



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Summer 07 - Week 9 of 13

Planned Harvest

(May differ from actual harvest)

Red LaSoda Potatoes
Beauregard Sweet Potatoes
White Onions
Green Beans
Tomatillos
Trucker's Delight Sweet Corn
Melons
Verdolagas

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Tomatillos



The **tomatillo** (*Physalis ixocarpa* or *Physalis philadelphic*) is a small, spherical green fruit

surrounded by a paper-like husk formed from the calyx. As the fruit matures, it fills the husk and can split it open by harvest. The husk turns brown, and the fruit can be any of a number of colors when ripe. Tomatillos are the key ingredient in fresh and cooked Latin American green sauces. Fruit should be firm and bright green as the green color and tart flavor are the main culinary contributions of the fruit.

Fresh ripe tomatillos will keep in the refrigerator for about two weeks. They will keep even longer if the husks are removed and the fruits are placed in sealed plastic bags stored in the refrigerator. They may also be frozen whole or sliced.

Newsletter editor

Sara Jones

IMPORTANT: Fall Session Offers Two Separate Pickup Options!

Starting with the Fall session (September 4th to November 30th) we will offer two independent pickup days, **Tuesdays 4 to 7 pm** and **Fridays 4 to 7 pm**, with Farmer Frank delivering on both days. There will no longer be Tuesday morning pickups. The Tuesday and Friday deliveries will be completely independent, so pickup days **will not be interchangeable**. Members may pick up only on their appointed day, which they will choose when subscribing. There will be a subscription cap for each day.

As the Tucson CSA has filled up, we've change subscription procedures:

Members subscriptions period: priority renewal for current and past Tucson CSA members is from July 30th until August 14th. Fall contracts are available at the CSA, or you can ask us to email you one.

Waiting list subscriptions period: August 15th to August 31st (or until full). Folks on our waiting list will be contacted by email in the order they joined the list.

Verdolagas (Purslane, Portulaca)

“I learned that a man may use as simple a diet as the animals, and yet retain health and strength. I have made a satisfactory dinner off a dish of purslane which I gathered in my corn field,” wrote Henry David Thoreau in Walden, “yet men have come to such a pass that they frequently starve, not for want of necessities, but for want of luxuries.”



Purslane was one of the most important wild plant foods for the Ancestral Puebloans at Salmon Run on the San Juan River, Chaco Canyon, Mesa Verde, and Canyon de Chelly, according to William Dunmire and Gail Tierny in Wild Plants and Native Peoples of the Four Corners. Cooked purslane is still a familiar vegetable throughout Mexico, where it is called verdolagas.

In the summer, the only greens we get are verdolagas (purslane) and quelites (amaranth), both considered as weeds in the United States and delicacies everywhere else. If the idea of eating a weed disturbs you, one taste of these delicious greens should change your mind! The greens of this plant are succulent and juicy, and have a nice lemony flavor. They are also nutritious and contain many important vitamins and minerals as well as the highest concentration of Omega-3 fatty acids found in any plant. But because the plant grows so well, it is thought of as a weed (it is invasive, and if you plant some in your garden once, it is bound to reappear again and again).

There are as many options for cooking verdolagas as there are culinary traditions. This weed (or herb, if you prefer!) is widespread throughout the world. Most popular in Mediterranean, particularly Greek, cooking, it appears on tables across the globe, both raw and cooked in a variety of recipes. Verdolagas are well suited to mayonnaise or yogurt based salads. If you have a favorite creamy salad, try adding blanched verdolagas to create a more interesting taste and texture. I also think that verdolagas make a good stand in for cucumbers in many recipes. Verdolagas are easy to prepare – simply remove any thick stems (the more tender, succulent ones are fine) and dunk in a bowl of water to rinse. Roughly chopped, they are great served in either raw or cooked recipes. Sprigs of purslane are perfect for salads or tucked into sandwiches or tacos. Chop purslane to fold, as you would celery, into mayonnaise-based salads such as egg, tuna, or potato.

Classic Sonoran Verdolagas

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

To some 'Verdolagas' may be synonymous with this recipe, traditionally prepared with pork roast as a stew. I have simplified it and left the pork out. It is a tasty dish, served wrapped in tortillas and topped with sour cream or shredded cheese.

1 large bag verdolagas
2-3 medium size tomatillos
1-2 green chiles
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoons cumin
2 tablespoons oil
Salt and pepper to taste

Wash and sort verdolagas, removing any thick stems. Chop roughly. Roast tomatillos and chiles, ideally over a barbeque flame. You can also cook them in a heavy skillet over high heat, stirring regularly for about 7 minutes, or under the broiler setting in your oven. The idea is to char the skin of the vegetables without burning them to a crisp throughout. Remove the seeds from the chile(s) and roughly chop the roasted vegetables. Heat oil over medium high heat and add onion, cooking for about 5 minutes until they begin to brown. Add the garlic and the cumin and stir until fragrant. Add the verdolagas, tomatillos and chiles, turn heat to medium low and cover. Cook for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. You may need to add a tablespoon or so of water to keep vegetables from sticking. Season with salt and pepper.

Verdolaga and Bean Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

1 cup canned or pre-cooked beans
1 bag green beans
1 bag verdolagas
1/4 onion, chopped
2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
1 teaspoon honey
1 tablespoon oil
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/2 teaspoon dried red chile flakes
Salt and pepper to taste

Remove stems from green beans and thick stems from verdolagas, cut into 1 inch pieces. Blanch in boiling, salted water for about 3 minutes, drain and then rinse in cold water. Mix together with beans and onions in a large bowl. In a smaller bowl, mix remaining ingredients and then pour over vegetables. Refrigerate and let salad marinate for at least 1 hour before serving.

Cantaloupe Popsicles

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

1/2 cup orange juice
1 medium cantaloupe, cut into chunks
1 cup plain yogurt
2 tablespoons honey

Puree orange juice and cantaloupe until smooth, about 20-25 seconds. Add yogurt and honey and puree until smooth, about 15 more seconds. Pour into popsicle molds and freeze until set. (You can create your own popsicle molds out of small paper cups and old popsicle sticks.)

Watermelon Ginger Agua Fresca

Bon Appetite magazine

If you are having trouble eating all of your melons, try drinking them instead! They go down a lot faster, and are a really refreshing treat. You can double or triple this recipe to use as much melon as you like. You can also mix the juice half and half with Ginger Ale for a special treat.

2 1/2 cups watermelon, seeded
3/4 cup cold water
Juice from one lime
1 tablespoon sugar
2 teaspoons ginger juice*

Place watermelon and water in blender and puree until smooth. Pour into container and add remaining ingredients. Chill and serve.

*To make ginger juice, grate a piece of fresh ginger, wrap in cheesecloth and squeeze.

**Green Salsa**

1/2 pound tomatillos, husked, rinsed, diced
1/2 to 1 jalapeno
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves
1/4 cup (firmly packed) fresh cilantro leaves
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice (optional)
1 tablespoon olive oil

Combine all ingredients in blender. Puree until almost smooth (should be slightly chunky). Season with salt and pepper. Add lime juice if desired.

Can also be cooked before blending for serving on warm dishes (add a scoop of whipping or sour cream to the blender).