



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Winter 17/18

Harvest lists are online

The Back Page Recipes

African Greens with Peanut Butter

Okonomiyaki (Japanese fritters)

Celery Tuna Noodle Casserole-new

More Recipes Online

Moving on to better pork

For many years we have enjoyed Guzman's pork. While it is good, naturally grown pork, we never knew exactly where it came from and we never knew the exact conditions in which it was raised. It has always bugged us.

The only way to get the perfect pork meat at the CSA was to buy our pork shares: the pork shares came from Josh and we knew it was raised without cutting corners and we knew that those pigs spent their entire lives living happy pig lives on large irrigated pasture. Seriously, it is hard to get better pork than Josh's pork.

Now that Josh is increased it pork production, we can get it not just for pork shares but also for to sell retail style like we used to do for ground, Italian and Breakfast sausage.

For the past few weeks, you've actually enjoyed Josh's pork at the old price, which is actually less than Josh's pork actually costs. But Philippe's out of the hospital now and has had a chance to adjust to prices to what they should be. And yes, it will more expensive pork, but you are also getting a far superior product.

The bacon and roasts will still come from Guzman for the time being.

Learning to Love Celery, By Shelby Thompson

As with many of the vegetables we get in our Tucson CSA shares, the celery is unlike the stuff I grew up eating: the bloated, pale green, mostly flavorless, industrially grown variety. I never really knew the story behind that celery—the climate it grew in, the far-off land it sprouted from, or the workers who labored tirelessly to get it to my grocery store. The disconnect between my food and me added to the lack of regard and love I held for the fibrous plant. In my home, where food came from far away, celery was no star... it was just there. Celery was the translucent vegetable in my chicken soup; an excuse to eat spoonfuls of Skippy peanut butter and call it a healthy snack; an ingredient in mom's dreaded clean-out-the-fridge salad. Celery was flavorless; clean of every imperfection and speck of dirt; and barren of its frilly leaves. Celery was not the local Tucson CSA celery I have come to know and anticipate.

Along with countless other things, Tucson CSA has changed the way I think about celery by introducing me to organic celery that is locally grown with integrity and delivered to The Historic Y with passion and respect. Thanks to local farmers and Tucson CSA, celery is no longer a vegetable that I avoid—it is the best part of my favorite dishes. Why? Local celery, colored a dark, vibrant green all the way to its core, is beautiful. Local celery, intensely and flavored by the familiar soils of southern Arizona, is delicious. Local celery, handed to me by the Tucson CSA volunteers I have come to befriend and adore, connects me with one of the best parts of my community. Local celery sticks with you long after you leave the CSA.

When you get home with your celery, submerge it in a large bowl of water and allow the gritty sand between its stalks to fall to the bottom of the bowl. Set it on a kitchen towel to dry while you eat dinner or do whatever it is that you do in the evening. Then, use a large knife to separate the celery leaves from the stalks and store the two separately. When stored properly in the fridge, celery should keep for a few weeks.

Use a few stalks of local celery in your soffritto—sautéed celery, carrots, and onion—to add a lovely flavor to hearty stews, like my favorite winter minestrone. Adding celery to soups, stalks, and stews, even if it isn't called for in the recipe, is an easy way to use a large bunch of the green stuff. (If nothing else, a quick sauté of celery, onions, and carrots can make any house smell like home in a matter of minutes.) Or, pickle it to use for snacks and condiments. To pickle your celery, slice it at an angle and add it to a mason jar filled with equal parts water and white wine vinegar, a few teaspoons of kosher salt, and a little sugar. Eat your pickles straight from the jar, or save them in the fridge to add to mustardy potato salads and sandwiches in need of a pick-me-up. Use your celery leaves the same way you might use any leafy herb. Chop them finely and add them to scrambled eggs, pasta dishes, and salads. Or, use them in place of basil in your favorite pesto recipe. And remember: the volunteers at Tucson CSA could write a very thorough book on the best ways to store, cook, and preserve seasonal produce. When in doubt (or overwhelmed by a huge bunch of celery), simply ask away. You'll learn more than you thought you ever could.

Recipes referenced are on back page

African Greens with Peanut Butter

Kristina Bishop, Tucson CSA

This is a recipe that was commonly eaten in rural South Africa where I was a Peace Corps volunteer. It is widely eaten in Southern Africa. There they use either spinach or wild greens the people gather.

1 bunch spinach or other greens
1 onion chopped
1 tomato chopped (I have used canned or frozen or left it out if I don't have a tomato)
1/2 cup peanut butter (natural style is best)
salt and pepper to taste

Wash and de-stem the greens and roughly chop. In a medium saucepan bring to a boil enough water to cover the greens. Add the greens to the boiling water. Cook for about 10 minutes for sturdy greens like kale or collards. 2-4 minutes for more delicate greens. Drain most of the water. Reserve about 1/2 cup for later use. Add the onions and tomatoes to greens and cook for another 10 minutes. Meanwhile in a small bowl combine peanut butter with reserved water by adding one tablespoon at a time. Mix well until the sauce is thick but pourable. Drain the rest of the liquid from the cooked spinach. Combine spinach with peanut butter sauce. Add salt and pepper to taste.
I hope you enjoy!

Okonomiyaki (Japanese fritters)

Philippe, Tucson CSA

Fritters are a great way to use up vegetables that are lingering in your refrigerator. You can shred or grate just about any vegetables, including greens, mix them with flour and eggs, and turn them into delicious fritters. The following recipe is the Japanese version of our pan-fried fritters. Okonomiyaki is traditional Japanese dish typically made from flour, eggs and shredded cabbage, with added vegetables and sometimes fish or meats. It is often compared to an omelet or a pancake and is sometimes referred to as Japanese pizza. I find it to be more like fritters or frittata. It is a very easy and versatile dish and there are infinite ways to make it. The following recipe is by no means authentic, it's just how I make it. I usually make it with whatever ingredients I have on hand. It has no seasoning other than the sauce but it is nevertheless packed with fresh flavors. However, if you want it to have an extra kick you can add black pepper, chile flakes or herbs.

The base:

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup water, stock, or dashi
2 eggs
1/2 cabbage or 1 bunch sturdy greens like collards and kale, cleaned and shredded
1 tablespoon olive oil

Other optional ingredients – add 2-3 cups of a combination of two or more of the following: chopped green onions, bacon, ham, thin slices of pork or beef (pre-cooked/sautéed), fish, shrimp, chopped greens, sliced mushrooms, nori flakes (dried seaweed), corn, grated carrots, green beans, grated summer squash, grated sweet potatoes, grated turnips, ... grated anything really.

Toppings:

Mayonnaise
Okonomiyaki sauce, soy sauce or Worcester sauce

In a large bowl, mix the flour, eggs and water or stock. Add the cabbage and the other ingredients. Mix gently until everything is well coated with the batter. Heat oil to medium hot in a large skillet. Pour the mixture in a large skillet and press it down with a spatula. I try to make it about 1/4 inch thick. Cover and cook for 5 minutes. Flip (I usually slide in on plate, cover with another plate, flip it and slide it back in the skillet) and cook for another 5 minutes. Slide onto a large plate, cut in wedges, brush wedges with some mayo, sprinkle some sauce on them, and enjoy.

Celery Tuna Noodle Casserole-*new*

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

The celery in our shares has been fibrous, but cut into pieces and cooked it gets perfectly tender. I used the inner light green leaves to flavor this dish as well. If you have leftover dill this is a great way to use it!

Several stalks of celery, diced
1 medium onion, diced
About 1 cup of frozen peas
Two large handfuls of chopped greens
About tablespoon olive oil
1 pinch dry thyme
1-2 cans tuna fish, drained
1 package egg noodles
1 tablespoon butter
1/4 sour cream
1/4 chopped fresh herbs
Salt and pepper to taste

Cook celery and onion in a good glug of olive oil in large skillet over medium high heat. Meanwhile bring a large pot of salted water to a boil for pasta. Once veggies begin to brown add greens and peas and thyme and lower heat to medium and cover. Cook noodles to al dente, reserve about 1/2 cup of water and drain. Add noodles, reserved water, butter and a dollop of sour cream to veggies. Stir well to combine. Add herbs, tuna and salt and pepper to taste. At this point you can serve as is, or add to an oven proof dish, sprinkle with cheese and bread crumbs and brown under broiler.

Celeri Recipes referenced on Front Page

Celery Greens and Lemon Pesto

(http://ediblebajaarizona.com/recipe_archive/csa-recipe-of-the-week-celery-greens-and-lemon-pesto)

Winter Minestrone

(http://ediblebajaarizona.com/recipe_archive/weekly-csa-recipe-autumn-vegetable-soup)

Egg Salad with Pickled Celery and Coarse Dijon

(<https://smittenkitchen.com/2013/02/egg-salad-with-pickled-celery-and-coarse-dijon/>)