



# Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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## Spring 2011

Harvest list is online

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### Newsletter Editors

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## SUMMER SQUASH!

This summer we get to eat a whole poem of summer squash in our CSA shares.



Yellow crooknecks. Mexican grays. Pattypan. Sunbursts. Eight-balls. Gold balls. All those to go with the well-loved zucchinis and yellow squash! And to top it all off, squash blossoms.

Like winter squash, summer squash come from the species *Cucurbita pepo*. But unlike winter squash, they are harvested before maturity, which makes their rinds soft and edible.

Because of that, their life span is shorter than that of winter squash. Best to eat them soon after harvest, though they will usually last for a week or two if refrigerated. Here's a little primer:

Yellow crooknecks are a close relatives of yellow summer squash, but distinguishable by their bumpy skin and, of course, its crooked neck. It is a little sweeter than other summer squash.

Pattypan are recognizable by their round, disc-like shape and scalloped edges, like mini-Frisbees! They are yellow, green, or white. The name comes from "a pan for baking a patty," and in French, "pâtisson," is a small scalloped-edged cake.

Mexican Gray squash is also known as "calabacita," in Spanish. It is a light green-gray squash that is thicker skinned than a zucchini and is often fatter with a rounder bottom. It is a perfect squash for making the popular and easy Mexican side dish, "calabacitas," (sauté it with chopped onion, fresh corn, and roasted green chiles).

Sunburst summer squash are a variety of pattypan and are, of course, bright yellow!

Eight balls are zucchini hybrids that are roly-poly round! They have a delicious nutty, buttery flavor and are favorite "stuffers," thanks to their shape.

Gold balls are also spherical zucchinis but bright yellow.

Squash blossoms are the lovely orange flowers that appear at the stem of the squash. In Mexico, and here in Tucson, we like to sauté them and eat them. They are delicate and beautiful with subtle squash taste. If you can handle them gently, you can stuff them with goat cheese! But be careful, they do, of course, squash easily. ;)

## CROOKED SKY FARMS' CORN HARVEST LOOKS PROMISING

It is easy to grow corn in our climate, but it is not easy to grow good corn, as it tends to get damaged by worms, especially early in the corn season. But this summer, Farmer Frank has high hopes for his corn. The hard frost we had last winter killed a lot of undesirable pests. The first corn looks good. You may find a little worm damage in some ears, but not as much as last year's, which was not a good year for corn at the farm. Crooked Sky Farms has planted five different types of corn, which we will get in waves in our shares throughout the summer if all goes well.

### **Calabacitas and Rice with Mole**

Philippe Waterinckx, Tucson CSA

Nothing quite conjures up the essence of our Sonoran summer like summer squash with a Mexican mole seasoning. Moles truly enhance the delicate flavor and texture of summer squash. Mole powders are ready-to-use mixes of spices, herbs, fruits and nuts. They are labor intensive to make but luckily they can be bought off the shelf at the CSA. For a spicy seasoning, use mole adobo. For a milder one, use mole pipian. For a sweet touch, use mole dulce. For a stronger flavor, simply use more mole powder than indicated in the recipe.

1 pound summer squash, diced  
1 tablespoon mole  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 cup rice  
1 cup water  
1 cup chicken or vegetable broth  
salt to taste

Heat the oil to medium hot in a skillet. Add mole powder and stir it into a paste. Fry the mole paste for a few minutes, then add water, stock and a sprinkle of salt. Bring the water back to a boil, then add rice. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Add diced squash on top of the rice, cover and turn off heat. Let stand for 10 minutes. Stir and serve.

### **Shredded Carrot Marinara**

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This recipe will help use up an abundant carrot harvest. It is a great way to use warm season carrots that aren't particularly sweet. You can use beets as well. The trick is to slowly caramelize the carrots with the onions. You will be amazed with the results! This is great served over spaghetti, but is also an excellent base for a soup or chili. Or add ground beef for a delicious meat sauce that could be used for pasta or to stuff peppers or squash.

2 tablespoons olive oil  
5 carrots, shredded  
1 onion, diced  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 large can diced tomatoes  
2 tablespoons tomato paste  
1 teaspoon dried thyme  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
Red pepper flakes, to taste  
Salt to taste

Use a large pan or pot with a heavy base, to distribute heat evenly. Over medium heat, cook carrots and onions in olive oil, stirring occasionally, for about 20 minutes. The vegetables should be soft and browning. Add garlic, herbs and spices and tomato paste and cook an additional 5 minutes. Add diced tomatoes and cook about 10 minutes. Salt to taste. Toss with cooked spaghetti or use for soup or chile.

### **Minty Squash Pasta Salad**

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is great hot or cold. Try using basil instead of mint and parsley for a nice change.

1 box penne or bowtie pasta  
About 2 teaspoons olive oil  
About 2 medium summer squash, cut into half moons  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 handful mint, chopped finely  
1 handful parsley, chopped finely  
Zest of two limes  
Juice from one lime  
2 teaspoons walnut or hazelnut oil (optional)  
Salt to taste

Cook pasta until al dente and set aside. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium high heat. Add garlic and squash. Cook, stirring occasionally, until squash begins to brown slightly. Remove from heat. Toss together pasta, squash, mixture herbs, lime zest and juice. Drizzle with nut oil or additional olive oil, and salt to taste.

### **Carrot Fritters**

Tina Hansleben, Tucson CSA

Fritters work with just about any veggie. They are really great because they change the texture and appearance of a vegetable, which can give you a new appreciation for an item you have been receiving for weeks! You can adjust the seasoning for fritters depending on the veggies you are working with. Carrots go particularly well with cumin and coriander.

3-4 large carrots, grated  
¼ cup flour of choice (I have used many different kinds of wheat free flours with success.)  
1 egg  
Herbs or spices of your choice  
Juice of one lemon  
Peel of one lemon  
½ teaspoon salt  
Sugar, to taste  
Chèvre, to garnish

Shred roots into a large bowl. Add egg, herbs and spices, lemon peel, salt, flour, juice from ½ lemon. Add a little more flour if the mixture is still very wet, you want the vegetables to stick together. Heat a pan to medium with oil. Scoop out the mixture in a ¼ cup measure and press down with a spoon. Drop mixture onto the pan, flatten with a spatula and fry until golden on each side. Mix remaining lemon juice with a little sugar until you have a sweet concoction to drizzle onto the fritters at the table.