. They certainly don't look like the tame, unobtrusive cucumbers you're used to seeing in the supermarket! I confess that when I joined the CSA last year, I was taken aback by their appearance. And they go limp so quickly in the refrigerator! But not true! Appearances can be deceiving!



We are privileged to receive from Farmer Frank what are known as Armenian cucumbers, specifically adapted to our desert conditions. Not surprisingly, they're also known as snake melons. The online Cook's Thesaurus ([www.foodsubs.com](http://www.foodsubs.com)) notes they are "hard to find, but one of the best-regarded slicing cucumbers." Not hard to find for us!

According to a report by the Environmental Working Group, commercial cucumbers are one of the top twelve most pesticide-laden produce items. The wax applied to commercial cucumbers, apples, and many other produce items is made of petroleum oils. Not only does it seal in moisture, prolonging shelf life, it also seals in pesticides.

Armenian cucumbers don't need to be peeled or seeded, and despite their limpid appearance, you'll notice that they're still crisp when sliced. As soon as you slice one, the perfumed aroma begs you to take a bite. And when you do, you won't be disappointed. You'll be amazed at how little it resembles the flavorless, tough-skinned varieties you're used to. You could use slices of this cucumber to perfume and brighten mixed drinks, lemonade, or even plain water, or simply eat it with a light sprinkling of salt.

### Agua Fresca de Pepino (Cucumber-Lime Drink)

Amy Schwemm, TCSA member and volunteer

Our gigantic Armenian cucumbers are ideal for this most refreshing summer drink. Easy to make and to drink! It will use up your CSA cucumbers faster than you can get them.

- 1 large Armenian cucumber, unpeeled (equivalent to 3 English cucumbers)
- 1 cup lime juice
- 1-2 cups water
- ¼ cup sugar, agave syrup, or other sweetener

Juice the cucumber with skin and seeds, or blend and strain it. Add lime juice, water, and sugar, and shake. Serve chilled. For added zest, sprinkle with chopped mint, basil, or Stevia leaf. Makes approximately 2 quarts. (Shortcut: use ¼ cup frozen limeade in place of the lime juice and sugar.)

### German Potato Salad

My father was born in Chicago during the Depression, the fifth of six children. This recipe is his mother's, and she made it throughout his childhood and continued to bring it to family get-togethers after her children married and had children of their own. It has been a summer favorite for both me and my father for as long as we both can remember, and preparing and eating this potato salad always connects me to the memory of my grandmother. My grandmother didn't subscribe to a CSA, but she did have a Victory Garden during World War II, since food during that time was rationed. It is even more of a pleasure for me now to be able to prepare this salad with the fresh produce grown for us by Farmer Frank, and I hope that making this salad recalls for you, too, foods that have been a memorable tradition in your family. My grandmother never measured anything, however, so the measurements provided here are approximate and serve only as a guide. -Christa

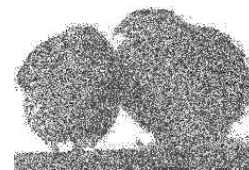
- 1 pound unpeeled Red La Soda potatoes
- ¼ pound bacon, chopped
- ½ medium or large sweet or purple onion or 1 small, or ¼ cup shallots, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 1/3 cup water
- ¼ cup vinegar (my Depression-era grandmother always used plain vinegar, but you may choose to use red or white wine vinegar)

1. Bring a large pot of water to boil and add potatoes. Cook 'til tender but still firm, 8-15 minutes, depending on size.
2. Meanwhile, sauté the bacon in a small skillet until crisp. Remove the bacon and reserve.
3. In the bacon fat remaining in the skillet, sauté the chopped onion until tender but not browned, 5 minutes or so. Add the flour, sugar, water, and vinegar to the skillet and cook over medium heat until dressing is thick.
4. When the potatoes are done, drain them, cool them slightly, and slice while still warm.
5. Pour the dressing over the still-warm potatoes. Season with salt and pepper to taste, and gently toss. Sprinkle reserved crisp bacon on top. 4 servings

### Pickled Quail Eggs

Gourmet magazine, April 2004 ([www.epicurious.com](http://www.epicurious.com))

Kim Webb of Estancia Farm in Dragoon is now providing the TCSA with Japanese quail eggs. Quail eggs have all the nutrition of chicken eggs, but less cholesterol. In addition, Japanese quail mature faster, produce more eggs, and need far less food and space than do chickens, making them a highly sustainable alternative to chickens. Quail eggs can be used exactly like chicken eggs, using 5 quail eggs in place of 1 large chicken egg. Because the eggs are so small, however, they are often pickled. Pickled eggs are good on their own as a snack or added to a salad. They go particularly well with bitter greens such as arugula, mizuna, tatsoi, and watercress. On their own, think of them as convenient little protein bombs to get you through those hours when it's too early for a meal and you're too busy to make yourself a serious snack. A neighbor of mine who is a cancer survivor seriously keeps a stash of these handy just for this purpose, when she is feeling fatigued and needs a quick, nutritious pick-me-up. The pickling recipe below using beets is particularly colorful and tasty, but you can find additional pickling recipes at the Washington State University Cooperative Extension (<http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu>) and in back issues of *Mother Earth News* ([www.motherearthnews.com](http://www.motherearthnews.com)). -Christa



Pair of Japanese quail

- 3 lbs. beets (8 medium, including greens), scrubbed and stems trimmed to 1-1/2 inches)
- 1 cup cider vinegar
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 Turkish bay leaves or 1 California
- 5 whole cloves
- 24 or 25 quail eggs or 5 large chicken eggs

Cover beets with cold water by 1 inch in a 3-quart heavy saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer beets, partially covered with lid, until tender, about 40 minutes. Transfer beets to a bowl with a slotted spoon, reserving beets for another use, then measure out 2 cups beet cooking liquid. Bring beet liquid to a boil in a small saucepan along with vinegar, sugar, salt, bay leaves, and cloves, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat and cool pickling liquid completely, about 1 hour.

While pickling liquid cools, cover eggs with cold water by 1 inch in a small saucepan and bring to a boil, stirring gently (to help center the yolks in the eggs). Reduce heat and gently boil eggs, uncovered and undisturbed, 3 minutes (or 10 minutes for chicken eggs). Pour off water and shake pan so eggs hit each other, lightly cracking shells. Cover eggs with cold water and let stand 15 minutes (to stop cooking and facilitate peeling).

Drain and peel eggs, then transfer to a glass jar or deep bowl. Pour liquid over eggs. Let eggs pickle, covered, 24 hours. For best results, pickle eggs no longer than 24 hours: any longer, and the whites will become too rubbery and the pickling liquid will seep into the yolks.