

Prairieland Community Supported Agriculture
Week 8 – June 20, 2007

Important Notes:

Please do not take the green plastic containers for the tomatoes today. You may bring a plastic bag or other container to take yours home in.

Pickup for the week of July 4 will be on TUESDAY, July 3 between 4pm and 7 pm.

Heat Harvest Continues

Last week, the Moores had to begin harvesting the last of the spring vegetables before they bolted. However, the summer vegetables are now coming on like gangbusters due to the heat, as well. This situation is continuing this week and today will be another big share. Much can change on the farm in a week, as I learned once again having written the newsletter before I went on vacation. Sorry to not have been more accurate, but hopefully the surprise you got when you picked up your share was a good one.

Like much of the region Watseka has been caught in a dry weather pattern See the NOAA summary for more details on why this was occurring <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lot/?n=drought>. However, the Moores did receive a half inch in the last two days which should be enough to get the winter squashes sprouted. With any luck, rainfall will be more prevalent in the coming weeks.

In Your Share Today:

Beets with tops, cherry tomatoes (full pint), 1 large or 2 small turnips with tops, 1 cucumber, broccoli, zucchini, summer squash, green onions, radishes, lettuce, and for the first time in PCSA history...cauliflower!!!

Totebags

Need a big tote for all your produce? If you are interested in ordering a totebag, please call 355-6279 or email info@prairielandcsa.org. We only need 24 more to complete the order with Weiskamp. For more details, see <http://www.prairienet.org/pcsa/totebag.html>

Recipes and Storage Tips:

If you want to use your vegetables in mass this week, check out the basic stir fry, frittata, pilaf, and pizza recipes on pages 34, 23, 35, 37 of recipes from America's Small Farms, respectively. Otherwise, here are some suggestions for preparations for individual vegetables.

Beets

Roast them in the oven or on the grill. Peel and cube. Alternatively, peel and slice and steam. Dress cooked beets with salt, pepper, olive oil, and balsamic vinegar, and a bit of dried, crumbled rosemary or fresh chopped. Add some crumbled blue cheese, feta, or drier goat cheese and walnuts or pine nuts. Very pretty on top of a bed of lettuce or sautéed greens. Saute a clove of chopped garlic in olive oil, add torn beet greens and

turnip tops and cover for a minute or two to steam. Add a splash of red wine or berry vinegar and call it done.

Cherry Tomatoes

Toss halved cherry tomatoes with cooked penne pasta. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and thinly sliced fresh basil or chopped fresh Italian parsley, drizzle with olive oil. Add cubed mozzarella if desired.

Alternatively, slice cherry tomatoes in half and use in Tuscan Bread Salad on page 161 of Recipes from America's Small Farms. Substitute green onions for the red.

Turnips

Peel and julienne cut. Toss with equal amounts of sugar, rice wine vinegar, and water, for a crunchy side for stir fries or other Asian fare.

Cucumber

The easiest way to remove the seeds is to use a spoon. Even if you aren't serving the seeds to your guests, don't toss them out as this is where the vitamins tend to hang out. Same with tomatoes.

If you want paper thin ribbons of cucumber or squash in record time, the best tool is a mandoline. You can buy inexpensive ones at AM-KO and Green Onion for about \$15. Be careful with this tool, which is affectionately known at our house as the finger flayer.

Seeded, thinly sliced cucumber ribbons can be salted with kosher or sea salt for 15 minutes, rinsed, squeezed, and then dressed with a little soy sauce, a splash of rice wine vinegar, and a few drops of sesame oil. Add a few flakes of red chili if you like heat.

Alternatively, combine thinly sliced cucumber and chopped green onion with yogurt, salt, and pepper, and fresh or dried dill weed.

Broccoli

Steaming this vegetable is the way to go. A recently released study showed that a significant portion of broccoli's vitamins and antioxidants are lost with boiling or blanching. If you don't own a vegetable steamer, you can steam broccoli or other vegetables with a stainless steel folding metal steamer rack in a conventional pan, or with a steamer rack in some rice cookers. Steamed broccoli is great with just a sprinkling of lemon juice.

Zucchini and Summer Squash

Thinly sliced ribbons of squash are excellent sautéed with a bit of garlic in olive oil and tossed with pastas like fettucine. Or, use them as a bed for fish, tofu, or other entrees.

Radishes

Steaming or roasting is the way to go if you must cook these. Try them thinly sliced on buttered bread for sandwiches. Or slice and top with herbed butter for a nice appetizer.

Green Onions

You can almost always use green onions in any recipe that calls for regular onions. Try them in pasta salads, in soups-especially miso, or in salsas.

Lettuce

Salads are always a sure bet with lettuce. But putting a few leaves under other entrees and salads like tofu is a great way to add vitamins, fiber, and color. If you are trying to lose a few pounds this summer, putting your food on lettuce is a great way to make smaller portions look larger.

Cauliflower

Try cauliflower cheese pie on page 74. You can make it with or without the potato crust.

Questions, comments, or have a recipe you'd like to share? email info@prairielandcsa.org or call 355-6279