

PCSA for August 25, 2004

Pickup is today between 4 and 7 pm. If you are picking up in Urbana, go to 714 W Iowa; in Champaign go to 701 W Washington St. Produce is in the garages of both locations. Please use the smaller service doors to access the garages.

On the Farm:

Jim and Diann are feeling shorthanded this week with Wes and Aaron heading back to school. "We couldn't hire adults that can work half as hard and half as efficiently as Wes and Aaron do," says Diann. "We really miss them when they go back to school." In honor of a summer of hard work, Jim and Diann took the boys out to their favorite restaurant on Sunday. Between rains, construction continues on the new greenhouse/poly barn and the Moores are contemplating a second one. "We've had consecutive rainy years for the last three years, and it looks like greenhouse/barns may be about the only way we will be able to produce tomatoes and eggplant earlier in the season," says Jim. According to Jim, a second greenhouse also will mean more room for greens which could help with the germination problems that have been plaguing the farm this season.

2005 Share Signup Begins Next Week:

Shares for the upcoming season will go on sale to current shareholders beginning September 1 and to the general public on September 15. As you may have read on the PCSA website, the share season is being extended to April in 2005 thanks to the new greenhouse. You will receive an email as soon as the shares go on sale. Please sign up as soon as possible. We currently have only 23 new spots for next year and a waiting list of 30 as of today. For details, see the contracts link on the PCSA website:
<http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa>

In Your Share Today:

Eggplant, onions, Desiree potatoes (red skins with yellow flesh), German butterball potatoes (all yellow), tomatoes, yellow squash, zucchini, a hot pepper of your choice, and Roma beans. Note: the Romas touch the ground and have received water splash up from the rain, however, the Moores have not washed them prior to delivery in order to keep them from souring. Wash them just before using them.)

Recipe and Produce Suggestions:

Eggplant

Smaller eggplant, can be sliced, dipped in egg or soymilk and seasoned bread crumbs and baked on an oiled cookie sheet. Flip them midway during cooking to brown on both sides. Use as a sandwich filling with pesto mayonnaise, or as an entrée with a tomato sauce. Store in your refrigerator vegetable crisper.

For larger eggplant:

Caponata

1-lb eggplant

salt

olive oil

1 c chopped onions

1/2 c chopped celery

1/2 c peeled, seeded, and chopped tomatoes

1/2 t dried rosemary

1/4 c pitted, halved green olives

1/8 c rinsed and drained capers

3 T red wine vinegar

2 t sugar

Freshly ground pepper

Peel and cube eggplant into 3/4-inch pieces. Salt and let drain for 30 minutes; pat dry. Pour a thin layer of oil into a large frying pan. Sauté half the eggplant until golden brown, 6-10 minutes. Remove to a strainer, drain. Add more oil, sauté the rest of the eggplant, and drain. In the same oil (or add 1 T additional oil if necessary), sauté onions and celery until just tender, then add the toma-toes, and rosemary. Cover pan and cook for 4-5 min., uncover, and cook 5 min. Add the eggplant, olives, and capers. Heat the vinegar and sugar until the sugar dissolves, and pour over the mixture. Simmer, covered, for 5-10 min. Season to taste and cool. Makes 3-4 c. Use to top pasta, bruschetta. Can be served warm or at room temperature.

Onion

Use in Caponata above or in Japanese Style Stewed Potatoes. Or substitute for green onion in potato salad. (see <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/pdf/newsletters/2004/june30.pdf> for recipe) These will store best in your refrigerator crisper drawer.

Potatoes (Pink Desiree and German Butterball)

Japanese Style Stewed Potatoes

Peel 1 pint new potatoes. Cube. Place in small heavy sauce pan. Add water until it just covers potatoes. Bring to boil, skimming foam. After 7 minutes of boiling, add 1 onion, sliced into rings. Cook for five minutes more. Add 3-4 T shoyu and 3 t sugar. Simmer 10 minutes more until potatoes are tender. Adjust shoyu and sugar as necessary. Potatoes should be adequately salted with slight hint of sweetness.

Store potatoes in a cool dry area out of direct light and away from onions which will cause them to sprout. A basket or net bag in a pantry closet is ideal.

Tomatoes

Use in caponata. Chop with minced garlic and basil for a quick no-cook pasta sauce. Or, make salsa.

Tomatoes should be stored on your counter with plenty of air circulation, e.g. in a colander. You can put them in a window sill, though watch that they don't start to overripen.

Hot Pepper

Salsa is a matter of preference, use more or less of any ingredient as you prefer...

2 tomatoes chopped

1 small onion chopped

1 sweet pepper chopped (optional)

1 hot pepper, minced (use less or more if desired)

juice of 1 lime

1 clove garlic, minced (optional)

1-2 T chopped cilantro (optional)

Combine ingredients, let sit for 20 minutes for flavors to develop. Alternatively, use a peach or 2 plums for one tomato, or an equivalent amount of pineapple as PCSA shareholder Corinne Carlson suggests. You can also substitute green onions or yellow for red. For a richer flavor, cut tomatoes and onions in half and grill before adding.

Store hot peppers in your refrigerator. You also can dry them on your counter.

Squash

Slice and saute with chopped onion until onion is translucent. Add 1-2 chopped tomatoes and saute a few minutes more for a quick pasta sauce.

Store in your refrigerator crisper drawer away from any produce in plastic bags to discourage mold.

Roma beans

Remove tips. Slice these Italian-style green beans on the diagonal into 1-2" pieces. Steam, or blanch (boiling water followed by ice water) as you would traditional green beans until tender crisp. Here's a good way to use your beans and any red cabbage you may still have:

Penne and Roma Bean Salad

6 ounces penne pasta

1/2 pound fresh Roma beans, trimmed and cut diagonally into 1-inch pieces

1/3 cup Italian salad dressing, or herbed vinaigrette

1/2 t dried tarragon, crushed

1/2 t fresh ground black pepper

1 c finely shredded raw red cabbage

4 c mixed salad greens

2 oz Gorgonzola or other blue cheese (optional)

Cook pasta, adding beans during last 5 minutes of cooking. Drain. Rinse with cool water. Whisk together dressing, tarragon, and pepper. Toss dressing with pasta, beans, and cabbage. For each serving, place a mound of pasta mixture on top of greens. Sprinkle with crumbled cheese if using. Serves 3