



# Tucson Community Supported Agriculture Newsletter

August 1, 2006 – Issue 47

Summer 06  
Week 9 of 13

## This Week's Share

Cantaloupe  
Trucker's Delight white corn  
Beet  
Armenian cucumber  
Texas 1015Y sweet onions  
Okra  
Green beans  
Basil  
Garlic

## Recipes in this Issue

Sautéed Okra with Tomatoes and Corn  
Shrimp and Okra Main Course  
Easy CSA Gazpacho  
Easy Beet Salad  
Raw Beet Salad



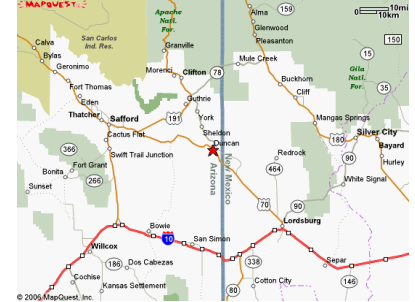
**Texas 1015 Y sweet onions** are harvested at Crooked Sky Farm once a year in late April. They are stored at the farm in a dry and shaded outdoor area for the next 2-3 months (see picture above). Unlike most commercial onions, Farmer Frank's are not sprayed with fungicides, and so they do tend to develop a moldy outer layer. Don't be put off by it. It is harmless and does not affect the quality and flavor of the interior. Just peel off the outer layer and wash them before using. Also, do not store them in the fridge.

**Newsletter Editor**  
Christa Selig

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

## First Harvest from Duncan Field Next Week

Farmer Frank grows many of our summer vegetables in Duncan, northeast of Willcox and close to the New Mexico border, due to its higher elevation and water availability. He'll be making his first harvest there next week. His small Duncan field will provide us with chiles, eggplant, more kinds of melons and watermelons, and chiles, among other vegetables. The rain with which Tucson has recently been deluged has not touched Frank's Glendale field, so we're mighty grateful for this second field in Duncan.



## More on Grass-Fed Meat

In case you missed it, there's an excellent article on "The Grass-Fed Revolution" in the June 12 issue of *Time* magazine, which you can read online at <http://jcgi.pathfinder.com/time/magazine/article/0.9171.1200759.00.html>. According to the article, more than 1,000 ranchers have switched their herds to an all-grass diet—what one rancher calls "beef with integrity"—although pure pasture-raised beef still represents less than 1% of the nation's supply.

Cattle are ruminants, evolved to graze grass. It was only after World War II that the US began confining cattle in factory farms that can fatten 50,000 head a year on high-calorie grain. The new US system grew thanks to vast surpluses of government-subsidized corn and soybeans, produced with modern petroleum-based fertilizers. Traditionally, steers had taken three to four years to fatten on pasture; today, they grow to slaughter size in less than two years, an efficient industrial process that has transformed beef from a luxury meal into cheap fast food with a uniform taste. Grass-fed meat, by contrast, varies according to the breed of cattle and the pasture on which it was raised. In addition, when animals are 100% grass-fed, their meat is not only lower in saturated fats but also slightly higher in omega-3 fatty acids, the healthy fats found in salmon and flaxseed.

Because sales of pasture-raised beef reached some \$120 million last year and are expected to increase more than 20% a year over the next decade, naturally, industrial producers, too, want to jump onto and take advantage of the grass-fed label bandwagon, in much the same way that the label "organic" has been taken over by industrial agribusiness and businesses such as Wild Oats are now exploiting the "local" label. To most consumers, the term "grass-fed" means animals humanely raised in grass pastures from birth to harvest, the way nature intended. **A new USDA proposal, however, would allow animals to be kept in confinement without shade; breathing a fecal dust cloud; and fed antibiotics, growth hormones, harvested forage, corn silage, and other grains that have not been separated from their stalks, and still legally be labeled as "grass-fed."** Obviously, the label risks losing its integrity, as the label "organic" already has and "local" is fast on its way to doing so as well.

If you would like to voice your thoughts on the matter, you may e-mail the USDA at [marketingclaim@usda.gov](mailto:marketingclaim@usda.gov). Refer to Docket No. LS-05-09. The deadline for accepting comment is **August 10**. You might suggest that as a consumer, you believe that the standard for "grass-fed" must include reference to being raised on pasture without starchy grain supplementation and a restriction of confinement feeding systems.

## In Season: Mucilaginous Nkurama

Although we receive our mucilaginous Nkurama fresh from Farmer Frank, it originally comes to us from the Twi on the Gold Coast of Africa (present-day Ghana). Nkurama crossed the Atlantic with the slave trade and the name was shortened to—you guessed it! Okra! Succulent and mellow, with subtle suggestions of eggplant, artichoke, and asparagus, okra suffers from bad PR for its undeniable, un-American “sliminess.” As Terra Brockman writes in her wonderful column, “Cooking with the Seasons,” at [www.consciouschoice.com](http://www.consciouschoice.com), “You can minimize the slime factor by buying very fresh okra, cooking it lightly and not exposing it to water. But okra is okra. My advice is: learn to love the slime. Or call it something else. ‘Slime’ is for the creature from the black lagoon [...] In the food world, let’s say it’s ‘slippery’ [...] Just think: millions of people all over Africa, India, the Middle East, the Caribbean, South America, the Balkans, even Japan, eat okra and no one apologizes about the slime factor—in fact, they love it. You can, too.”

Here’s a recipe from Terra Brockman and one from okraphile TCSA member JodyLee Estrada Duek. You can find more in online TCSA newsletters 40 and 45 and in Elizabeth Schneider’s wonderful *Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini* (HarperCollins, 2001).

### Savannah Sautéed Okra with Tomato and Corn

Terra Brockman, [www.consciouschoice.com](http://www.consciouschoice.com)

- 1 pound fresh okra
  - 2-3 large ripe tomatoes
  - 1 large onion
  - 2-3 ears corn
  - 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
  - 2 teaspoons brown sugar (optional, particularly if the corn is very sweet)
  - ½ cup water
1. Cut the okra into ½-inch slices. Peel and chop the tomato. Cut the onion into thin slices, and cut the corn from the cob.
  2. In a heavy skillet, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking. Sauté the okra with salt to taste, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 3 minutes. With a slotted spoon, transfer the okra to a bowl.
  3. Add the remaining tablespoon of oil to the skillet and sauté the onion, stirring until it begins to soften. Stir in the tomato and water and simmer 3 minutes, stirring occasionally.
  4. Add the corn and simmer until it is crisp-tender and the sauce is thickened, about 3 minutes. Stir in the okra with salt and pepper to taste and cook until heated through. Serves 4.

### Shrimp and Okra Main Course

JodyLee Estrada Duek, TCSA member

- 4 to 8 ounces medium-sized shrimp per person, or use chicken or pork
- 2 to 3 okra per person
- 1 small onion for every 4 people
- 1 stalk celery for every 2 to 4 people
- ½ bell pepper for every 4 people
- 1 hot pepper for every 2 to 4 people (optional)
- 1 ounce lemon juice for every 4 people, or to taste
- 2 ounces cooking oil or Southern-style bacon grease or ham fat
- 2 to 4 ounces rice per person

Peel and devein the shrimp or cut the chicken or pork into bite-sized pieces. Chop the onion, pepper, and celery, and slice the okra into 1/3-inch rounds. Sauté the onion, celery, and pepper over medium-low heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the shrimp and okra and cook 2 to 3 more minutes, until the shrimp and okra are just cooked through. Add lemon juice to taste. Serve Southern-style, over rice.

### Easy CSA Gazpacho

Amy Schwemm, TCSA member and volunteer

#### **1 large Armenian cucumber**

- 5 or more (or less!) small tomatoes
- 1-2 slices of onion, to taste
- 1 or 2 cloves of garlic, to taste
- 1 green chile, any kind, or ½ bell pepper (optional)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, or to taste
- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar, or to taste
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Trim ends off of cucumber and chop coarsely. Trim bruised spots and stem ends off tomatoes. Remove seeds and stems from green chile or bell pepper, if using. Purée all vegetables in a Vita-mix, blender, or food processor, first by adding the garlic, onion, and chile, following with the tomatoes and then the cucumber. Season to taste with oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Chill before serving.

### Easy Beet Salad

Philippe

Scrub beet clean and cook for 1 hour in a pot of boiling water. After the beet has cooked, the skin will slip off rather easily. Chop, and toss with your favorite home-made or bought salad dressing. (Editor’s note: This salad keeps remarkably well! Philippe reports that it was still delicious after **8 months** in his refrigerator).

### Raw Beet Salad

Co-op Food Stores, Hanover & Lebanon, NH  
[www.coopfoodstore.com](http://www.coopfoodstore.com)

No room to print it here, but if you don’t feel like cooking, there’s an easy recipe for a raw beet salad at this Web site! ☺