

AJO COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE



Editor: Nina Altshul

Winter 2010 / Week 5 of 11

Planned harvest: Rapini, Rutabaga, Black Spanish Radishes, Baby Braising Mix, Acorn Squash, Citrus, Carrots, Tango and Lolla Rossa Lettuce Mix.

Ajo CSA Cooks!

10 members of Ajo CSA gathered after last Saturday's pickup when Mimi Phillips of ISDA came over to present ISDA's program called Ajo Cooks! This program is aimed at developing ways for local people to earn some extra money or actually begin a small business around something we already do in our own kitchens, with the assets we already have, including a rich multicultural heritage in which people gather all the time around food here in Ajo. As we shared Mimi's family's apple pie, and my Slovene specialty, a blueberry strudel, we talked about foraging for wild foods, gardening, comfort foods and family recipes.



Cafecita meeting participants discuss food memories

On top of that, members discussed options for legally preparing and selling healthy foods, and how to make locally grown produce and home-made treats more widely available to people in Ajo. As far as Ajo CSA is concerned, first, we are starting to look for a more public pick-up place. And second, for the past 7 months Ajo CSA has been operating a small farm stand selling extra produce mostly to members, however, in cooperation with the Ajo Community Garden Consortium, plans are currently being discussed regarding starting a real farmers market in town. CSA members proposed expanding the produce selection with home-made "healthy foods", and holding such an event once a month.

In addition, ISDA is planning backyard gatherings ("tastings") where folks can gather to watch a cooking demonstration or lesson, try the food, and give their opinions. Ajo CSA could organize these, too. There will also be informal workshops to sort out costs and think about marketing and health/business licenses, as well as training for the use of a commercial kitchen. But first, an event arising from these small gatherings will be held on January 23, featuring local cooks and their cultural foods, and Ajo CSA is proud to partner with Ajo Community Garden in providing a wonderful salad for the event. We hope to see you there!

Ajo Cooks!

**CANDLELIGHT
CULTURAL FOOD FESTIVAL**

YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS IT!
DINE WITH CULTURAL MUSIC AND DECOR

Curley School Auditorium
Saturday, January 23, 2010
6:00 PM

TICKETS: \$10.00

Purchase now at:
ISDA, Copper News, Chamber of Commerce, Si Como No

RECIPES ETC.

Rapini (also known as Broccoli Rabe (or Raab), *Broccoletti*, Saag (Punjabi) or *Cime di Rapa*) is a common vegetable in Mediterranean and Asian cuisines. The plant is a member of the Brassicaceae family, and is classified scientifically as *Brassica rapa* subspecies *rapa*, in the same subspecies as the turnip. Rapini has many spiked leaves that surround a green bud which looks very similar to a small head of broccoli. There may be small yellow flowers blooming from the buds, which are edible. The flavor of rapini has been described as nutty, bitter, pungent, and "an acquired taste". The vegetable probably descends from a wild herb, a relative of the turnip, that grew either in China or the Mediterranean region. Rapini is a source of vitamins A, C, and K, as well as potassium, calcium, and iron.

Rapini & Garbanzo Pita Pizzas

(adapted from *Gourmet*)

2 large garlic cloves, sliced thin
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
a 19-ounce can of garbanzos, rinsed and drained
1/2 cup water
1 pound rapini tips, rinsed and coarsely chopped, eat the leaves and tender stems!
1/2 teaspoon dried hot red pepper flakes
three 6-inch whole wheat or other pita breads, halved horizontally to form 6 rounds
1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese (about 2 ounces)

Preheat oven to 400F. In a large heavy skillet cook garlic in oil over moderate heat, stirring, until pale golden. Transfer garlic and 1 tablespoon oil to a food processor. Add chick-peas, 1/4 cup water, and salt and pepper to taste and blend mixture until smooth.

Heat oil remaining in skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking and cook rapini until wilted. Add remaining 1/4 cup water and pepper flakes and simmer, covered partially, until the greens are crisp-tender and almost all liquid is evaporated, about 2 minutes.

Spread rough sides of pita with chick-pea purée and top with rapini and Parmesan.

Arrange pita pizzas on a large baking sheet and bake in middle of oven 10 minutes, or until edges are golden.

Serves 6 as an entrée or 10 to 12 as an hors d'oeuvre.

Stuffed Acorn Squash

(submitted by Karen Johnson)

Halve and clean the cavity of an acorn squash. Bake (30 minutes) or microwave (6 minutes) face down in a covered dish until tender. Stuff with any of the following and pop in the oven to brown for five minutes:

- applesauce and walnuts
 - tangerine sections and maple syrup or honey
 - chopped apples and raisins
 - diced mango, hot sauce and lemon
 - pear slices and honey, topped with sunflower seeds
 - cranberry sauce, lemon juice and a marshmallow
- Or, make up your own combos!!

Rutabaga (*Brassica napus* var. *napobrassica*) is another close relative of turnip, though larger, sweeter and tanner in color. Sources say rutabaga appeared suddenly in the 17th century and first became popular in Sweden (in fact, the word rutabaga comes from Swedish *rotabagge* which means "baggy root"). They were among the first vegetables grown by colonists in America as they began farming the untilled lands, because the large roots helped break up poor soils. Rutabaga is high in carbohydrates, vitamins A and C, and some minerals, particularly calcium. It also belongs to a handful of cruciferous vegetables believed to be effective in cancer prevention. Before preparing, scrub well with a vegetable brush to remove any dirt (you can peel it, but you will lose nutrients in the peel). Rutabaga can be grated raw into salads or slaws, or steamed or boiled for about 30 minutes until soft. Try mashing them with other vegetables, such as carrots and potatoes, or adding cooked cubes to casseroles or stuffing mixtures. You can also roast them with other veggies or meats. How about rutabaga chips? Slice very thin (1/8"), and deep fry until golden brown. Make sure you don't crowd the pan. Drain on paper towel, sprinkle with salt and pepper and other seasoning of your choice and serve.

Black Spanish Radish is a harder, drier, horse-radish tasting radish, and can be eaten raw or cooked. Some sources say it has been used as a food product since at least the time of the Pharaohs, and was used as a remedy for cough. It is rich in Vitamin B and C, sulfur and fiber. It is also an antioxidant and beneficial to digestion. Try grating some into your slaw or salad, or into a lentil or split-pea soup.