



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 63 ~ November 20, 2006 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

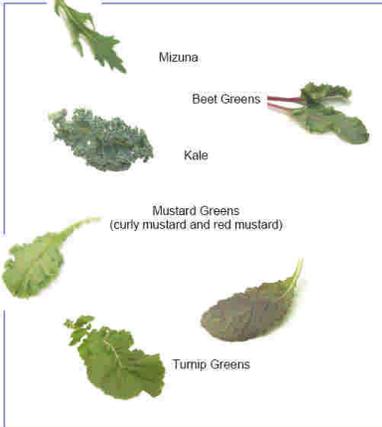
Fall 06
Week 12 of 13

This Week's Harvest

Navel Oranges
Beauregard Sweet Potatoes
Red La Soda Potatoes
Sweet Bermuda Onions
Garlic
Arugula
Pak Choi
Spring Salad Mix

Recipes

Primer on Greens



Tips

Pak Choi: can be used like Bok Choi
Arugula: try Seline Hayden's yummy Arugula Pesto recipe (on our website)
Navel Oranges: even the greenish ones are ready to eat.

To all our members: we thank you for sharing our harvests and we wish you a warm Thanksgiving!

The Crooked Sky Farms and Tucson CSA crews



Tucson CSA mural



Tuesday, November 21 is the last day for Early Bird subscriptions for the Winter Session

Black Mesa Ranch's wonderful confections have arrived!

David Heininger is a happy camper again because he's back in his candy kitchen working with all that great Belgian chocolate and that rich and creamy last-of-season goat milk. Available for a limited time at the CSA are: **Caramels, Truffles, Toffee, Dark Debris** and, this year, introducing a fantastic **Goat's Milk Fudge**.



Try our new shade-grown, organic, fair trade coffee out of Chiapas, Mexico



Dark Vienna Roast and Full City Roast (Ground and Whole Bean)

If you want to be environmentally and socially responsible *and* have coffee, **Café Para La Vida Digna** is probably one of your better options. It comes from our nearest neighbor, Mexico. The autonomous Zapatista Municipality in Rebellion, Ricardo Flores Magon, give their word that this coffee has been produced without the use of pesticides or herbicides, that 100% of this coffee has been produced by Zapatista producers, that the producers have been paid a better than fair trade rate, and that all proceeds go to support the autonomous education project, "La Educacion Verdadera", as well as medical and other projects.

Sun-Grown Coffee

Requires chemical fertilizers and pesticides and year-round labor, placing financial demands on the growers.

Leads to greater soil erosion and higher amounts of toxic runoff, endangering both wildlife and people.

Sun coffee plants produce bean crops for only 10 to 15 years.

90% fewer bird species are found in sun-grown coffee areas compared with shade-grown areas.

Shade-Grown Coffee

Traditional coffee plantations help to conserve watersheds, leading to higher water quality and quantity for local populations.

Shade-grown coffee is cultivated in specific ways that help protect biodiversity.

Shade coffee plants can produce bean crops for up to 50 years.

Migratory birds and many resident birds find sanctuary in the forest canopy of traditional coffee plantations.

Shade trees protect the plants from rain and sun, help maintain soil quality, and aid in natural pest control, thanks to the birds.

Find out more at

www.cafeparalavidadigna.com

Egg update

Our members often ask us if we will ever provide more eggs than we currently do. The answer is YES. In fact, two months ago two local suppliers agreed to produce organic eggs to the Tucson CSA. However, these things take time: baby chicks had to be bought and they take two to three months to reach maturity and start laying eggs. So, the egg situation is progressing. Thank you for your patience!



A PRIMER ON GREENS

Everyone wants to look good, feel better, and have more energy. Billions of dollars are spent buying supplements each year toward this end. Yet we often overlook simple dietary changes that can provide our bodies with the nutrients they need to achieve the goals we want. Some of the most nutrient-dense foods available on the planet are dark leafy greens--the super-heroes of the vegetable world. Eating a helping of delicious, dark leafy greens each day can help keep you in tip-top shape. Popeye was right. So why isn't everybody putting greens on their must-have lists for the grocery store? Arugula, beet greens, bok choy, collard greens, dandelion greens, kale, lamb's quarters, mustard greens, spinach, Swiss chard, and watercress are only a partial list of the kinds of these superheroes.

HOW TO STORE GREENS

Vegetables are alive! They are respiring, which means that they need moisture and air to survive. If you store wet greens in a sealed plastic bag, they will rot quickly. If you toss a bunch of greens onto the bottom shelf of the fridge without a bag, they will dry out and wilt due to moisture loss. The best way to store them is slightly wet in an open or perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator. Fresh herbs do well if you trim off about 1/2-inch from the root ends, place them in a jar of water with a plastic bag over the top, and store them in the refrigerator. Stored properly, greens should keep about 3 days.

HOW TO PREPARE AND COOK GREENS

Fresh herbs and tender leaves like arugula, spinach, and watercress can be chopped raw and added to soups, salads, and grains, or lightly steamed. More mature greens like bok choy, kale, dandelion greens, and collards, taste bitter if you serve them raw, and often the texture is too tough for easy chewing. Steaming these greens actually intensifies the bitterness. They need to be cooked in liquid where the bitter flavor can be dispersed. If greens are too pungent for your taste, blanch them in salted water to reduce the 'bite'. First you need to prepare the greens. Remove large stems or break off small ones. Fill a sink with cold water and submerge the leaves. With herbs, leave the stems and hold on to them as you give the leaves a dunk. If there is sediment in the water, drain the sink and repeat. If you plan to put the greens in a salad, spin them dry. Leaves destined for cooking can have excess water shaken off and be placed on a towel or chopping board. The skill is how to cook the greens so they lose as little nutritional value as possible while shedding their bitter flavors.

There are three cooking techniques when cooking the more mature, bitter greens: quick-boiling, simmering, and stir-fry.

To **quick-boil** greens, bring two quarts of water to a boil. Do not chop the leaves, but submerge them whole into the boiling water. Use a wooden spoon to move them from top to bottom. To tell when they are done, use your senses. The leaves should begin to lose their perkiness and wilt slightly, but the bright green color will still be present. At this point, bring a leaf up with your spoon, tear off a piece, and chew it. If the flavor is bitter, let them cook more. The greens are just right when chew-

ing a piece releases sweet juices in your mouth. If the color is gone or there is no flavor left when you chew it, they've cooked too long. The amount of time depends on the maturity of the green and the amount of leaves you're cooking. For something like tender mustard greens, it should be a thirty- to sixty-second dip, while mature collard greens can take about five minutes. Once you test the green and get a sweet flavor, pour the contents of the pot into a colander. Save the water, which is called potlikker. Many cooks like to drink this nutrient filled broth, but I like to use it to water my plants. Gently run cool water over the greens to halt cooking. Once they are cool enough to touch, gather them into a ball and gently squeeze out the excess water. Chop them on the cutting board and they are ready to dress and serve.

To **simmer** greens, bring about one inch of liquid (water, broth, wine ...) to simmer in a large skillet. Chop the washed greens into strips. Place the strips in the simmering liquid and keep them moving with a wooden spoon. You are looking for the same results as described above: a bright green color and a sweet flavor; but since the greens have been chopped, the cooking time will be shorter.

When **stir-frying** greens, it is good to work with just-washed greens. The water helps with wilting and releasing bitterness. Heat 1-2 Tablespoons of oil in a skillet. Add a minced clove of garlic if desired. The garlic will tell you if you have the heat right. Too hot and the garlic will burn, too cool and the garlic will just sit there. If there is too much water on the greens or the oil is too hot, the oil will sputter, so take care. Chop the greens you are using into bite-sized pieces. Stacking the washed leaves is an easy way to make efficient, uniform cuts. Place cut leaves in the skillet and keep them moving. Stay with the process and test every minute or so for doneness. When the leaves are still full of color and tasting proves not bitter, but sweet, they're ready!

HOW TO DRESS THEM UP

Once you have a heap of cooked greens in front of you, there are limitless possibilities. Frankly, I like to keep things simple and give them a dash of vinegar and a sprinkle of tamari, toss, and eat. Cooked greens can be added to soups, grain dishes, and salads to add color, flavor, and nutrients. You can prepare a heavenly peanut sauce to drizzle over greens, or toss them with toasted sesame oil and toasted sesame seeds for an Asian flavor. A squeeze of lemon is fine, but how about a little orange juice with garlic and a touch of chipotle sauce? Serve it over slices of polenta and it's fit for company

(Vegetarian Journal, May, 2001 by Cynthia Lair).

Check our Greens recipes online at
www.tucsoncsa.org