

Prairieland Community Supported Agriculture 2009 - Week 10

Pickup begins at 4 pm and runs through 7 pm in the garages at 714 W Iowa in Urbana, Illinois and 701 W Washington in Champaign, Illinois.

From the Farm

Still trying to get straw baled and put up. Spending a lot of time in the greenhouse which is about 15 degrees warmer than outside – just a bit muggy.

Today's Haul

Red cabbage, eggplant 1 big Italian or 3 Asian your choice, 5 summer squash / zucchini, broccoli / cauliflower, romaine lettuce, 9 tomatoes (3 slicers, and 6 others), 1 full size cucumber, mini sweet corn 3 ears (not completely filled due to drought, but enough to provide a taste of things to come).

Please do not shuck corn in the garages of our volunteer hosts.

Recipes and Serving Suggestions

Sweet Corn

Less is more with corn. The less time it takes to get it from the field to your pot, the less time you cook it--3 minutes or less--all add up to better tasting corn. Storing it for longer periods of time or cooking it longer reduces its sweetness.

Corn is a natural with tart greens like arugula and mustard, as well as with salty flavors like bacon. My older sister serves corn on the cob with lime juice, salt, and smoked chipotle. My youngest sister makes a simple salad with cooked corn cut off the cob, chopped tomatoes, chopped onions, and a vinaigrette dressing with basil or parsley. Sometimes she throws in a few black beans. You could add some of this week's cucumber as well. You also can add cooked corn to your favorite salsa recipe.

Or add a handful of fresh corn to these pancakes when you're cooking them and top with salsa for a savory brunch dish or quick evening meal.

Cornmeal Pancakes

1 c yellow cornmeal
1/2 c all-purpose flour
1 1/2 t sugar or more to taste
1/2 t salt
1/2 t baking soda
1/2 t baking powder (see note above)
1 c buttermilk or plain yogurt, or soy yogurt
1/4 c milk or soymilk
2 T vegetable oil
1 large egg or equivalent egg replacer

Mix the dry ingredients together in a large bowl. Mix the buttermilk, milk, oil and eggs together and stir into dry ingredients until just mixed. Let batter sit for 5 to 10 minutes. Cook on a medium hot griddle. If batter is too thick, thin with a little more milk.

Corn and Goat Cheese Pudding

You may remember this recipe from a few months ago. It is perfect with corn.

2 c fresh corn

3 green onions or equivalent yellow onion

1 T vegetable oil

salt and pepper to taste

1 T chopped fresh thyme or 1 t dried

2 T unsalted butter (or use salted and cut back on salt above)

2 T flour

1 c milk

Pinch cayenne

2 eggs separated

4 to 6 ounces of mild goat cheese or cream cheese

3 T Parmesan, grated

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a 1 quart casserole dish. In a large skillet, saute onion in 1 T vegetable oil until softened, add corn. Warm through and set aside. Add butter to skillet. When melted, add flour to make a paste. Slowly add milk and cook for about 5 minutes until smooth and thick. Cook for 5 minutes more. Add salt, pepper, and cayenne to taste. Stir in thyme. Allow to cool for a few minutes. Beat in egg yolks one at a time. Stir in greens and onions. Stir in goat cheese and Parmesan. In a clean bowl, beat egg whites. Quickly fold egg whites into goat cheese mixture and pour mixture into casserole. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes until a knife comes out clean.

Eggplant

Eggplant is the tofu of produce, taking on any flavors it's paired with. Try one of the eggplant dips on page 156 of Recipes from America's Small Farms. Alternatively, you can poke it a few times with a fork, wrap it in foil and put it a heavy skillet on top of the stove or on the grill to speed the process and keep heat out of your house.

Peel large eggplants and slice into 1/4-inch slices. Or, just slice Asian eggplants into 1/4-inch slices without peeling. Dip in a little beaten egg with a teaspoon or two of water and then into seasoned breadcrumbs. Saute in olive oil until brown on both sides. Top with a "salsa" of chopped tomato, minced garlic, and thinly sliced basil.

Red Cabbage

Shareholder Sonya Newmark's recipe is a perennial favorite:

Danish Red Cabbage

1 lg cabbage (less than 3.5 lb)

1 / 4 c butter

3 T sugar

3 T vinegar

100 ml cranberry juice

Thinly slice cabbage and place in a large covered saucepan . Add remaining ingredients. Steam covered at very low heat for 1.5 hours. Cook without lid to evaporate some but not all of liquid for 1/2 hour. The cabbage should have at least an inch of liquid throughout the cooking time, add more cranberry juice if necessary. Serve warm as a side dish. Or, eat cold as a salad, on sandwiches with hard boiled egg, or in place of coleslaw as part of a California reuben.

Or, save your cabbage in the fridge for a few weeks and make freezer slaw when the rest of the ingredients make their way into the local marketplace:

Freezer Slaw

1 cabbage (red is prettier for this), cored and shredded
1 carrot, peeled and shredded
1 green pepper, chopped (optional)
1 sweet onion, chopped
1 t salt
1 c vinegar
1 c sugar
1 t celery seed

Combine vegetables. Let stand 1 hour. Boil together vinegar, sugar, and celery seed. Cool and pour over slaw. Put in containers and freeze or use now.

Zucchini / Summer Squash and Broccoli / Cauliflower

You know the drill. If not, see <http://www.prairielandcsa.org/newsletters.html> for recipes and suggestions from previous weeks.

Romaine Lettuce

This is some of the prettiest lettuce ever. If you're up for it, here's the classic Caesar Salad recipe. Sadly anchovies were a later addition. To be truly authentic, prepare it table side. <http://www.reluctantgourmet.com/ntpcaesar.htm> Don't know how to coddled eggs? No problem: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coddled_egg

Tomatoes

Penne al Pomodoro is a great way to enjoy this week's tomatoes:

Boil 8 oz penne pasta in salted water, and drain. Meanwhile, dice 2 tomatoes and thinly slice about a dozen basil leaves and/or equivalent amount of Italian parsley. Mince 1 clove garlic. Heat 1 to 2 T of olive oil in a large skillet. Saute garlic. When you can smell the garlic but it hasn't colored, add tomatoes and basil. Cook just until tomatoes soften. Toss pasta into sauce. Add a handful of fresh mozzarella and grate on a little parmesan if desired.

Chez Pim has a tip for fresher tasting cooked pasta sauce that's ready in 15 minutes

<http://www.chezpim.com/blogs/2008/09/fifteen-minutes.html>

Have a recipe you'd like to share, or questions, comments, suggestions? Don't hesitate to email info@prairielandcsa.org or call 355-6279.