

AJO COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE



Summer 2009 / Week 11 of 13

Editor: Nina Altshul Layout: Peter Altshul

Planned harvest: Asian Pears (double share), Watermelon, Green Beans, Sweet Corn (Truckers Delight), Red LaSoda Potatoes, Sweet Potatoes, Anaheim Chiles.

Fall 2009 Session Registration Now Open! The Ajo CSA Fall Session runs for 12 weeks from the beginning of September through the end of November, and the cost of a produce share is \$240. The farm accepts both checks and cash; checks should be made out to Crooked Sky Farms – Ajo CSA. You can pay the entire amount at once, at the beginning of the session (due by August 31 at the latest), or in two installments: \$120 before the beginning of the session and \$120 after 6 weeks. Half-shares are not available from the farm but can be arranged within the group if enough notice is given. Gas money contributions will be calculated according to the number of registered members at the end of August, and will probably run around 4-5 dollars a week per share. Please pick up your copy of the contract at the pick-up, or download it from your email, fill it out, and turn it in when you submit your payment.

Food demo featuring CSA produce: In honor of National Health Center Week, Ajo's own Desert Senita Community Health Center is organizing a series of activities from Monday, August 10th through Friday, August 14th. Among others, join State Representatives during the Annual Open House on Thursday, August 13th between 3 pm and 5 pm. On Friday, August 14th, Chef Cheralyn Schmidt from Tucson will prepare a food demonstration featuring new WIC food package, using tofu, brown rice and "glorious greens". Crooked Sky Farms has provided Glendale Gold onions for the demo, as well as a variety of melons for refreshment afterwards. The day's theme for discussion will be the local food movement. Ajo CSA and the Ajo Community Garden Consortium will offer information about locally available produce.

The Impact of Common Foods Before They Reach Your Plate Check out this interactive web tool that shows you how some of the most popular foodstuffs in the U.S. are made, with an emphasis on how fossil fuels enter into the production chain. The amount of fossil-fuel energy used to make a steak, potato, soda and an organic salad may just surprise you!

<http://news21.jomc.unc.edu/index.php/stories/diet/from-pasture-to-plate.html>

Green beans: Beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*) are indigenous to Central American and the Andean regions of South America. They came in a range of varieties, sizes and colors, and string or green beans are among the most widely used garden vegetables in the U.S. Nutritionally this early, fresh phase of the bean is not as high in protein as its mature relative, the dried bean, however, its amounts of vitamins A, B1, and B2, calcium, and potassium make it more than worthwhile to put them on our plates.

Storage tip: Refrigerate fresh in a plastic bag, and use as soon as possible. They will keep well for about a week.

Cooking tips: Remove strings and stems of fresh beans before cooking. Beans retain more nutrients when cooked uncut. Steam or simmer in boiling water for 5-10 minutes. Watch carefully for beans to brighten in color and become tender, but not soft or mushy. If intending to serve fresh beans chilled, cook less to retain more crispiness. Use fresh greens in soups, stews, salads (try adding them to your favorite potato salad!), add to your pasta or pilaf, as a side dish, or go ahead and pickle them (see recipe below)! And have you ever tried roasted green beans? Green beans marry well with a great range of spices, from Asian, Indian and Mediterranean to Mexican, so don't be afraid to experiment!

Melon of the Week: The Crimson Sweet Watermelon, large oval melons averaging 25 lbs., light green with dark green stripes. The flesh is dark red, firm and fine-textured. This heirloom variety is nearly seedless and packs a wonderful watermelon punch. Perfect for a long, hot summer day!

RECIPES ETC.

Nina's Green Beans with Caramelized Onions

Slice about 3-4 small Glendale Gold Onions (or 1-2 regular yellow onions) into thin slices and cook very slowly in little olive oil and about ¼ cup of balsamic vinegar until very soft, about an hour. The onions should almost “melt”. Stir occasionally, and add oil and balsamic vinegar once or twice if they look dry. Season with salt and pepper. Cook beans in boiling salted water until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes. Drain and serve topped with the onions.

Zydeco Green Beans

(adapted from *From Asparagus to Zucchini*, by the Madison Area CSA Coalition)

6-12 sliced garlic cloves
6 teaspoons yellow mustard seeds
3 pounds green beans, trimmed
6-12 small hot peppers
6 dill heads or 6 teaspoons dill weed
3 ½ cups white wine vinegar (no substitutes!)
2 Tbsp pickling salt
3 ½ cups water

If you've never canned food before, read about it in a reputable cookbook before proceeding. Sterilize 6 pint jars. Divide garlic, mustard seeds, beans, peppers, and dill into jars. Bring vinegar, salt, and water to a boil; pour over beans, leaving ½ inch head space. Place lids on jars, and process 5 minutes in a boiling water bath. Age the pickles at least one month before snacking on them.

Nina's Pest-toed Roasted Green Bean Salad

1 lb green beans
5 cloves of garlic
1-2 Tbsp good olive oil
Salt, to taste
2 Tbsp pecans (or walnuts or pine nuts), gently toasted
1 Tbsp white wine vinegar (or as a variation, lemon juice or balsamic vinegar)
2 Tbsp Parmigiano Reggiano, freshly grated, or more to taste
Pepper, to taste
Basil, optional

Wash and trim the green beans. If your beans are bigger, steam them for about 2-3 minutes before proceeding. Separate and peel garlic cloves, and slice them. Combine the garlic and beans with the olive oil and salt in a large

bowl and mix gently. If you wish, add some crumbled dried chile or Italian peperoncini. Transfer to a large baking sheet, and roast them at 400°F for about 30 minutes. They are done when they have a somewhat blistered look and are beginning to brown in spots. Remove from the oven (they are delicious as is, served as finger food, warm or at room temperature). For the salad, transfer to a serving bowl, sprinkle with vinegar, add pepper, nuts and some cheese and mix gently. If you happen to have any fresh basil, tear the leaves into smallish pieces and mix in as well. Serve with more cheese grated on top, warm or at room temperature.

Nina's CSA Creamy Corn Chowder (vegan)

Take 3 CSA ears of corn, remove the kernels and set them aside while you start on a stock (or omit the next step and use your favorite broth powder, bouillon or packaged stock).

Halve the cobs and put into a pot. Add a few carrots, preferably with the tops, a few sprigs of parsley, a leek (optional), a bay leaf, a few peppercorns, a few celery stalks, 2 small Glendale Golds, halved, with skins and all, a few cloves of garlic, a grating of nutmeg, and salt to taste. Boil for at least an hour and a half. Strain, and discard all the veggies. (This stock also freezes well, and makes for quick and easy preparations once done.)

In a clean pot, start 2 Tbsp of olive oil (or substitute some butter for a non-vegan version), add 2-3 Glendale Gold onions, minced, 4-6 CSA Red LaSoda potatoes cubed into small cubes, and the corn kernels. Sauté lightly, add a clove of chopped garlic, stir, then add just enough corn cob stock to cover, bring to a boil, and simmer for about 20 min. Take about a third of the soup and blend it, then return to the pot and bring to a boil again. Turn it off, adjust the salt and pepper, and serve, sprinkled with fresh Italian flat-leaf parsley.

Nina's August Wheat Berry Salad

Soak and cook 1 CSA portion of wheat berries until tender but chewy, and chill. Wash and trim 1 CSA portion of green beans, cut into 1 inch pieces, steam for about 5 min. and let cool. Remove kernels from 2 CSA ears of corn. Roast your Anaheim chiles until they start to blister, then chill in a plastic bag. Remove skin and seeds and chop into small pieces. Slice and chop 1 CSA cucumber, chop 1 or 2 fresh tomatoes (if you have no fresh tomatoes, substitute sun-dried tomatoes). Combine all the ingredients in a serving bowl. Serve with vinaigrette: 3 Tbsp olive oil, 1 Tbsp white wine vinegar or lemon juice, salt, pepper, herbs, garlic and onion.