



Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

Newsletter 198 ~ July 20, 2009 ~ Online at www.TucsonCSA.org

Summer '09 Week 8 of 13

Harvest list is online

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Recycling at the CSA

Here's a list of items you can recycle at the CSA:

Green plastic baskets: the ones your tomatoes, onions and tomatillos come in.

Egg cartons: cardboard only, no styrofoam or clear plastic.

Milk and Cajeta jars from the CSA: you even get a refund for those.

Paper and plastic grocery bags: standard size only.

Please give them to our volunteers. Thanks!



CSA Bulletin Board

As our members' bulletin board above the trading table gets more used, the time has come to organize it a little better.

To help keep ads current and to give them all a chance to have their place in the sun, may we ask that, when posting one, you write the posting date on it. Ads will be removed after one month.

Newsletter Editor

Philippe Waterinckx

GLENDALE GOLD LITTLE SWEETIE ONIONS

How Farmer Frank saved heirloom onions from extinction



There is something special about the onions we've been getting recently from Crooked Sky Farms – they are the farm's very own onion variety. It is an heirloom variety of sweet onions native to the Phoenix Basin. The seeds of those onions used to be distributed by a well-known seed company. Last year, the seed company decided to discontinue the variety. It is quite a significant event in

the world of heirloom seeds when a seed company discontinues a seed it holds the rights to. That variety may become extinct.

When Farmer Frank from Crooked Sky Farms heard of this, he approached the seed company and purchased the rights to trademark and distribute that onion's seeds. He subsequently renamed it Glendale Gold Little Sweetie Onion, and has since been growing those onions on his farm. They are the small yellow onions you have been receiving in your shares over the past month or so.

Unfortunately, heirloom varieties are becoming increasingly rare as seed distributors move to newer hybrids. Large seed companies prefer hybrids because growers can't reliably reproduce the plants by collecting the seeds. Instead, they must purchase all their seeds from the seed company. Protecting heirlooms from extinction preserves the genetic diversity of our crops. Scientists point out that genetic diversity may be especially important as climate change occurs – some varieties may show greater ability to adapt and thus prevent widespread crop failures. Thanks to grass-roots seed-saving organizations, non-profit seed-saving organizations such as Native Seeds/SEARCH, heirloom seed companies, and individuals such as Farmer Frank, the genetic material of some heirloom varieties is being preserved.

FOOD PRESERVATION COURSES AT HOME by Sallie Marston

Our friends at the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension who run the National Center for Food Preservation have two excellent options for learning how to preserve food at home. The first is a free, self-paced, online course. It's called, *Preserving Food at Home: A Self-Study* and its offered through the University of Georgia WebCT system. You can find information about the course at www.uga.edu/nchfp/. You need to register in order to receive a login. Look for the following image:



The second option for learning about food preservation at your own pace is through their *So Easy to Preserve* two-disc DVD series that includes: canning tomatoes, fruits and vegetables, freezing food, pickling, drying, jams and jellies. This one costs \$39.95.

There is also a 375-page book, that is different from the DVD series but has the same title (price not currently posted). Check out both the book and the DVD series at www.uga.edu/setp/.

Cottage Pie

Sarah Martin, Tucson CSA

This recipe can be easily altered to accommodate a changing variety of produce.

1 1/2 pounds red skinned potatoes, cubed
2-3 ounces shredded farm house cheddar cheese
1/4 cup yogurt
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 pound ground beef*
1/2 cup onion, diced
1 cup green beans, diced
2 cups vegetable stock
1 tablespoon bay leaf
Worcestershire sauce
2 tablespoons all purpose flour
salt and pepper to taste

Preheat your oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit.

Combine the potatoes and 1 cup of the vegetable stock in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and cover. Simmer 10 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Set aside. Do not drain.

Heat olive oil in a skillet. Add ground beef. Break the beef into chunks as it cooks. When you don't see any more pink, pour off any extra fat and add the onions and green beans. Cook 5 minutes more. Add the Worcestershire sauce, bay leaf and salt and pepper to taste. Stir the flour into the beef mixture making sure to coat all of the ingredients. Cook 2-3 minutes more. Slowly pour the remaining vegetable stock into the beef and bring to a boil.

Pour mixture into an 8 or 9-inch casserole. Mash the potatoes in their cooking liquid and stir in the shredded cheese and yogurt. Spread the potatoes over the beef and vegetables. You can sprinkle extra cheese on top of the potatoes if you like things extra cheesy. Bake 30-45 minutes or until bubbly along the edges.

*Substitute ground lamb and you have a shepherd's pie, or cooked lentils for a vegetarian option.

Green Bean Potato Salad with Tomatillo/Avocado

Dressing

Mary Leuchtenberger, Tucson CSA

5 or 6 medium potatoes
1 share green beans, chopped
2 small onions, chopped
1 stalk celery, chopped
rice vinegar
2 large tomatillos
1 garlic clove
1/2 avocado
1/2 cup plain yoghurt
3 hard boiled eggs

Cut potatoes in half and boil until cooked through, but not too soft. Chop green beans and add to pot of potatoes during last few minutes of cooking. Drain and allow to cool. Chop warm potatoes and place in bowl with green beans, shallots, and celery. Sprinkle with rice vinegar and refrigerate overnight. Blend tomatillos, avocado, garlic and yoghurt in blender or food processor until smooth. Stir dressing into potato salad, while adding chopped hard boiled eggs. This tangy dressing goes well with any salad, and can be used as a dip too.

Salsa Verde (Green Salsa)

Use as a tortilla chips dip. Can also be cooked and used as a topping over broiled salmon or scrambled eggs.

1/2 pound tomatillos, husked, rinsed, diced
2 green chiles
1/2 to 1 jalapeno
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves
1/4 cup (firmly packed) fresh cilantro leaves
1 tablespoon fresh lime juice (optional)
1 tablespoon olive oil

Char green chiles directly over gas flame or in broiler until blackened on all sides. Enclose in paper bag; let stand 10 minutes. Peel, seed, and chop chilies.

Combine all ingredients in blender. Puree until almost smooth (should be slightly chunky). Season with salt and pepper. Add lime juice, if desired.

Can also be cooked before blending for serving on warm dishes (add a scoop of whipping or sour cream to the blender).

Paletas

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

1 cup water
1 cup sugar or sugar equivalent
2 cups cubed melon
1 cup peeled and cubed cucumber (or additional melon)
1/4 cup lime juice
1 tablespoon minced fresh mint or basil (optional)
Popsicle molds or small paper cups and wooden sticks

Make a simple syrup by boiling the water and dissolving the sugar in it. Allow to cool. You won't use it all in one batch, but it keeps forever in the refrigerator and can be used to sweeten drinks or in your next batch of paletas.

Combine 1/4 cup of syrup, the melon and cucumber, the lime juice and the minced herb in a blender and blend until smooth. Pour into popsicle molds or paper cups. Freeze until firm, about 6 hours. If using cups, check after 2 hours and insert wooden sticks into the almost-frozen paletas.

Yield: six two-ounce popsicles