



# Tucson Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

July 18, 2006 – Issue 45

Summer 06  
Week 7 of 13

### This Week's Share

- Cantaloupe
- Corn
- Heirloom tomatoes
- Okra
- Choice of herbs
- Lemon cucumbers
- Amaranth greens
- Sweet onions

### Recipes in this Issue

- Cucumber Sandwiches
- Okra Poppers
- Fried Okra
- JL's Okra Southern Style
- Vegetable Soup with Okra
- Pico de Gallo
- Amaranth Tip



The corn is as high as an elephant's eye! Farmer Frank standing amongst his Sweetie 82 yellow corn.

### **TCSA Organizer**

Philippe Waterinckx

### **Newsletter Editor**

Christa Selig

We welcome your questions, comments, feedback, and suggestions.

[www.tucsoncsa.org](http://www.tucsoncsa.org)

## San Ysidro Farm adds New Breed of Sheep to their herds

Nathan and Jackie Watkins of San Ysidro Farm in Cochise County are this time supplying us with lamb from a new breed they are trying out called **Jacob**.

Previously, they have supplied us with lambs from their Dorper herd, a hornless South African breed that thrives in arid conditions.

The Jacob is an ancient breed of British origin, slight of build, sporting a black or deep gray coat with white spots, also known as piebald. Their most distinctive feature, however, is their multiple horns on both the males (rams) and females (ewes). The ewes generally have one or two pairs (i.e., two or four horns) while the rams can have up to six horns.



Jacob Sheep Conservancy Logo courtesy [www.jacobsheepconservancy.org](http://www.jacobsheepconservancy.org)

Jacob sheep may be one of the oldest breeds of domestic sheep. By the early 1900s, Jacob sheep had little commercial value and most piebald horned sheep became an ornamental or curiosity breed loosely called "park sheep" because most were located in the 60 public parks in England. By 1911, piebald horned sheep were nearly extinct in England. J. J. Elwes and J. Cossar Ewart started the Park Sheep Society to save seven breeds of park sheep including "the piebald sheep with four horns": in other words, the Jacob sheep. In 1969, 78 people with 55 flocks formed the Jacob Sheep Society in England to preserve this primitive stock.

Nathan and Jackie are pleased to bring us this restored "heirloom" sheep which, like their Dorpers, feed on only pasture grass, never grain. Please share with us what you think of the flavor, tenderness, and other qualities of this new breed.

### Drink Tea to Cool Off!

**New at the CSA: Made in Tucson! Raspberry-Leaf-Blend herbal tea by Native American Botanics.** This herbal tea features Raspberry Leaf punctuated with the distinct flavor of Wintergreen Leaf. It is blended with women in mind, but can be enjoyed by men and women alike. Raspberry fruit has been and remains a favorite flavoring for many tribes. Native American Botanics combines raspberry leaf with wintergreen, a traditional tea ingredient used by numerous tribes, along with freeze-dried cranberry fruit pieces, hydroponically grown stinging nettle flowers and leaf, red clover flowers, and the mild dietary supplement sweetener Stevia Leaf to form a delicious herbal tea beverage that can be enjoyed any time.



And speaking of any time, winter is not the only time to enjoy warm tea! **Both the American Ginseng/Peppermint and Chamomile teas are particularly refreshing this time of year.** You don't even need to ice it in order to enjoy its refreshing benefits. Philippe drinks it the North African way, hot and sweetened and with extra mint. For sweetener, he uses Stevia Leaf, a natural low-calorie sweetener. You can grow your own Stevia plant or purchase Stevia Leaf powder right around the corner from the CSA at the Food Conspiracy Co-op.

## The Very Cute and Very Yellow Lemon Cucumber

Lemon cucumbers are an heirloom variety dating back to 1894. They range in color from pale to bright yellow and are shaped like—guess what? Lemons! When they are pale yellow, they can be eaten with the skin on. As they mature and become a brighter shade of yellow, the skin becomes a tad harder and should be peeled off. They're slightly and deliciously milder and sweeter than the typical long green cucumber. Lemon cucumbers are not limited to salads, although they are very **pretty in salads** because of their yellow peel. They are also **portable** and work well as a refreshing snack any time of day. In fact, **you can bite into them just like an apple**. They're also **great for backpacking**, and they **work well in sandwiches instead of tomatoes** because they're not as wet as sliced tomatoes can be.



### Cucumber Sandwiches with Garden Herbs

The best way to eat a lemon cucumber is in a manner that allows its flavor to shine. Spread white or wheat bread with an herb butter or yogurt cheese and cover with thinly sliced cucumber. Tuck herb leaves among them, but not too many, because you don't want to overpower the fresh, sweet flavor of the cucumber.

### Okra Poppers

JodyLee Estrada Duek, TCSA member

JodyLee has been looking forward to okra since the spring! She shares with us here some of her favorite okra recipes.

15 young okra, 4" or so  
 6 ounces white cheese, such as feta, goat, cream, cotija, string, Oaxaca, queso menonniito, etc.  
 Egg, egg white, or milk  
 Corn meal or bread crumbs  
 4 ounces cooking oil

Wash the okra and slit them open down one side. Insert ½ ounce cheese in each piece. Dip the okra in beaten egg, egg white, or milk, then roll in corn meal or bread crumbs (add pepper or paprika to the crumbs for more bite). Fry the okra in hot oil for about 2 minutes, turning once or twice to brown on all sides. Serves 2 as a dish, or 4 to 6 as an appetizer.

### Fried Okra

JodyLee Estrada Duek, TCSA member

This recipe is much simpler and down-to-earth than the one I provided a while back! If you haven't yet tried fried okra, I encourage you to give this recipe a try!—Christa

15 baby okra, 4-5"  
 1 egg  
 Cornmeal  
 2 ounces oil

Dip okra in beaten egg and roll in cornmeal. Fry 1-2 minutes in hot oil, turning once or twice. The okra should be al dente and just cooked, with the seeds feeling like young corn kernels in your mouth. Serves 2.

### JL's Okra Southern Style

JodyLee Estrada Duek, TCSA member

6-10 okra, 4-7"                      1-2 stalks celery  
 1-2 medium tomatoes              1-2 slices bread  
 1 small onion                        1 hot pepper, chopped (optional)

Slice okra in 1/3" rings. Chop the onions, celery, and tomatoes into small pieces, but not minced fine, and save the juices.

Sauté the onions and celery in a little oil until they begin to soften. Add the tomatoes and any juices that have accumulated and stir until the mix has some liquidity to it (add a bit of water or soup stock if necessary). Add the okra and let it stew for 8-10 minutes, until all the vegetables are thoroughly cooked. Tear the bread into bite-sized pieces and add it to the pot to soak up the juices. Some folks like to add a bit of vinegar or lemon juice before serving. Serves 2.

### Vegetable Soup with Okra

JodyLee Estrada Duek, TCSA member

Once you've got your soup made, add 4-8 okra, cut in thinly sliced rings. Allow to simmer at least 15 more minutes. The okra will thicken up the soup a bit, making it more hearty.

### Pico de Gallo

Lyn Hart, TCSA member

3 medium tomatoes (more if tomatoes are small), seeded and finely chopped  
 ¼ cup finely chopped onion  
 1 garlic clove, minced or crushed  
 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice  
 1-2 jalapenos, seeded and membranes removed to lessen heat, if desired  
 ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped  
 Sea salt to taste

In a glass bowl, stir all the ingredients together and let sit for at least 15 minutes before serving.

### Amaranth Greens (Quelites) Tip

Remember: vitamin-rich amaranth can be used in any recipe just like **spinach**. Sauté, steam or stir fry it. It's best slightly wilted. Remove the long stems; the remaining leaves will cook down to about half their volume.