

AJO COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE



Editor: Nina Altshul

Winter 2010 / Week 7 of 11

Planned harvest: P'ittoi Onions, Hakurei (White) Turnips, Endives, Green Bok Choi, Mustard Greens, Red LaSoda Potatoes, Detroit Beets, Cilantro.

Cultural Dinner a big success! The first of the public events in ISDA's new Ajo Cooks! program drew a full house (over 125 people) on Saturday night to a beautifully decorated Curley School auditorium. The Ajo CSA and Ajo Community Garden crew started harvesting in the Community Garden at 9 am and together with the harvest that Tania provided at the farm washed over 12 pounds of different salad greens in the commercial kitchen at the Ajo School! We added radishes, tomatoes and P'ittoi onions from the garden, as well as sliced rutabagas and white turnips from the farm. ISDA contributed rehydrated cholla buds from the Tohono O'odham nation, which not only tied our salad to the peoples and traditional foods of the place we live in but also added an intriguing asparagus-artichoke-like taste and texture. The salad was dressed with a simple citrus vinaigrette using dried and fresh herbs from the garden, Ajo lemons and Queen Creek olive oil, and decorated with fresh nasturtium flowers from the garden. Many guests commented on the freshness of the greens and the salad in general, and all of the salad that we made was eaten!



Besides the salad, the menu featured foods by 11 Ajo cooks, including salsa, Southern-style sweet beans and turkey, beef tamales, carne asada tacos and nopales salad with guacamole. The desert was buñuelos (cinnamon-infused sweet fried tortillas) and Scottish shortbread Peace Cookies. Another traditional local food item was served as a drink – Agua de Jamaica (hibiscus flower tea). Ajo CSA greens have been finding their way to plates at events in this town for over a year, but this was the first time that Ajo Community Garden produce was served at a public event. We're looking forward to more of these types of events in the future – this Saturday, for instance!



Desert Senita Community Health Center 2010 Health Fair coming up this Saturday! On January 30, the annual Health Fair will be held at the clinic on 410 Malacate Street in Ajo between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. The schedule of events includes touring the new Desert Senita Pharmacy, a FILL THE VAN drive accepting donations for the Ajo Food Bank, "Lungs" (a COPD program by the DSCHC nursing staff with prizes), health screenings by Cathedral Health (for a fee, call 1-800-770-0240), free screenings for cholesterol, blood sugar and osteoporosis (call 387-5388), personality screens by Behavioral Health, blood pressure testing, First Smiles Matter by DSCHC Dental, Yoga with Nina and the Laughter Yoga Club (at 11:00 and 11:15 am respectively), a solar oven demonstration by Christine Johnson and mammography performed by Assured Imaging (for a fee, call 387-5388). Don't miss the DSCHC Almost Famous Cake

Walk, the piñatas at 11:45 and 1:00 and the Duck Pond either!

Ajo CSA is very proud to participate in these activities: we will share a table with the Ajo Community Garden and will be providing produce and help with the Healthy Food Demonstration conducted by Cheralyn Schmidt, U of A Cooperative Extension Instructional Specialist. Cheralyn will start cooking at 10 am and will go till 2 with short breaks, so stop by to chat with our volunteers and visitors, and try some of the food magic performed by Cheralyn! This is a great opportunity to get some new ideas about what you can do with your produce shares.

RECIPES ETC.

Curried Turnips

(by Sara Jones, Tucson CSA)

If you still haven't found a way to cook turnips, give this recipe a try. Curry spices are also delicious sprinkled over roasted turnips or rutabagas, as well! And the curry spices, cumin, coriander, turmeric and ginger are all powerful digestive aides for those who find turnips hard to digest.

1 bunch turnips with greens, cleaned, roots diced and greens roughly chopped
1 small onion
1 clove garlic
About 1 tablespoon freshly grated ginger
1 tablespoon good curry powder
1/4 cup canned, chopped tomatoes
Oil
Fresh chopped cilantro, for garnish

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Add onions and cook until beginning to brown. Mash garlic and ginger into a paste and add to skillet, then add curry powder. Cook stirring well for one minute then add turnips and tomatoes and about 1/4 cup of water. Cover and cook until turnips are tender. Stir in greens and cook until wilted. Season to taste with salt and garnish with fresh chopped cilantro.

Fish, lentil soup and escarole recipe

(submitted by Sarah and Steven Howard)

Put 3/4 lb of halibut or whitefish in a 9"x13" baking dish, cover with lentil soup and place lots of escarole on top (more than you think), Put a dash of pepper and balsamic vinegar on the escarole. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 400 degrees for about 30 min or until fish is flaky. Serve with sweet potatoes. I boil whole sweet potatoes for 20 min and then slice into 3/4" thick circles. Remove skins from circles. Place in baking dish. Put a mixture of brown sugar, maple syrup and butter on top of sweet potatoes and broil on High for 10 min. Eat.

Brownies (with Carrot and Spinach)

(created by Jessica Seinfeld, adapted from Oprah.com)

Nonstick cooking spray
3 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate
1/2 cup carrot puree
1/2 cup spinach puree (or substitute any other milder greens)
1/2 cup firmly packed light or dark brown sugar
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
2 tablespoons trans-fat-free soft tub margarine spread
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
2 large egg whites
3/4 cup oat flour or all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt

Separately steam your carrots and greens until soft, and then blend them into a puree. Cool.

Preheat the oven to 350°. Coat an 8" x 8" baking pan with cooking spray.

Melt the chocolate in a double boiler or over a very low flame. In a large bowl, combine the melted chocolate, vegetable purees, sugar, cocoa powder, margarine and vanilla and whisk until smooth and creamy, 1 to 2 minutes.

Whisk in egg whites. Stir in the flour, baking powder, and salt with a wooden spoon. Pour the batter into the pan and bake 35 to 40 minutes. Cool completely in the pan before cutting into 12 bars.

"Love Potion Salad" (aka Pineapple-Fennel Salad with Ginger-Sesame Dressing)

(submitted by Carolyn Cook, adapted from Vegetarian Times)

Fennel is a natural plant estrogen, and spicy radishes are reputed to have been the Egyptian pharaohs' stimulator of choice! Ginger's warming qualities rev up circulation. And sesame seeds are rich in arginine, an amino acid the sex organs need to produce nitric oxide, which expands blood vessels to enhance blood flow. And the vitamin C-packed pineapple is said to help counter impotence. This is a true Valentine's Day special recipe, however who doesn't need some good loving just about any day, right?

Dressing

1 tbs. lemon juice
1 tsp honey
1 tsp. fresh grated ginger
1 tbs. sesame oil
2 Tbs. toasted sesame seeds or black sesame seeds

Salad

1 medium fennel bulb, quartered and thinly sliced (1 cup)
1 cup diced fresh pineapple
1 cup sliced radishes
2 green onions, thinly sliced (1/4 cup)
1 cup diced avocado
3 cups watercress or arugula

1. To make dressing: Whisk together lemon juice, honey, and ginger in small bowl. Whisk in oil, then sesame seeds. Season with salt and pepper, if desired.

2. To make salad: Toss fennel, pineapple, radishes, and green onions with dressing in large bowl. (salad can be made ahead to this point and refrigerated overnight.) Stir in avocado, and season with salt and pepper.

3. Divide arugula among serving plates. Top with pineapple mixture.

