



# Tucson Community Supported Agriculture

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## Summer 2013

Harvest list is online

### The Back Page

Stuffed Bell Peppers  
Potato Tacos  
Zucchini and Olive Breakfast Cake,  
French-Style  
Agua Fresca de Pepino (Cucumber-Lime Drink)

Many more recipes on our website

### Easy Pickled Cucumbers

In a small saucepan, bring to a boil 1 cup of water, 1 cup of vinegar and 1 tablespoon of sea salt. In a one-quart canning jar, add 1 bay leaf, 2 peeled garlic heads and 1 tablespoon peppercorns. You can add other seeds also, such as mustard seeds and coriander seeds. And of course, you can add dill if you like.

Rinse the cucumbers well and quarter them in wedges. Cram the cucumber wedges in a one-quart canning jar. Add the boiling solution to the jar, covering the cucumbers and filling it completely. Close and let cool. Store in the refrigerator for a up to 3 months. You can start eating them after 1 week.

### Cucumber, Bell Pepper and Chile Salsa

Proportions don't matter much in this recipe. It's all good.

Dice a cucumber and a bell pepper in small cubes. In a blender, add roasted chiles (peeled and seeded), an onion, a garlic head, and some herbs (cilantro, parsley or mint), and the juice of a lime or lemon. Pulse a few times until mixture is well mixed but still chunky. Mix with cucumber and bell pepper, and add salt and pepper to taste.

\* Note: all recipes in *italics* are available on our website

## THE CUCUMBER\*

Okay, we've had cucumbers for how many weeks in a row now? I'd rather not count. Instead, I'd rather talk about how to get us through The Year of the Cucumber. Each year, we seem to have a bumper crop of one vegetable or another. This summer certainly has been rich in cucumbers!

When there is a lot of repetition in our shares it is easy the get bored or to run out of ideas. There are two solutions to repetition: one is preservation for future consumption, the other is make-over, i.e. give a vegetable new personalities by expanding your recipes repertoire. As far as repetition is concerned, the cucumber is really not a bad crop to be repeated, as it is a very versatile one.

**Preserve your cucumbers:** a little time spent pickling cucumbers today means that you can have crisp, flavorful cucumbers for the 8 months of the year when we have no cucumbers. There are many pickling recipes on the internet, including on our own website (*Old Fashioned Maine Mustard Pickles; Fresh Refrigerator Pickles*). Personally, I prefer unsweetened pickles, like my aunt used to make—see the recipe in the left column. You can also pickle them the old-fashioned way by natural fermentation.

**Eat them raw:** cucumbers can be sliced, diced or julienned and combined with other vegetables, grain, pasta and/or fruit to make mouth-watering salads (*Thai Melon Salad; Apple Melon Cucumber Salad; Tabouleh; Cucumber, Tomato and Feta Salad; Cucumber Dill Pasta Salad, Spiced Cucumber Salad, Cucumber Noodles; Cucumber, Bell Pepper and Chile Salsa -see recipe in left column*). Or they can be grated and mixed with yogurt and minced garlic to make refreshing dips (*Tzatziki; Raita*). You can also excavate cucumber segments and stuff them with tuna salad, shrimp salad, egg salad, or a cream cheese dip with chives and dill. The stuffing possibilities are limitless. Instead of stuffing them, you can slice cucumbers thinly with a cheese slicer and wrap the slices around the stuffing, be it figs, dates, or a cream cheese salmon salad for example, and then secure the wrapping with a toothpick. You can also use cucumber slices as a low carb alternative to crackers.



**Drink your cucumbers:** there are few things as refreshing as *Agua Fresca de Pepino* (*cucumber and lime drink*) or *Cucumber Cooler*. The latter can even be made into popsicles. *Cucumber-Apple Shake* is not bad either. Cucumbers also make really good cold and hot soups: *Chilled Cucumber Soup; Cold Cucumber Soup; Divine Soup; Gazpacho*.

**Cook your cucumbers:** if you've never had cooked cucumbers, try the *Braised Dijon Cucumbers* or the *Cucumber Coconut Milk Curry* and you'll be hooked. Or *Gisela's Cucumber and Carrot Dish*. Another amazing coconutty recipe is the *Cucumbers*

## **Stuffed Bell Peppers**

Philippe, Tucson CSA

Meat version: 1 pound ground pork (or Italian sausage)  
Veggie version: replace meat with cooked black beans, plus 2 eggs to bind the mixture.  
1/2 cup quinoa  
4-6 bell peppers  
2 pounds tomatoes, quartered, or 1 quart canned tomatoes  
1 onion, chopped  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 tablespoon thyme, Italian seasoning, or Herbes de Provence  
Salt and pepper to taste

Boil 1 cup of water, slightly salted. Add ½ cup of quinoa. Bring back to boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer for 15 minutes. Turn off heat and let the quinoa steam for 15 more minutes. Let cool. Cut out the stem end of the bell peppers, remove stem and seed core, and scoop out most of remaining seeds. Season the ground pork with salt and pepper, add the cooled-off quinoa, and mix well. You can also add some herbs/spices for extra flavor. Stuff the bell peppers with the ground meat/quinoa mix. If you end up with extra mix, stuff more bell peppers if you have any. If not, just make a few meatballs. If you have extra bell peppers, dice them and sauté them with the onions. If you're making the veggie version, make the stuffing by mixing the quinoa, black beans, eggs and seasoning. In a large pot on medium heat, sauté the onions in olive oil until translucent. Add garlic, tomatoes, herbs, and salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 10 minutes. Place the stuffed peppers (and meatballs if any) in the sauce. Cover, bring back to a simmer and cook for another 45 minutes.

## **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 kind of delicate operation, be patient and don't be frustrated if your first couple end up a bit ugly – they'll still taste fine.

About 1 1/2 cups cooked potatoes, lightly mashed  
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
Salt and pepper to taste  
2-4 roasted chiles, peeled, seeded and diced  
About 8 corn tortillas  
2-4 tablespoons vegetable oil  
Salsa and garnish for tacos

Mix together potatoes, chiles, cumin, garlic and salt and pepper. In a heavy skillet, heat 1-2 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 to drain.

## **Zucchini and Olive Breakfast Cake, French-Style**

Lorraine Glazar, Tucson CSA

All cakes don't have to be sweet! Mediterraneans, and the French in particular, have a whole tradition of "gateaux salés" (savory cakes). This one is lovely example.

1/3 cup olive oil, plus more for greasing the pan and drizzling  
1/2 pound zucchini  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 large clove garlic, minced  
1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper  
3 large eggs  
1/3 cup milk  
2 ounces goat cheese, crumbled  
1/2 cup Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced  
Kosher salt

Heat the oven to 350°. Lightly grease a 9x5 inch loaf pan with olive oil. Grate the zucchini on the coarsest side of a box grater. Place the zucchini in a colander in the sink, and toss with 1 teaspoon of salt. Let drain while preparing the rest of the recipe. In a large bowl, whisk the minced garlic with the flour, baking powder, salt and pepper. In a separate, medium bowl, lightly whisk the eggs, then whisk in the milk and olive oil. Use a rubber spatula to fold the wet ingredients into the dry until barely mixed. Fold in the crumbled goat cheese and the sliced olives. Press firmly on the zucchini in the colander, pressing out as much water as possible. Quickly fold the zucchini into the batter. Spread the batter in the prepared loaf pan, and drizzle lightly with olive oil. Sprinkle the top with kosher salt. Bake loaf for about 45 minutes, or until golden and a knife inserted in center comes out with a few crumbs attached. Transfer to a rack to cool in pan for 5 minutes. Run a knife around edge to release. Turn out loaf onto rack to firm up before slicing, about 30 minutes; using a serrated knife, cut into 3/8-inch slices, then cut into halves or quarters.

## **Agua Fresca de Pepino (Cucumber-Lime Drink)**

Amy Schwemm, Tucson CSA

2 cucumbers  
1/2 to 1 cup lime juice  
1-2 cups water  
1/4 cup sugar, agave syrup, simple syrup, or other sweetener

Juice the whole cucumber (with skin and seeds), or blend and strain it. Add lime juice, water, and sugar. Serve chilled.