



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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Spring `08

Planned harvest list is [Online](#)

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Fennel Tips

The three different parts of fennel—the base, stalks and leaves—can all be used in cooking. Cut the stalks away from the bulb at the place where they meet. Unless your recipe calls for a whole bulb, cut the bulb in half, remove the base, and then rinse it with water before proceeding to cut it further.

The best way to slice it is to cut it vertically through the bulb. If your recipe requires chunked, diced or julienned fennel, it is best to first remove the harder core that resides in the center before cutting it. The stalks of the fennel can be used for soups, stocks and stews, while the leaves can be used as an herb seasoning.

Healthy sautéed fennel and onions make a wonderful side dish.

Combine sliced fennel with avocados, and oranges for a delightful salad.

Braised fennel is a wonderful complement to scallops.

Use sliced fennel in addition to the traditional toppings of lettuce and tomato on sandwiches.

Top thinly sliced fennel with plain yogurt and mint leaves.

Fennel is a match made in Heaven when served with salmon.

Newsletter editor

Philippe Waterinckx

SPRING SESSION, YEAH!

Welcome to another three months of gorgeous organic veggies from Crooked Sky Farms.

If you're new to the CSA, you may go into "green shock" over the next few weeks. Although greens are starting to be phased out, we will be getting quite a few more of them in the coming weeks. And remember that turnip, beet and radish tops are prized edible greens too. If you're ever at loss about what to do with all these healthy greens, check our online recipe archive: we have many recipes that feature them. Look for them under Greens, or under the specific name of the greens in question.

Belonging to a CSA is a learning experience: cooking with CSA produce is ingredient-driven rather than recipe driven. Don't hesitate to talk to our volunteers or other members to help you slip into the CSA groove.

FENNEL



Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) is a versatile vegetable that plays an important role in the food culture of many European nations, especially France and Italy. It belongs to the Umbellifereae family and is therefore closely related to parsley, carrots, dill and coriander.

Fennel was revered by the Greeks and the Romans for its medicinal and culinary properties and it has a rich history. The ancient Greeks knew fennel by the name "marathron"; it grew in the field in which one of the great ancient battles was fought and which was allegedly

named the Battle of Marathon after this revered plant. Fennel was awarded to Pheidippides, the runner who delivered the news of the Persian invasion to Sparta.

Fennel is composed of a white or pale green bulb from which closely superimposed stalks are arranged. The stalks are topped with feathery green leaves near which flowers grow and produce fennel seeds. The bulb, stalk, leaves and seeds are all edible.

Fennel's aromatic taste is unique, strikingly reminiscent of licorice and anise, so much so that fennel is often mistakenly referred to as anise in the marketplace. Fennel's texture is similar to that of celery, having a crunchy and striated texture.

Fennel is rich in Vitamin B and C and is known for its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. It is also good source of fiber.

BANANAS, A STORIED FRUIT WITH AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

In a February 18, 2008 story on the NPR program "Fresh Air", Popular Science writer Dan Koeppel reported on the sexy, sordid history of the banana, from the Garden of Eden to the corporate wars in Central America. To listen to the story online, follow the link on the "In The News" page on the CSA website.



The following is from the Fresh Air website:

Americans consume more bananas than apples and oranges combined. Dan Koeppel, author of *Banana: The Fate of the Fruit That Changed the World*, gives us a primer on the expansive history — and the endangered future — of this seedless, sexless fruit. Koeppel traces the ubiquitous yellow fruit back to the Garden of Eden, where, he argues, it, not the apple, was the "forbidden fruit" that Eve offered Adam. In the 20th century, he examines the United Fruit Company's maneuvering in the "banana republics" of Central America, and warns that the banana's unique reproductive system — each new fruit is a genetic duplicate of the next — makes it especially susceptible to epidemics.

Roasted Beet and Fennel Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This recipe keeps well for about 72 hours in the refrigerator.

2 large beets
1 fennel bulb, thinly sliced
1 teaspoon oil
salt and pepper to taste
¼ teaspoon cumin
¼ cup feta cheese

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Cut the stem and tip ends off of the beets. Scrub well and wrap in aluminum foil. Place in the oven and roast for 45 minutes. Remove and let cool. (This may be done in advance and the beets placed in the refrigerator overnight.) Remove the leafy ends from the fennel and any stalks that appear too tough. Slice very thinly. Put the olive oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Add the sliced fennel and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 15 minutes. Remove and let cool. Remove the beets from the aluminum foil. The skins will slip off easily after roasting. After they are skinned, cut into ½-inch cubes. Mix together the beets, sautéed fennel, salt, black pepper, ground cumin and crumbled feta. Chill well.

Carrot and Fennel Pasta

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This is a fast and easy recipe, everything is ready by the time the pasta is done cooking. The vegetables, cut into long thin strips, cook quickly. Use a vegetable peeler to cut strips of carrot, and a very sharp knife to cut long strips of fennel and onion. Butter complements the taste of fennel, but you can use olive oil if you prefer.

2-3 carrots, sliced into thin strips (or grated)
1 head fennel, any woody core removed, sliced into thin strips (use leafy fennel fronds for garnish if desired)
3 green onions, sliced lengthwise into thin strips
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 + tablespoons butter
Salt and pepper to taste
Cooked pasta

While pasta is cooking, stir carrots, fennel, onion and garlic into melted butter, in a skillet over medium high heat. Stir often, sprinkling mixture with a little of the boiling pasta water or white wine if it appears too dry.

When pasta is cooked through, drain and add to vegetable mixture. Season with salt and pepper and another pat of butter, if desired, and toss to mix. Serve hot.

Carrot Fennel Salad

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This recipe uses the same long thin strips of fennel, carrot and green onion used in the recipe above, but is served raw

as a salad. Serve the mixture alone, or over spinach or spring mix for a more substantial dish.

2-3 carrots, sliced into thin strips (or grated)
1 head fennel, any woody core removed, sliced into thin strips (use leafy fennel fronds for garnish if desired)
3 green onions, sliced lengthwise into thin strips
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon orange juice
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 apple, sliced thinly
Salt and pepper to taste

Mix vegetables together in a bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk together oil, vinegar, orange juice and Dijon mustard. Pour over vegetables and toss well to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Let sit for at least 30 minutes. Garnish with apple slices right before serving.

Swiss Chard with Pine Nuts and Raisins

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

Swiss chard is often accompanied by raisins and pine nuts in a wide range of dishes. Here is the basic recipe, with much room for creativity. (Think quiche, pasta salad, lasagna, enchiladas...)

2 bunches Swiss chard, (you can substitute one of the bunches with spinach), chopped roughly, stems diced
1/3 cup pine nuts
2 tablespoons oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1/4 cup golden raisins, finely chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil over medium high heat, add onion, sauté for about 5 minutes then add chard, pine nuts, raisins and a splash of water. Cook, stirring often, until chard is well wilted. Season with salt and pepper and a dash of balsamic vinegar, if desired.

Slow Cooker Risotto with Swiss Chard

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 small yellow onion, finely chopped
1 ¼ cups uncooked Arborio rice
2 (14 ounce) cans reduced sodium broth, vegetable or chicken
½ cup dry white wine
Dash salt
½ bunch Swiss chard, rinsed clean, well-dried and coarsely chopped

Heat olive oil in small skillet. Add onion and cook until softened, 4 to 5 minutes.

Place in slow cooker. Add rice and toss well to coat. Stir in broth, wine, salt and Swiss chard. Cover and cook on high 2 to 2 ½ hours or until all liquid is absorbed.