

AJO COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

Fall 2008 / Week 10

Planned Harvest: Acorn Squash, Red LaSoda Potatoes, P'ittoi Green Onions, Chioggia Beets, Turnips, Mizuna Greens, Radishes, Farmer's Choice

News from the farm: The summer season in the fields is coming to an end, meaning our last shares contained the last summer produce such as tomatoes, cucumbers and chiles. Melons are coming to an end too, as well as summer squash. From here on we will gradually ease into more autumn vegetables, especially roots and greens.

Sign up for the winter session: The winter session runs from the beginning of December through February. Our shares will mostly contain roots like potatoes, yams, beets, carrots, winter squash, a wide variety of greens and brassicas, as well as herbs, onions and citrus. The farm will be closed for a week at the end of December due to the holidays. The weekly price of 20 dollars per share will remain the same, and since the season runs for eleven weeks, the total price for the winter session will be 220 dollars. Half-shares are possible within our own Ajo CSA group only and not with the farm, so if you are interested in a half-share please register soon enough so that we can find you a partner. I will be collecting checks addressed to Crooked Sky Farms or cash from November 7 on. We will again collect gas money as well, and the gas contribution per share will be determined and announced as soon as we get a good handle on the number of members we will have.

Chioggia Beets: The Chioggia beet is a pre-1840 Italian heirloom variety of garden beet (*Beta vulgaris*), named after an Italian town on the Adriatic coast about 25 kilometers south of Venice. Sometimes called Candystripe Beet or Bull's Eye Beet, it is distinguished from other varieties by alternating concentric rings of scarlet red and white inside. There is considerable variation in the amount of coloration, with some individuals being nearly completely red, others almost white, and every combination between those two extremes. The slightly flattened globe-shaped roots have a red-orange or pink to light red skin. Taste is described as sweeter, milder or more peppery than the typical red beets. The leaves are medium height with green stems and red shading.

Beet leaves can be used as greens in salads or cooked in any recipe that calls for collards, kale, chard, or spinach. The roots can also be grated raw and added to salads, and the striped Chioggia are striking when grated, but lose the distinct colors when cooked, turning overall pinkish. Beets can be cooked whole in some orange juice and water and the sauce then used as a salad dressing mixed with some olive oil. They are even sweeter when roasted whole with the skin, about an hour depending on the size (check at 40 minutes) at 400° F, covered. Then remove from the oven but keep covered. Thirty minutes later put each beet in a paper towel and rub the skin off. They can be served as a side dish warm with a little salt and olive oil, or used in a salad with oranges and red onions, or shredded over salad greens. Beets pair nicely with bleu or feta cheese and nuts - especially walnuts or hazelnuts. Olive oil or walnut oil, vinegar (balsamic or red wine), and orange juice are always nice as a dressing, as do the additions of orange zest, dill, black pepper, and salt, and of course sour cream.

(Sources: University of Wisconsin; Delicious Organics)

RECIPES ETC.

Pumpkin Pancakes

(adopted from Vegetarian Times, November/December 2008)

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup whole-wheat flour
1 ½ tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. baking soda
2 tsp. pumpkin pie spice mix
¼ tsp. salt
3 large eggs
1/3 cup honey
2 cups milk
1 cup pumpkin puree
½ tsp. vanilla extract

Whisk together flours, baking powder, baking soda and salt in bowl. Beat eggs and honey in separate bowl. Whisk in milk, pumpkin puree, vanilla extract and spices. Stir egg mixture into flour mixture and whisk gently. Oil a nonstick skillet or griddle and heat over medium-high heat. Ladle about ½ cup of batter onto skillet for each pancake. Cook 3 minutes, or until bubbles begin to form in center of pancakes. Flip and cook 2 to 3 minutes more, or until pancakes are browned on both sides. Serve warm.

Eggs in a Nest

(from Barbara Kingsolver's book *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*)

This recipe makes dinner for a family of four, but can easily be cut in half. It brings out the best in dark, leafy greens, and it is a staple meal when greens are coming up by the bushel.

2 cups uncooked brown rice
Olive oil – a few tbsp
1 medium onion, chopped, and garlic to taste
Carrots, chopped
½ cup dried tomatoes
1 *really large* bunch of chard, coarsely chopped (or any other greens)
8 eggs

Cook rice with 4 cups water in a covered pot while other ingredients are being prepared. Sauté onions and garlic in olive oil in a wide skillet until lightly golden. Add and sauté for a few more minutes, adding just enough water to rehydrate the tomatoes. Mix the greens with other vegetables and cover pan for a few minutes. Uncover, stir well, then use the back of a spoon to make depressions in the cooked leaves, circling the pan like numbers on a clock. Break an egg into each depression, being careful to keep yolks whole. Cover pan again and allow eggs to poach for 3 to 5 minutes. Remove from heat and serve over rice.