



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 695 ~ August 5, 2019 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Summer 2019

Harvest lists are online.

Back Page Recipes

- Salsa Verde
- Potato Tacos
- Chiles en Escabeche
- Ginger Mashed Potatoes with Yogurt

Find many more recipes on our website.

Reusable Bags

Thanks to some very kind donations, we now have a number of reusable bags in the “I Forgot My Bag” chest. If you take one to use, please bring it back clean for another member to use. Thank you!

Ice Packs for Grabs

We have ice packs left over from shipments that we’ve received over the last year. If you’re in need of ice packs to help transport cold food, we’re more than happy to pass them on in an effort to reduce, **reuse**, and recycle!

Upcoming Event: Trivia Night!

What: Quiz for a Cause, benefitting Pima County Food Alliance

When: Tuesday, August 6 at 8 p.m.

Where: Hotel Congress

PCFA is a grassroots coalition working to improve food access by tackling food policy issues and educating the public.
pimafoodalliance.org

The Thick of Summer

Written by Sara Jones

I love Tucson in the summer, but the sweltering heat can be challenging. This is especially true on the farm, where it’s essential to get the irrigation schedule just right and ensure that newly harvested crops are rapidly cooled. In the heat and humidity, the effects of the slightest miscalculation are amplified. A few weeks ago, in a scramble to come up with eight items for our shares, someone at Crooked Sky Farm made the hasty decision to harvest butternut and spaghetti squash for our CSA shares without curing them first. Curing the squash is a process that allows the excess moisture in the vegetable to evaporate, in the process drying the skin to form a hard protective barrier. It is an important step, but if it doesn’t happen at the farm you can usually continue the process at your house by placing the squash in a sunny windowsill with good airflow. Unfortunately, the humidity coupled with the fact that some of the squash got a bit bruised during transportation meant that more than a few squash in that batch ended up going bad. We heard from a few members who had a mess to clean up on their counters last week and are really sorry if that was your experience. However, it’s always good to get your feedback so that we can pass it along to the farm. It takes a village!

This is the time of year when the heat of summer really starts to sink in. Week after week of relentless heat takes its toll. Our early summer romance with double shares of juicy, ripe tomatoes and oversized watermelon has faded, and now the produce looks about as wilted as many of us feel. This is one of those times during the year when our commitment to the farm is put to the test. Luckily, our farmers work hard to ensure that we have decent shares even during these in-between times. We will probably see more items like potatoes and onions filling in for some of the more glamorous vegetables for the next few weeks. But once produce starts coming in from Duncan (Crooked Sky Farms’ summer location near the New Mexico border), we will start to see more variety. In late August we should start seeing yard long beans, a new crop of cucumbers, and corn that hasn’t had to survive the heat of Phoenix – plus a second planting of okra for the okra lovers. With any luck, the melon and peach crop will slowly yield to the early apple crop so we won’t have much of an interruption in our fruit supply.

Last week I was talking with some of our longtime members who are moving to Chicago, wondering what kinds of produce would be available at the farmers’ market and CSAs there. An image of abundance came into my head: juicy berries of all different colors and piles of fresh, vibrant greens! And then I snapped back to my dusty, sweaty reality. But I know that soon enough the weather here will cool and I will be grateful I’m not freezing in some northern location. I really look forward to fall this year, but until then I try to appreciate the beauty of saguaros and palm trees silhouetted against the sunset after a long, hard day. I take it easy and stay hydrated as best I can, and I’ve signed up for a sprout share to add a touch of green, brightness to my meals! This can be a tough time of the year for all of us desert dwellers, and we truly appreciate your commitment to supporting small, local, organic farming through thick and thin. Thank you!

RECIPES

Salsa Verde

Philippe, Tucson CSA

This is great to serve with chips or over tacos but the prepared salsa is super versatile and can be used to spice up plain rice or beans. It is also great mixed with leftover shredded meat for an enchilada filling or with cooked potatoes for delicious tacos dorados (recipe follows).

1 CSA basket tomatillos
1 CSA bag roasted chiles, or 1 yellow hot pepper
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
1 medium onion, quartered
Juice of 1 lime or half a lemon
1/4 cup cilantro
Salt to taste

Peel chiles and remove seeds. Remove husks from tomatillos and grill the tomatillos on barbeque or under oven broiler until slightly charred. Place chiles, tomatillos and remaining ingredients in a food processor and blend on pulse until slightly chunky (not puréed). Taste for salt and adjust seasoning if needed.

Potato Tacos

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

These are really nice garnished with shredded cabbage or lettuce, slices of cucumber and onion. Making the tacos is a bit fiddley, be patient and don't be frustrated if your first couple end up a bit ugly – they'll still taste fine.

About 1 ½ cups cooked potatoes, lightly mashed
½ teaspoon ground cumin
2-3 tablespoons salsa verde
About 5-6 corn tortillas
2-4 tablespoons vegetable oil
Salsa and garnish for tacos

Mix together potatoes, cumin and salsa verde. In a heavy skillet, heat about 1 tablespoon of oil over medium heat. Place one tortilla into oil and flip after one or two seconds (this makes the tortilla pliable enough to fold in half without breaking). Place 1 heaping tablespoon of potato mixture on the half of the tortilla closest to you. Using a fork, gently fold the other half over the filling, towards you. Press the tortilla closed for a few seconds to seal, then move the taco to one side to make room for more tacos. Repeat with remaining tortillas. Add more oil as needed to keep skillet covered in a thin layer. Flip tacos when beginning to brown on bottom side. When cooked on both sides, place on an old newspaper or paper towels to drain.

Chiles en Escabeche (pickled chiles)

Amy Valdes Schwemm, Tucson CSA

Fresh chiles (fleshy types with thin skins like jalapeno, serrano, and güeros/yellow hots are better than long chiles with thinner walls).

Vinegar, cider or distilled
Salt, non-iodized
Extras:
Carrot
Onion
Garlic
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 to easily cover chiles. Put solution in a non-reactive pot with 1 teaspoon salt for each cup of solution. Bring this brine to a boil and cook veggies for 1 to 3 minutes (more time for whole chiles, less for sliced). Do not let chiles get soft! Remove from heat and let cool. Put in jars, making sure the chiles stay submerged in brine, and refrigerate. They will keep up to a year.

Ginger Mashed Potatoes with Yogurt

Rachel Yaseen, Tucson CSA

Spice up your mashed potatoes!

1 1/2 lbs. potatoes
1 cup plain yogurt (I like Strauss)
1/4 cup cilantro, finely chopped
1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh mint
1-3 fresh or roasted chile peppers, minced
2 cloves garlic, chopped very fine
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons oil (I like coconut oil or olive oil)
1/2 teaspoon cardamom
1 cinnamon stick, broken into pieces
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 tablespoons peeled minced fresh ginger
2 tablespoons finely chopped chives (optional)

Boil potatoes in water until tender. Drain, peel, coarsely mash. With fork, lightly mix in yogurt, cilantro, mint, chile peppers, garlic, and salt. Heat oil and add cardamom, cinnamon, cumin, and black pepper. Stir 1 minute, add ginger and cook another minute. Pour oil over potatoes and garnish with chives.