



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 344 ~ June 25, 2012 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Summer 2012

Harvest list is online

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**Many more recipes in
our online recipe archive**

4th of July

There will be a pick-up as usual on Wednesday, July 4th. **Remember to put your subscription on hold if you are going to be out of town that day.**

Bulk Tomatoes

This year, like every year from early June to mid-July, you can order tomatoes in bulk at the CSA. They are the same tomatoes from Crooked Sky Farms that we are getting in our shares.

They cost \$25 per flat, and a flat contains about 15 pounds of tomatoes. Pretty good deal!

You have a choice of 3 types of flats:

1. Classic Reds: only red tomatoes (open-pollinated, heirlooms and hybrids)
2. Heirlooms: all colors and sizes
3. Romas: good for canning because less they are fleshier and less juicy.

All orders must be pre-paid at the front desk for pick-up the following week.



WATERMELON

The watermelon is a member of the Cucurbitaceae family which includes cucumbers, melons, pumpkins and squash. Like its relatives, it is a sprawling vine. By weight, the watermelon is the most consumed melon in the United States, followed by cantaloupe and honeydew.



Watermelon is thought to have originated in southern Africa, where it is found growing wild. Evidence of its cultivation in the Nile Valley was found from the second millennium B.C. By the 10th century A.D., watermelons were being cultivated in China, which is today the world's single largest watermelon producer. By the 13th century, Moorish invaders had introduced the fruit to Europe; according to John Mariani's Dictionary of American Food and Drink, "watermelon" made its first appearance in an English dictionary in 1615. It is believed that the watermelon was introduced to the New World by the Spaniards in the 15th century.

Watermelons can be round, oblong or spherical in shape. They are typically light to dark green with white mottling stripes, but some varieties differ a lot from the norm: some varieties such as "Moon And Stars" are dark purple with golden spots. Their flesh is commonly bright red but some varieties have brown, orange, yellow, pink or even white flesh. Their core contains large black seeds. Seedless hybrid varieties tend to be less flavorful.

Few fruits are as cooling as watermelons on a hot summer day. Usually only the flesh is eaten. It can be juiced, eaten raw as is or in salads, or it can be grilled. The rind, which is the whitish green part of the watermelon, between the skin and the flesh, is usually discarded. However, the rind is richest in minerals and can be juiced with the flesh, or it can be pickled or candied. The seeds can be used too. Check out some recipes on our online recipe archive.

The watermelon has a very high water content (92%). It is rich in beta-carotene, folic acid, vitamin C, vitamin B5 and smaller amounts of B1, B2, B3 and B6. It is also a rich source of minerals such as calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, sodium and smaller amounts of copper, iron and zinc. Like the tomato, the watermelon is rich in lycopene, the red carotenoid pigment that gives it its red color. This important antioxidant is powerful in neutralizing harmful free radicals in our body.

Watermelon is very cleansing, alkalizing, diuretic and mineralizing. It is very effective in promoting elimination of toxic wastes. The alkalizing effect maintains the acid-alkaline balance in the body, neutralizing the toxic condition of the body resulting from excessive intake of acid-forming foods.

DON THE BAKER AWAY DAYS

Our baker Don Guerra will be away the 2nd and 3rd week of July (July 10, 11, 17 & 18). There will be no bread shares or extra bread on those weeks. If you wish to stock up on bread in preparation for this, you can add extra bread shares to your subscription for next week via your online CSA account (you can change your subscription between the day after your pick-up day and midnight Friday). But remember that you will have to remove your extra bread shares from your subscription after you have picked them up.

Ratatouille A La Bettina - new

Bettina Walker, Tucson CSA

Editor's note: this recipe uses over half of this week's produce share.

Many years ago my mother showed me a ratatouille recipe that she liked. I made it back then according to the recipe but through the years I have modified that recipe in numerous ways. So, here it is as I made it last week:

4 to 5 small, 3 medium or 2 large eggplants
2 large zucchini (or summer squash) or 3 small to medium ones (minimum)
4 to 5 medium size tomatoes (but can easily accommodate more)
1 large onion or 2 smaller ones – chopped
2 large cloves of garlic or 3 to 4 small ones - cut up very finely or passed through garlic press
good-quality olive oil (I buy mine at Afonso's at St. Phillip's plaza during Farmers' Market there on Sat. or Sun.)
salt & pepper to taste
chopped up fresh basil or about 2 tablespoons dried basil leaves

Rinse whole eggplants, zucchini, and tomatoes.

It makes the ratatouille less watery if you can extract some of the internal water from the eggplant and zucchini before cooking it. Best method to do that is to slice both eggplant and zucchini in round slices each about 1/2" to 3/4" thick. Lay slices down either on a clean kitchen towel double folded or on double folded paper towels. Then sprinkle top surfaces of eggplant and zucchini with salt. Don't salt too much - should be a light coating of salt over the surface of the veggies. After one side of eggplant & zucchini slices have been salted, turn them all over and salt the surfaces of other side. Cover with more paper towels and then let sit for about 30 minutes.

In the meantime, cut up the onion and tomatoes - diced fairly small. With the tomatoes try to get rid of the seeds and juice. I usually just scrape that into a cup before dicing the flesh of the tomatoes and when I'm all through, I reward myself with a cupful of delicious fresh tomato juice.

After the eggplant slices and zucchini slices have sat for a half an hour with towels absorbing their extra moisture, cut slices up anyway you like for a ratatouille. I usually quarter the zucchini slices and cut up the eggplant slices so that the pieces are approximately 3/4" - 1 inch wide and long. I leave the skin on the eggplant and zucchini because I think it gives the ratatouille more flavor; but some people prefer to remove the skin. Up to you!

Coat bottom of big skillet (or 2 medium-size skillets cooking side by side) with olive oil and let skillet heat up on medium-high heat. Add onions and garlic until onions are mostly transparent. Then add the cut-up eggplant and zucchini as well as an additional tablespoon of olive oil. Stir well; turn heat down to medium or to medium-low, depending on how

hot & how quickly your stove heats. Stir regularly; and, as you do, every few minutes keep an eye on bottom of inside of pan, to determine need for additional olive oil as ratatouille cooks: you want to make sure that the bottom of the contents of the pan isn't burning. It should cook this way (with close supervision) for 30 minutes on medium-low heat.

Then add the cut up tomatoes and stir. Cover skillet again and let cook for about 5 minutes. In last minute of cooking add basil leaves (if you use the dried variety, rub leaves between palms of hands first creating a coarse powder from the leaves), salt, and cracked pepper. Stir all ingredients well; and, after a minute or two, remove from heat. Great to serve warm over brown rice or quinoa, inside a baked potato or just by itself.

One nice feature of this recipe for this time of year is that it keeps in the refrigerator for up to a week and IT IS JUST AS YUMMY COLD AS IT IS WARM!

Grilled Watermelon

Sara, Tucson CSA

If you have the grill fired up at all this week try tossing some slices of watermelon on it. Grilling brings out the sugar in any fruit and intensifies the flavor.

Cut watermelon into one inch thick slices and coat with olive oil. Place on a very hot grill and cook on each side just until you begin to see grill marks. Dress the grilled slices with an herbal simple syrup and a few sprigs of fresh herbs for a simple, elegant dessert.

Herbal Simple Syrup

Lemongrass, basil or mint, are all delicious options for making an herb-infused simple syrup. Use this syrup to dress the grilled watermelon from the above recipe or add it to iced teas, club soda or cocktails.

1 cup water
1 cup sugar
1 handful herbs, chopped

Heat all three ingredients over medium heat in a thick-bottomed pan. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally to make sure that all sugar is dissolved. Let boil for two minutes then remove from heat. Let cool completely before straining out herbs.

Stores well in a jar in the refrigerator for a long time.