



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 77 ~ March 05, 2007 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Spring '07
Week 1 of 13

This Week's Harvest

Yukon Gold Potatoes
Grapefruit
Carrots
Spinach
Salad Mix
I'ittoi Onions
Garlic
Watercress/Arugula/Dandelion



Crooked Sky Farms' Nantes carrots

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Tip - Frozen Green Chiles

For those members who were subscribers this past summer, now is the time to get out those frozen green chiles from last year and enjoy them - if you're lucky to still have some. They furnish a blast of summer flavor when we are anxious for spring to begin. Check the website for ways to use them. – Lorraine

Crew Pic



Part of the Tucson CSA crew.
From left to right: Daniela, Sara, Rory, Dan and Wendy.

From the Field



Farmer Frank (left) and the folks at Crooked Sky Farms thank you and welcome you to the Tucson CSA's 14th session. As a CSA member, you are contributing to support a local organic family farm, and you are helping to preserve an urban open space and to keep it clean from toxic substances. In exchange we will all do our best to keep you supplied with the farm's fresh, healthful and beautiful produce for the next three months and beyond.

Enjoy the glorious southern Arizona Spring!

From the Table by Irene Walden, Tucson CSA member and occasional volunteer

I live alone and I made a commitment to myself to use most, if not all, of the food I receive each week from CSA. Needless to say I rarely go the grocery so my total food cost is \$17 per week. That's great but the best part is that I do not seem to get hungry. I attribute that to the fact that there is more nutrition in locally grown, organic fresh foods. I love the recipes we receive each week and Sara's cooking class is very fun and incredibly wonderful.

*Write about how YOU experience the CSA. We'd like to hear YOUR story!
Email your short essay to tucsoncsa@tucsoncsa.org*

Other ways to make your voice heard

Online Recipes: Share with other members your secrets on cooking with CSA produce. For every 5 of your own recipes published online or in our newsletter, you get credit for a week's share.

Feedback: Tell us what you think: you can make general comments on the website's Comments page, comment on specific online recipes and write a piece for our newsletter.

A few notes/reminders about the Pickup Routine

1. **Bags**: Bring your own bags if you can.
2. Check the **whiteboard** to find out if there is anything special going on, such as a tasting, a special pickup or sale, an opportunity to order stuff, etc.
3. **Newsletters**: Grab yours every week, hard copy or online, to find out what's happening in the fields and to learn ways to cook CSA produce.
4. Remember to **sign in** to indicate that you have picked up your share.
5. **Look, pick and move**: Avoid looking through the bins to find that perfect bunch: just look and pick; this keeps the produce clean and prevent bruising, spoiling and drying.
6. **Take your whole share**: Don't leave any of your produce in the pick-up bins: if you don't want an item, **trade it in the trading basket or donate it in the surplus basket** for other members to enjoy.
7. **Vote** to influence what's coming the following week. Think we're getting too much grapefruit? Cast your vote to tip the balance toward something else! Your votes also help Farmer Frank plan future crops. If you can't pick up on Monday evening, remember that we are also open on Tuesday morning, from 7:30 am to 1:00 pm.

P'itoi Onion

From Slow Food USA



Not only is the taste of the P'itoi Onion bold and complex, but also is its ambiguous history. The original US harvest of the wild P'itoi Onion took place on P'itoi Mountain, which is also known as Baboquivari Mountain. This mountain is regarded by the

O'odham nation as the navel of the world—a place where the earth opened and people emerged. The name P'itoi signifies the Elder Brother, who is the creator deity in Tohono O'odham legends and gave them the gift of the crimson sunset; consequently, the onion is a sacred reminder of the O'odham creation story. Botanical studies place the P'itoi onion among a very old line of clumping onions brought to the U.S. by Jesuit missionaries in the late 17th century, concluding that the onion is not necessarily a U.S. native. Regardless of its histories, the P'itoi Onion has a special place among Sonoran Desert culinary culture.

The sharp, peppery flavor of the P'itoi is well suited to southwestern stews and sauces, which often have robust, piquant flavors. The P'itoi plant grows easily and prolifically in the deserts of the American southwest. One bulb can produce 120 onions in a single season, and the plant requires one-third less water to grow than other onions. Left in the ground during its summer dormancy, the onion re-sprouts toward the end of the season at which point it is harvested and replanted.

The flavor of the P'itoi Onion is garnering interest on a small, but highly visible, commercial scale throughout the arid southwest. The onion may provide one of the best examples of crop survival due to the stewardship of backyard gardeners.

Scalloped Potatoes with Greens

Philippe, TCSA

We are repeating this recipe as many members have mentioned how much they liked it. It is particularly suited for the creamy Yukon Golden potatoes.

4 medium potatoes, thinly sliced
 2 tablespoons butter
 1 bunch scallions (or P'itoi onions), sliced
 1 bunch greens (mustard greens, watercress, kale or pak choi), sliced in ribbons
 2 tablespoons flour
 2 cups milk
 1 dash nutmeg
 1 teaspoon dry mustard
 salt and pepper to taste

Heat oven to 350°. Lightly grease an 11 x 7-inch baking dish. Melt butter in a medium saucepan. Add scallions and sauté for one minute. Stir in flour until smooth.

Add milk and stir until thick and bubbly. Add salt, pepper, mustard and nutmeg. Stir in greens. Pour mixture over potatoes and mix well, but gently. Pour the potato mixture into baking dish. Cover with foil.

Bake for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake for another 15-20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.

Watercress Tips

Watercress is probably best known as a classic ingredient for soup. But its distinctive mustardy flavor can help enrich a wide range of dishes.

Try it hot in sauces, with pasta, baked with fish or in a stir-fry. It brings a new dimension to pesto and is delicious in mashed potatoes – even the kids won't complain. Served raw, it adds a peppery bite to salads and sandwiches. Or you can snack on it straight from the bag.

Watercress combines particularly well with strong flavors such as garlic, chile, soy, ginger and onion, and here its pungency is mellowed. Conversely, with rice, pasta or bread, its pungent flavor is accentuated. The texture is all about crunch, bite and sensation – vital juices burst from the stalk, then the smoother, slightly fleshy leaves release the mustard oil flavor.

From soups and salads to family suppers, watercress is an amazingly versatile ingredient.

Yukon Gold Potato



The Yukon Gold was the first Canadian-bred potato marketed and promoted by name. It received a Canadian license in 1980 and soon began exportation to the United States.

Yukon Golds are slightly flat and oval in shape with light gold, thin skin and light yellow flesh. They can be identified by the rosy pink coloration of the shallow eyes.

Anthoxanthins are the compound which gives the gold potato its beautiful yellow color. These flavonoids are also found in onions, apples, and cauliflower. The texture of Yukon Gold potatoes falls in the middle between Idaho potatoes and red potatoes. Its slightly lower starch content than the Idaho or russet gives it a combination of mealy and waxy textures. This makes it an all-purpose potato good for just about any cooking process, so feel free to experiment using it in any recipe calling for traditional white potatoes.

Some potatoes turn grayish under certain cooking conditions. Yukon Gold resists graying and in fact will often turn an even brighter color when cooked in high pH (alkaline) water.

Be aware that the addition of acid to the cooking liquid will cause the gold potato flesh to pale somewhat, just as acid added to white potatoes while cooking brightens the white color.

Gold potatoes are great for those who love potatoes but want or need to avoid butter or margarine. They have a natural buttery flavor built in. You'll also find they require less seasoning than white potatoes.