
The Acorn Angle...

September 2016, Box #15



What's fresh?

How do I prepare it?

CARROTS

CELERY

✦ This celery tastes great in soups, casseroles and chopped in salads.

✦ Chop and freeze for future use.

KOHLRABI - purple

The outer skin is beautiful, but once it is peeled, the inner flesh is green.

✦ Peel, and eat raw or roast in the oven.

PEPPERS - Green or colored

✦ Add to soup or casserole. Try the recipe for Gypsy Stew from last week.

PEPPERS - Hot

OKRA

Okra is a heat loving plant that is frequently used in Southern and Indian cuisine. It does have a slimy texture (for lack of a better word) when sliced. To decrease the sliminess, you can roast it or pair it with tomatoes - which can diminish the slime.

✦ Try it in a gumbo, or use as a soup thickener.

RADISHES

✦ Enjoy raw or roasted with other fall vegetables.

SQUASH - BUTTERNUT

✦ Squash stores at room temperature for a month or more. - Enjoy it as a decoration before you eat it!

✦ Cut in half, remove seeds, place flesh down on a rimmed baking sheet, add a bit of water to the pan, and bake at 350 for about 60 minutes. Remove when center starts to sink and softens.

✦ Peel, cut open, remove seeds and dice into cubes. Roast with coconut oil, salt and fresh sage in the oven at 400.

SWEET POTATOES

Store it in a dark, cool, dry place - but not the refrigerator. They should last a few weeks before they need to be eaten.

✦ Try baking it, peeling and boiling it, adding it to soups, casseroles, making sweet potato bread, muffins, or waffles!

HERB - SAGE

✦ Tastes great with roasted vegetables.

Hello!

I always consider the CSA experience to be a learning process for our members. There is a lot to learn about the local food connection, and the farmers who grow food, new vegetable varieties and how to prepare and eat more homemade meals.

However, every season also presents learning opportunities for the farmer as well. To be a farmer you need to embrace hope and possibility. Otherwise the idea of planting seeds in the ground would be a silly one.

As a CSA farm, we have an obligation and desire to provide our very best to our members. In most years, this is an easy task, and one we take great pride in. This past month has been very challenging for us as farmers. The CONSTANT rain has prevented precious seed from being planted. The over saturated ground has prevented crops from getting dug. The biggest challenge has been plant disease - due to constant moisture in the fields and some standing water. Our pumpkin and squash crops will be down by over 50% this year, due to field rot, and our broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage crops have been nearly devastated by disease.

We tell you this, not to complain. We, as farmers hate complaining. We may talk about the weather (constantly), but we don't like to broadcast our problems. We generally put on a happy face and keep moving forward. However, this season we are tired. We are stressed out. We look forward to the seasonal shift towards winter and the time that the fields rest.

You are our members. You invest in our farm, and we want to be transparent about our season with you. The truth is, there will be veggies in your box. There may be a few more potatoes and onions than usual. There might be a few varieties that don't make it to you this season, but regardless we always do our best to fill your boxes.

We feel honored to have a CSA program where the members help and support us in good times and bad. (I wouldn't consider this a "bad" season...just not a "perfect" one).

Happy Eating! ~Kyle Zenz, CSA Manager 608.386.8066

Meal Ideas for the Week:

Breakfast - Roasted vegetables with scrambled eggs.

Lunch - Chicken casserole with celery and carrots.

Snack - Radishes and carrots with hummus or veggie dip.

Dinner - Vegetable beef stew.

Dessert - Squash pie. My grandmother always used cooked, pureed squash to make "pumpkin" pie. Delicious!

Recipes of the week...

Creamy Jalapeno Ranch Dip

2-3 small to medium fresh **jalapeno peppers**, seeded, deveined and coarsely chopped
1 cup sour cream
1 cup mayonnaise
1 (1 oz.) package Ranch seasoning mix
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/4 cup fresh cilantro
Salt and pepper, to taste

Place everything but the salt and pepper in the bowl of a food processor. Process until smooth. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Refrigerate until serving.

Easy Vegetable Beef Stew

3/4 lb. stew meat, trimmed and cut into 1/2 inch cubes
1/2 large white onion, diced
2 tsp. canola oil
2 garlic cloves
1 **butternut squash**, peeled and diced into small cubes
2 medium **carrots**, peeled and diced
1 (14.5-oz.) can low-fat, low-sodium beef broth
1 (14.5-oz.) can low-sodium stewed tomatoes
1 cup frozen corn
1/2 tsp. black pepper
1/2 tsp. dried oregano
2 Tbsp. cornstarch
1/4 cup water

In a large stock pot, heat oil and sauté onion until translucent and fragrant. Using a garlic press, add garlic to onion and oil. Add prepared meat and brown.

Add squash, carrots, broth, tomatoes, corn, pepper and oregano to stock pot. Cover and return to a boil, cooking on high until vegetables are easily pierced with a fork.

When vegetables are tender, combine corn starch and water, whisking until smooth. Add to stock pot and stir into stew.



Corn & Black Bean Tacos

Corn and feta salad

2 cups fresh corn kernels OR 2 cups frozen corn
1/4 cup chopped cilantro
3 medium red **radishes**, thinly sliced into small strips
1 medium lime, zested and juiced (to yield about 1 teaspoon zest and 2 tablespoons lime juice)
1 medium **jalapeño pepper**, seeded and minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/4 teaspoon sea salt
1/2 to 2/3 cup crumbled feta, to taste (optional)

Black beans

2 cans black beans, rinsed and drained
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 small yellow or white onion, chopped
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1/3 cup water
Salt and black pepper, to taste

Everything else

10 small round corn tortillas
1 large avocado, sliced into thin strips
Optional garnishes: pickled jalapeños, salsa verde, hot sauce

To prepare the corn salad: Use a sharp chef's knife to slice the kernels off all four sides of the corn cobs. Transfer the kernels to a medium-sized mixing bowl and add the chopped cilantro, radishes, lime zest and juice, jalapeño, olive oil and sea salt. Mix well. Stir in 1/2 cup crumbled feta, taste, and add a little more if you'd like. Set the bowl aside to marinate while you prepare the beans.

To prepare the black beans: Warm the olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add the onions and a sprinkle of salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions have softened and are turning translucent, about 5 to 8 minutes. Add the cumin and cook for about 30 seconds while stirring. Pour in the beans and 1/3 cup water. Stir, cover and reduce heat to simmer. Cook for 5 minutes, then remove the lid and use the back of a fork to mash up about at least half of the beans. Remove from heat, season generously with salt and pepper, to taste, and cover until you're ready to serve.

To warm the tortillas: Heat a cast iron or non-stick skillet over medium heat and warm each tortilla individually, flipping occasionally. Alternatively, you can warm them directly over a low flame on a gas range. Fold a tea towel over the warmed tortillas to keep them warm. Put it all together: Spread black beans down the middle of each tortilla. Top the beans with corn salad. Place a slice of avocado to the side of the beans and serve with optional pickled jalapeños, salsa or hot sauce on the side.



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