



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 200 ~ August 3, 2009 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Summer '09 Week 10 of 13

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FALL SESSION

SUBSCRIPTIONS: September, October and November

Fall session registration for current and former members is from August 1 to August 31 (or until we fill up, whichever comes first). Contract forms are available at the CSA, or online under *Join > Subscriptions & Cost*.

To avoid lines at the front desk, you can either place your completed contract and payment in our drop-box at the CSA pick-up, or mail them to us. We will e-mail you a confirmation when we process your subscription.

We recommend that current and former members register before we open registration to the waitlist on August 16. The later you subscribe after August 16, the greater the chance that either or both pick-up days may fill up.

Produce shares are \$247. Cheese shares are \$30. Cheese pick-up will be every other week (weeks 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12).

To get an idea of what's in store for us this fall, go online to our *Harvests* link and scroll down to previous fall harvests.

Newsletter Editor

Kimi Eisele

TOMA VERDE TOMATILLOS

For several weeks now, you've been getting the Toma Verde Tomatillo (*Physalis ixocarpa*) in your weekly share. A staple in Mexican cuisine, tomatillos are called *tomates verdes*, *tomates de cascara* or *fresadillas* in Spanish. In English, they're also called husk tomato, jamberry, husk cherry, mexican tomato, or ground cherry.



Domesticated by the Aztecs and documented in both Mexico and Guatemala, tomatillos are now popular throughout the U.S. They are used primarily in sauces combined with chiles, either to lessen the heat, add a tangy tartness, or as a base for salsa verdes.

Tomatillos are more heat and drought-resistant than tomatoes. Once harvested, tomatillos will keep for several weeks. Store them with their husks in the refrigerator or out in the open, not in airtight containers. You can also freeze them. They do not need to be peeled or seeded before cooking—but do remove the husks and rinse them as their skin is often sticky. Occasionally inconsistent in flavor, tomatillos range from mild to sweet to even a bit sour. Some cooks add sugar to balance out the flavor.

Use tomatillos **raw** in salsas to add a tart, citrus-like flavor. To mellow their tartness, try **blanching** them by adding whole tomatillos (without husks) to boiling water for about 5 minutes or until soft. Then remove from water and puree. **Roast** tomatillos over a grill, gas flame or in the broiler for a charred, smoky-flavored tomatillo great in salsas. Make sure the heat is high to prevent them from getting mushy. You can also roast them in a cast iron pan on low heat for 20-30 minutes.

SPOTLIGHT ON COMIN' HOME: HELPING VETERANS

Every Friday, the Tucson CSA donates surplus produce to Comin' Home, Inc., an organization that assists homeless veterans with transitional and permanent supported housing and services. Now celebrating their 20th anniversary, Comin' Home has helped over 3,700 veterans in Tucson, housing 170 homeless veterans daily and providing assistance with medical and psychiatric needs.

Comin' Home Executive Director Mary Pat Sullivan (a CSA member) reports that the number of homeless veterans is alarmingly high (comparable to after the Vietnam War). As a result, the organization is looking to expand its reach, acquiring additional housing, furnishings, and transportation for homeless veterans and continuing to build community partnerships that help veterans gain employment as well as treatment for war-inflicted injuries or illnesses.

These upcoming fundraisers will help the cause:

- August 12 & August 20, 7 pm: "The Adventures of the Freedom League of America" or "Tights Make Right," (\$20-\$30), a theatrical production at the Gaslight Theatre, 7010 E. Broadway.
- Sunday, August 23, 1:30-3:30 pm: Iced Tea Party of full English Style Tea with cakes and sandwiches (\$25). Hosted by the Chantilly Tea Room, 5185 Genematas Drive.

For more information or to purchase tickets for any of these events, call Anastasha at 820-1620 or email alynn@cominhome.org. For more information about Comin' Home, see <http://www.cominhome.org/>.

Melon Salsa

Nicole Baugh, Tucson CSA

This colorful salsa is a nice way to use melon in a savory, rather than sweet, setting. It's good on chips, with quesadillas or served on top of chicken or fish.

- 1/4 melon, peeled, seeded and diced into 1/2 inch or smaller dice (about 2 cups)
- 1/4 jicama, peeled and diced into 1/2 inch or smaller dice (one generous cup)
- 3 tomatillos, husked and diced into 1/4 inch dice
- 1 small Glendale gold onion or 1/2 large onion, minced fine
- 1 large garlic clove, minced fine
- 1/2 - 2 serrano peppers, minced fine (adjust heat to your liking)
- Juice of one lime salt, pepper and ground chile powder to taste

Combine everything in a non-metal bowl. Eat immediately, or let sit (refrigerated) for more heat and better flavor. The jicama can be replaced with more melon, but it adds a nice crunch. Other ingredients are also versatile - use tomatoes instead of tomatillos, add different peppers, throw in some cilantro - whatever you have on hand. This recipe may easily be scaled up to use an entire melon and a whole share of tomatillos.

Tomatillo Soup

Sara, Tucson CSA

- 5-6 small potatoes, chopped
- 3 tomatillos, peeled and cleaned, chopped
- 2 green chiles, preferably roasted, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 5 cups broth or water
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons cream, if desired
- 1 bell pepper, chopped finely

In a large soup pot, sauté potatoes, chiles, garlic and cumin to release fragrance. Cover with broth or water; bring to a boil. Cook for 15 minutes, then add chopped tomatillos. Cook for about 10 more minutes until all ingredients are tender. Add cream, if using, and salt and pepper to taste. At this point you can blend all or part of the soup to your desired consistency, or serve chunky. Garnish each bowl with the chopped bell pepper and serve hot or cold.

Quick Honeydew Sorbet

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Cut up and freeze your melon and you can have this easy sorbet any time you like.

- 4 cups frozen honeydew
- 1-2 cups apple juice
- 1 handful fresh mint (optional)
- Sugar, as desired

Using the pulse button, mix melon and 1 cup juice in food processor or blender. Add more liquid as needed to make a soft sorbet. Add sugar, if needed and serve immediately.

Tomatillo Avocado Sauce-new

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is a salsa bar standby and is a great taco condiment. This also makes a great dressing for any type of salad. The sauce is just the basic salsa verde recipe, with avocado and sour cream added in. Remember, salsa verde freezes excellently, but the avocado in this recipe won't freeze well. If you want to make this sauce in the off-season, freeze salsa verde alone, then defrost when desired, add the avocados and sour cream, and process until smooth.

- 1/2 pound tomatillos, husked, rinsed
- 2 green chiles
- 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
- 1 whole ripe avocado, diced
- 2 tablespoons sour cream or plain yogurt (optional)

Roast tomatillos and green chiles under the broiler until charred. Remove skins from chiles (this step is not necessary for the tomatillos). In a food processor or blender, puree all ingredients until smooth. Add salt to taste.

Green Bean Potato Salad with Tomatillo and Avocado Dressing

Mary Leuchtenberger, Tucson CSA

- 5 or 6 medium potatoes
- 1 share green beans, chopped
- 2 shallots, chopped
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- rice vinegar
- 2 large tomatillos
- 1 garlic clove
- 1/2 avocado
- 1/2 cup plain yoghurt
- 3 hard boiled eggs

Cut potatoes in half and boil until cooked through, but not too soft. Chop green beans and add to pot of potatoes during last few minutes of cooking. Drain and allow to cool. Chop warm potatoes and place in bowl with green beans, shallots, and celery. Sprinkle with rice vinegar and refrigerate overnight.

Blend tomatillos, avocado, garlic and yoghurt in blender or food processor until smooth. Stir dressing into potato salad, while adding chopped hard boiled eggs. This tangy dressing goes well with any salad, and can be used as a dip too.

