



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Spring '10 Week 1 of 13

Harvest list is online

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Lettuce Types



Oak leaf lettuce

The many types of lettuce we are getting include Lola Rosa, Romaine, Tango, Iceberg, Oak Leaf and Red Ball.



Lola Rosa (with Farmer Frank)

Sometimes they come as individual heads, sometimes they come mixed in bags named salad mix or spring mix.

Newsletter Editor

Philippe Waterinckx

WELCOME TO SPRING SESSION

The start of spring session isn't much different from the winter session, as far as the veggies are concerned, and the shift from winter to spring is very gradual. Tania, from Crooked Sky farms, told me this morning that we will still see lots of leafy greens, as well as more broccoli, fennel, onions, potatoes, citrus, and different kinds of kales, spinach and beets, etc. However, there are new things in the fields that will appear in our shares fairly soon: peas, beans, cabbage, artichokes and sorrel to name a few. Maybe even rhubarb!

If you're new to the CSA and if you find the volumes of greens in your shares a little overwhelming, we have two suggestions: 1. remember that greens shrink considerably when cooked; and 2. read Sara's helpful Winter Greens Guide (on our website, under Recipes).

WHAT'S WITH THE CRAZY CARROTS? by Kimi Eisele

In Katherine Dunn's well-known novel, *Geek Love* (1989), the parents of a traveling carnival family use drugs and radioactive materials in order to breed their own "freak" children—a boy with flippers, a pair of Siamese twins, a hunchbacked albino dwarf, among others.

A dramatic approach, indeed.

Farmer Frank isn't using drugs, radioactive materials, pesticides or herbicides on Tucson CSA vegetables. So what's the deal with the carrots? Surely you've had some oddly shaped roots in your share lately! (See photo for my latest find!)



Environmental conditions are usually the cause of misshapen or oddly shaped vegetables. Some parts may grow slower than others due to damage or stress. With carrots, if the tip undergoes stress or damage, it can split—sometimes many times! Soil conditions can also impact the shapes of vegetables. Rocky soil may impact growth, as might natural fertilizers.

Sometimes, odd shapes are purposeful. Farmers in Japan have grown rectangular watermelons in glass boxes, which not only makes the fruits easier to stack, but also more lucrative.

And then there are the contests. Growers can use artificial selection to grow giant hybrids. Some even trade seeds for these giant fruits and veggies through international online clubs.

A few years ago, the European Union loosened its standards that dictated specific measurements for the weight, size and appearance of vegetables sold in supermarkets. Prior to the decision, supermarkets, grocers, and farmers had been forced to throw away imperfect produce, wasting food and losing money for decades. Their protests were what finally changed the policy.

Fortunately, as most of us know by now, irregularity of shape isn't dangerous and certainly doesn't impact the taste of a vegetable. So, enjoy those crazy carrots!

Sources:

The Telegraph. Nov. 12, 2008. "EU to allow sale of 'odd' shaped fruit and vegetables."

Wikipedia.org: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unusually_shaped_vegetable

Ginger/Soy Glazed Carrots with Peas and Radishes

James Kittredge, Tucson CSA

* Sara's note: Originally, this recipe called for just carrots, but why not take advantage of our bountiful harvest? Peas and radishes add nice flavor and color. Garnish with peeled orange segments if you like.

3 large carrots, skinned and sliced
* 1/2 bunch radishes, cleaned and sliced in half lengthwise
* 1 large handful peas, stem end and strings removed
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons fresh ginger root, diced
1 shallot, diced
2 1/2 tablespoons of honey or agave nectar
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon citrus juice
1 tablespoon brown mustard

Boil a pot of water and toss in carrots. Let boil for about 4 minutes, or until just tender. Remove carrots from boiling water and add radishes and peas. Cook about 1 minute and remove. Melt butter in a skillet. Sauté shallot and ginger for 4 minutes. Add honey, soy sauce, lemon juice, and mustard. Stir together. Add vegetables and cook until they are heated through and the sauce is sufficiently thick, about 2 minutes.

Sweet Potatoes and Greens in Coconut Milk

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is a very simple, yet tasty recipe, with lots of room for innovation. If you find the flavor of mustard greens too strong, this is an excellent recipe to try. The spicy ginger and chile, along with the creamy sweetness of coconut milk and sweet potato, really smooth out the pungent greens. If you like curry flavors, add more spices to the mix, sautéing them with the onions before adding the rest of the ingredients. You can also add tofu, garbanzo beans or cooked chicken for a complete meal, served over rice.

1 bunch CSA greens, cleaned and roughly chopped
About 2 cups peeled sweet potato, diced small
1 inch fresh ginger, grated
1 onion, sliced thinly
1/2 teaspoon ground coriander
2 teaspoons oil
1/2 can coconut milk
Red chile flakes, to taste
Soy sauce, to taste
Lime juice

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium high heat and add onion. Cook until beginning to brown. Add ginger, chile flakes and coriander and cook until fragrant. Add vegetables and coconut milk, plus about 1/4 cup of water. Bring to a low simmer and cook until squash is tender. Season to taste with soy sauce and a bit of lime juice.

Spaghetti with Mustard Greens and Goat Cheese

Philippe, Tucson CSA (adapted from Vegetables from Amaranth to Zucchini, by Elizabeth Schneider)

1/2 pound spaghetti
1/2 pound mustard greens
4 ounces goat cheese
1 tablespoon olive oil

Wash the mustard greens, then fold the leaves in half and cut away the stems. Stack the leaves, roll them tightly and slice in super-thin slivers. Boil spaghetti until "al dente", then stir in half the greens and remove from heat. Drain. Toss with olive oil and remaining greens and crumbled goat cheese.

Slow Cooker Risotto with Swiss Chard

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

This recipe has become a CSA favorite! Consider adding diced sweet potatoes or peas to the recipe for a twist.

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
1 1/4 cups uncooked Arborio rice
2 (14 ounce) cans reduced sodium broth, vegetable or chicken
1/2 cup dry white wine
Dash salt
1/2 bunch Swiss chard, rinsed clean, well-dried and coarsely chopped

Heat olive oil in small skillet. Add onion and cook until softened, 4 to 5 minutes. Place in slow cooker. Add rice and toss well to coat. Stir in broth, wine, salt and Swiss chard. Cover and cook on high 2 to 2 1/2 hours or until all liquid is absorbed.

Carrots en Escabèche

Amy Schwemm, TCSA

Here's an easy recipe to take advantage of our abundant carrot harvest. Make one pint, or ten! Just follow the basic proportions and make sure your jars are sterilized.

Vinegar, cider or distilled
Salt, non-iodized
Carrot
Onion
Garlic
Fresh jalapenos
Mexican oregano

Cut slices of onion, garlic and carrot. Chiles can be left whole with stems, or seeded and sliced. Mix vinegar and water in equal parts, making enough brine to easily cover veggies. Put brine in a non-reactive pot with 1 teaspoon salt for each 4 cups of brine. Bring to a boil and cook veggies for 1 to 3 minutes (more time for whole chiles, less for sliced). Do not let veggies get soft! Remove from heat and let cool. Put in jars, making sure the veggies stay submerged in brine, and refrigerate. They will keep up to a year.