

AJO COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE



Fall 2009 / Week 10 of 13

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Planned harvest: Baby Detroit Beets with Greens, I'toi Green Onions, Summer Squash, White Acorn Squash, Tomatoes, Anaheim Chiles, Pecans, Curly Mustard Greens.

Winter Session Sign-up is now open! The winter session with Crooked Sky Farms will run for 10 weeks between December 1 and February 28 with a 2-week holiday break (no pickups between December 20 and January 6). The price per share is \$200 plus gas money, the amount of which will be determined by the end of November based on the number of registered shares. Since the number of shares is limited, current and former members will have priority registration until November 14, when the registration will be open to new members as well. Registration will close on December 1. Get your contract either at the pick-up location or email Nina at kat.altshul@yahoo.com.

Ajo CSA and Ajo Community Garden Open House on Saturday, November 21! Mark your calendars for an exciting day of fun and insights on how to live and eat more locally and sustainably! We will kick off with a citrus and irrigation workshop in the morning, and in the afternoon everybody is invited to a series of workshops at the Ajo Community Garden. We'll start with a tour of the garden with tips for your own garden and seasonal planting, followed by a workshop on how to make your own solar oven and one on soil and composting with earthworms (*times TBA*). Make sure you stay for a delicious food demonstration by Chef Cheralyn Schmidt using the beautiful fall produce from Crooked Sky Farms. The regular CSA pick-up will be held in the garden after the food demo, and the farm stand will also be open if you need some extra produce. To finish off the evening, join us at the Oasis Café for Ajo's first screening of the local and real food movie Fresh!

Greens, Greens, Glorious Greens All summer long we've yearned for them, and now they are finally here it is easy to get overwhelmed and puzzled by them! Arugula, chard, braising mix (aka spicy mesclun, a combination of baby kale, bok choy, mustards, arugula, and spicy endive), mustard greens, turnip greens, beet greens, kale; the entire group of Asian greens like mizuna, purple Osaka mustard, bok choy and tatsoi; and then there are of course lettuces, and be assured, there will be more throughout the winter as Frank is currently planting his second crop! I will write about individual greens, and their nutrition profiles, in the following weeks; here, let me just share some general tips. First of all, I find it really helpful to dedicate some time to washing them on Saturday after the pickup or on Sunday morning. Using a big bowl or sinkful of water, I wash all my greens separately 2-3 times in order to remove any sand or dirt, then let them dry (or spin them dry), and store in a bag with a paper towel in it. This way the greens will stay fresh for at least a few days, and you can get to them easily during your busy week. If you would like to use turnip or radish greens, then first separate them from the roots, wash the greens as described above, and store the roots separately.

After that, the sky is your limit! Aside from lettuces and arugula which are best eaten raw (see some recipe ideas on the opposite side), all greens respond really great to a simple technique of quick braising. My favorite way is to chop up some garlic and I'toi onions, heat up some oil in a pan and quickly warm up the garlic (and onions) until you can smell them. Chop your greens finely and add to the frying pan. Add some salt, and let the greens wilt in their own liquid. If you just washed the greens, allow the liquid to evaporate; if you are using dried greens, and the bottom of the pan gets sticky, add a tablespoon or so of water as needed. Take care not to overcook, though, since these are still very young and tender! You might want to add a chopped tomato instead of water, and some red chile flakes or chipotle flakes for extra heat and/or smokiness. Or use sesame oil and ginger with Asian greens. Serve the braised greens as a side dish, or pour eggs over them and bake into a frittata, mix with ricotta or feta cheese and make a spanakopita, or use to stuff your burritos along with some cheese and beans. They are also delicious when mixed with sautéed ground meat, scrambled tofu or beans, and used as a Sloppy Joe, or to stuff acorn squash. As a special treat, fry up some good local pork sausage (casings removed), and once the red color disappears, add the finally chopped mustard greens, cover with a lid and let the greens wilt. Serve with rice and black-eyed peas. Another way to sneak more greens into your diet is to add them to your soups or mashes. Or try baking them whole, following Peter's mom Connie's recipe for kale below. You'd never know that greens can taste this good!

RECIPES ETC.

Connie's Roasted Kale Chips

Wash and drain your kale, halve the big pieces, and lightly coat every piece with oil and salt, mixing them all up in a big bowl. Bake at 475°F for 7 minutes, and serve warm or let cool.

Mom's Salsa Cruda

(submitted by Sarah Howard)

4 c ripe tomatoes, chopped
3-4 roasted and peeled Anaheim chiles, chopped
4-6 Glendale gold onions
1 tsp salt
2 cloves garlic, minced or pressed
2 Tbsp fresh cilantro, chopped
1 1/2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
pinch of sugar, optional

Prepare all ingredients and mix together... that's it! Allow to sit in the fridge overnight before eating so the flavors have time to blend together.

Pete and Nina's Arugula Salad

We just can't get enough of this salad!

2 bunches arugula, leaves torn off the stem, washed and spun
2 tomatoes, chopped
3 I'toi onions, sliced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1/3 cup walnuts, finely chopped
2 handfuls of assorted roasted and salted nuts, whole
2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
3-4 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
salt and pepper to taste

Combine all the ingredients in a bowl, lightly mix and serve. If you want a meal in a bowl, consider adding cubes of your favorite cheese, hard-boiled eggs or even some cold grilled chicken or salmon. Delicious!

Nina's Arugula Salad with Caramelized Butternut Squash

1 bunch arugula, leaves torn off the stem, washed and spun
1 butternut squash, peeled and cubed (or a

combination of butternut and pumpkin and/or cushaw squash)

2-3 Tbsp olive oil

salt and pepper, to taste

2-3 Tbsp lemon juice, or/and orange juice or red wine vinegar

1/2 cup tamari roasted almonds, chopped

Preheat the oven to 375°F. In a bowl, mix the squash cubes with 1 Tbsp of olive oil, salt and pepper, arrange on a baking tray, cover with foil and bake for 15 minutes. Then remove the foil and bake for about 15 minutes more, or until tender and slightly caramelized (you can also do this step in a pan on stove-top, with a lid on). Remove the squash from the oven, and while still hot, toss with arugula, lemon and/or orange juice or vinegar, and the remaining olive oil. Add extra salt, and pepper to taste, and serve immediately, sprinkled with the tamari roasted almonds.

Nina's Stuffed Acorn Squash

Preheat oven to 375°F. Wash and halve your acorn squash, remove the seeds. Place face-down on a lightly oiled baking sheet, add a tablespoon of water, cover with aluminum foil and bake for 30-45 minutes, depending on the size of your squash, or until it is soft to touch. In the meantime, prepare quinoa with green chiles. Wash, deseed and chop 3-5 chiles (if you have time, try roasting and peeling them first for better taste), and then fry in some coconut oil until slightly soft and fragrant. Add 1 cup of well-rinsed quinoa. Stir and let quinoa slightly roast, then add 1 3/4 cup of water to the pot and a pinch of salt. Cover, and bring to a boil, then turn the heat down, and simmer for about 18 minutes or until all the liquid is absorbed and little snail-like shapes form as the quinoa opens up.

Heat up your favorite marinara sauce (or make one quickly by frying some onions and garlic in olive oil, adding a can of crushed San Marzano tomatoes or 4 peeled and chopped fresh tomatoes, thyme, oregano, basil, salt, lemon pepper, 1 tsp of brown sugar and a dash of cinnamon and/or nutmeg; let simmer for at least 15 minutes).

Fill the acorn halves with the quinoa risotto, top with a tablespoon or two of the marinara sauce, and serve as a substantial side dish or a vegetarian main dish with braised greens or green salad on the side.