



# *Tucson Community Supported Agriculture*

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## Summer 2012

Harvest list is online

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**Many more recipes in  
our online recipe archive**



### Reminder: Bread Crisis! ;)

As announced previously, Don your village baker is away for 2 weeks. There will be no fresh bread available this week and next. We just have a few loaves in the freezer from last week, for sale first come first served.

### Bulk Tomatoes: \$1.67 per pound

The farm just told us that next week (July 17 and 18) will be the last week for members to order flats of tomatoes.

Flats contains about 15 pounds of tomatoes and cost \$25 each. At \$1.67 per pound this is a very good deal for organic tomatoes!

You have a choice of 3 types of tomatoes:

1. **Classic Reds:** only red tomatoes (open-pollinated, heirlooms and hybrids)
2. **Heirlooms:** all colors and sizes
3. **Romas:** good for canning because less they are fleshier and less juicy.

All orders must be pre-paid at the front desk for pickup the following week.



## **OKRA**

Okra, along with watermelon, came to the New World with the slave trade. While understandably popular in the Southeastern U.S., it does grow well in our climate and Farmer Frank's okra is outstanding. During the summer okra is usually prepared fresh, often stewed with tomatoes, dipped in batter and fried like a fritter, or added to gumbos. For winter use the young pods can be pickled or sliced and dried like fruit.

Many people dislike okra for its gumminess, but cooked over high heat with enough room for it to brown instead of stew, okra loses the juices that cause the slimy texture. For crisp okra, fry, stir-fry or grill it; for soft, moist okra, stew it. Another trick to minimize okra's gumminess is to let completely dry off after washing it, and before cutting it: either let it dry off by itself or pad it with paper towels before prepping.

Besides green okra, Farmer Frank also grows an heirloom variety known as Texas Hill Country Red. It is drought-tolerant and an excellent pickling variety, but it can also be sliced and eaten raw in salads. Note that red okra will turn green when cooked.

## **THE CERTIFIED ORGANIC LABEL: 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

Until the late 1990's, the term "organically-grown" (or "organic" as many came to call it) was a grass-roots concept which meant that vegetables grown organically were grown as nature intended them to grow, without the use of pesticides, synthetic fertilizers or any "unnatural substances." It implied that organic food was "pure" and therefore safe to eat. However, the absence of regulations and control meant that growers could call their produce organic based on their own understanding of the concept and it rapidly became clear that some standards were necessary to ensure that consumers could trust that organic produce was actually organic. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) stepped in and the "USDA Certified Organic" label was born and implemented in 2002. It has come a long way in the past 10 years.

Organic food accounts for just 4 percent of all foods sold, but demand is growing fast and agri-food corporations have successfully grabbed their share of the organic market. However, large corporations pledge their allegiance to their shareholders rather than to their consumers, and to cash in on the premium prices yielded by organic foods, they have extended organic foods to value-added products instead of fresh produce only. In the process they have sought to water down the organic standards. How did they do that? Think lobbying. For example, senior officers from agri-food corporations now sit on the USDA National Board of Organic Standards. Guess who is now influencing, if not setting, the organic standards?

What's the result after 10 years? Many products that are now labeled certified-organic include substances which have nothing organic about them. Today, more than 250 non-organic substances are on the "allowed" list, many of them with controversial health records. And farmers are now allowed to use certain non-organic pesticides and still label their produce as certified-organic.

Is there an alternative? Yes. In the past few years, "Certified Naturally Grown," a grass-roots organization controlled and regulated by small organic farmers instead of Big Food, has offered an organic certification program that is true to the original organic ethics. And your farm, Crooked Sky Farms, is certified by that organization.

*Source: "Has Organic been oversized?" The New York Times online edition, July 7*

### **Okra with Chickpeas and Tomatoes (Egyptian recipe)**

Paula Karrer, Tucson CSA (*adapted from Saveur Magazine*)

1 cup chickpeas, cooked or canned, rinsed  
2 tbsp olive oil  
1-2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced  
1 basket okra pods  
1 basket tomatoes, chopped  
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin  
1/2 cup chicken stock  
Juice of 1/2 lemon  
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley or cilantro  
Salt and pepper

Heat oil in deep skillet and sauté garlic until fragrant. Add okra and cook, stirring, a few minutes until it turns bright green. Stir in tomatoes and cumin. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Add stock, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Cover, reduce heat to medium low, and cook until okra is soft and sauce is almost caramelized (this is what gives a delicious unique flavor)- about 35 minutes. Check occasionally to see that sauce is not sticking or burning – you may need to add small amounts additional liquid. Add chickpeas and cook until heated through. Add parsley and adjust seasoning. Serve hot or at room temperature.

### **Asian Flavored Pesto**

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

We tend to think of basil as an Italian herb, but it is widely used throughout Asia as well. This is a take on a basic pesto, substituting peanuts or sesame seeds for the traditional Italian pine nuts. It will make a great sauce for noodles. You can also make it without any nuts, to use as an addition to soups. It should freeze just as well as regular pesto, so make extra to freeze into ice cubes that will add some excitement to your wintertime produce.

2 large handfuls basil  
1 tablespoon fresh ginger and/or lemongrass  
Fresh green chile, to taste  
1 clove garlic  
1/4 cup peanuts or sesame seeds  
2 tablespoons sesame oil  
Dash of soy sauce, to taste

Pulse nuts in food processor or blender, until well ground. Add garlic and fresh chile pepper and pulse again to incorporate. Finish by adding the rest of the ingredients and puree until smooth. Taste, and add more soy sauce, as necessary.

### **Fresh Chile Lunch Pockets**

Inspired by Marit Alanen, Tucson CSA Member

The fresh chiles in this week's share make excellent packages for a variety of fillings. Simply cut off the stem end and scrape away the white ribbing inside the pepper. Stuff with something simple like cheddar cheese or leftover rice. Eat cold, as a refreshing, less heavy version of the typical chile relleno. This makes a quick and easy snack or light lunch.

### **Fudgy Zucchini Brownies**

Rachel, The Organic Kitchen

Yes, its time to pull out the baking recipes using squash. Turn this common vegetable into a brownie for a delicious change!

1/2 cup butter, melted  
1 1/2 cups coconut palm or turbinado sugar  
1/3 cup cocoa  
1 cup shredded zucchini  
1 egg  
2 cups whole wheat pastry flour

Mix butter, sugar and cocoa. Stir in zucchini and egg. Gradually mix in flour until well combined. Pour batter into a 9 by 13 inch pan. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the middle comes out clean.

### **Thai Melon Salad**

Sara Jones, Tucson CSA

This salad takes its inspiration from the classic Thai Green Papaya salad. It is great with sweet melon, but if you happen to open a less than ripe melon, this is a good way to use it. It is usually a really spicy dish; use less chile if you want it milder.

1 melon (and/or cucumber), peeled, seeded, julienned or cut into thin strips  
1 tablespoon dried chile flakes  
3-4 cloves garlic  
1 tablespoon fish sauce (or soy sauce)  
2-3 limes  
1 handful mint, finely chopped  
1/2 cup roasted peanuts, chopped

Crush chile flakes and garlic together into a paste. Mix paste with fish sauce and the juice from two limes. Pour mixture over melon and stir well to combine. Sprinkle with mint, peanuts and thinly sliced limes to serve.