

Community CROPS

Community Supported Agriculture 2008

4 August 2008---Monday, Week Nine

What's in the box:

Tomatoes !!

Genovese Basil

Lettuce

Papalo

Potatoes (Onaway, All
Blue Cranberry Red,
and Yukon Gold)

Zucchini, Yellow Squash

Patty Pan Squash (f)

Eggplant (full)

Cucumber

Writing the CSA Newsletter brings back memories of the first year of the CSA when Community CROPS had just two staff and a lot of learning to do--it is amazing to see how far we have come over four seasons of growing and marketing fresh vegetables. We've got a great farm manager and two interns this year who work hard every day to grow you your vegetables. They also work with our five farm families at the farm, who have been selling quite a bit of food and have learned a lot already this year.

In addition to the farm staff and myself, Brad Kindler is our assistant director (and the other person who worked on the CSA with me that first year), who does amazing work with kids, seniors, bees and community gardens. We have two AmeriCorps members who help us out on just about everything and make a big difference. Our newest staff member is Juan, the CROPS Farmers' Market Manager.

In addition to the farm, Community CROPS has 13 community garden locations this year at a variety of locations all across Lincoln. You may have seen the one at 46th and Pioneers or the Antelope Church of the Brethren on Normal Blvd, but did you know about the garden behind the Indian Center, or the one at Rosemont Church on North 70th? We have a total of 150 families growing food this year. Community CROPS provides the tools, seeds, plants and water, and various individuals and organizations provide land for growing beautiful gardens. One of the gardeners told me recently that she has really enjoyed the garden, not just the great food for her family, but getting to know the neighbors and the neighborhood better as she walks over to her plot. Community gardens do make it possible for people to grow food, but more importantly, they create community and connect us all.

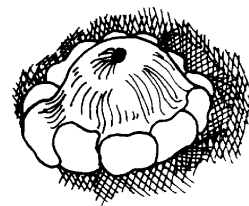
-- by Ingrid Kirst, CROPS Executive Director

About your veggies...

Papalo is an herb, similar to cilantro used in Mexican cooking. The name comes from the word papalotl, Nahuatl for butterfly. It is typically used raw to flavor tacos filled with guacamole or carnitas (pork). The herb must be used fresh as it does not dry well. Like cilantro the herb is quite pungent and is an acquired taste. Enriqueta, who grows it at our farm suggests using it on sandwiches or in a salad. (See also the recipe below.)

The tomatoes are from Khalaf, a long-time farm project participant, who grows great tomatoes. He also sells them weekly at the Sunday market.

The Patty Pan Squash may look a little different as a small, flat, round white squash, but it is delicious. You can slice it up and use it like you would the summer squash or zucchini.



Recipes

PAPALO SALSA Source: <http://www.gourmetsleuth.com/papalo.htm>

2 roasted and deseeded chopped chili peppers	1/2 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
2 roasted and deseeded chopped green peppers,	1 teaspoon vegetable oil
3 small green tomatoes, chopped	salt
4 roasted garlic cloves	2 spoonfuls of minced onion
6 papalo leaves	

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor & put in refrigerator at least 1 hour before serving.

BAKE OVER

This recipe is adapted from www.maryjanesfarm.com/bakeover. It is a delicious way to use up a mix of any kind of vegetables. See the website for more ideas along this theme.

- 4-5 cups of vegetables (can be just about anything, such as kale, cabbage, beets, potatoes, garlic, basil, onions, carrots, peppers, greens, etc.)
- 1/2 cup cheese (optional)
- Biscuit dough (Use your favorite recipe or even a mix. About 2 cups of flour, with the other ingredients adjusted to the right ratio seemed to be the right amount.)

Saute your vegetables in an oven-safe skillet but don't entirely cook them. Mix in the cheese, if using. Cover the pan completely with the biscuit dough and bake for about 30 minutes or until golden brown.

You can bake it in the oven at 350 degrees for 30 minutes, or just keep the skillet on the stove and bake the biscuits like you would dumplings. It'd also probably work well in a solar oven.

BASIL AND ALMOND PESTO (from Verdura, Vegetables Italian Style)

Makes approximately 1/2 cup

2 cups fresh basil, stems removed	1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil, divided
4 garlic cloves, peeled	1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 cup blanched almonds	Salt and black pepper to taste

Place basil, garlic, and almonds in a food processor and process until everything is chopped to a rough or fine consistency, depending on your preference. (A blender also works fine, just add the oil at the beginning.) Add the remaining ingredients and serve. Store refrigerated in a tightly closed container.

GRILLED VEGGIE PACKETS

Chop a variety of fresh vegetables, potatoes, squash, beets and eggplant work well. Add fresh herbs, such as basil or oregano, and olive oil. Mix it thoroughly. Place about 1 1/2 cups of vegetable mix in a large foil square and fold it up so it is tightly sealed. Put on a pre-heated grill on medium-high and bake about 15 minutes or until vegetables are thoroughly cooked. Open very carefully and serve with grilled bread or meats.