



SUNSHINE IN A BOX



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 CSA Week 12

IN THIS ISSUE

Ripe for Harvest

Farm Update

This time of year many vegetables are in full production and I harvest every day to keep up. I am also getting in the last of fall plantings and preparing for the winter growing season. It is a time of year in our part of the world when we are spiraled out to the most expanded and active above ground activity—we have to store the sun's energy now for use in the depths of winter. Some examples are the ripening butternut squash,

blanching and freezing beans, the chickens replacing their coat of feathers, and planting winter vegetables. I think of this time of year as a second spring.

I hope to use the new caterpillar tunnel for some winter growing, but in the meantime it is great to have tomatoes protected from frequent rain. This allows me to manage disease without the use of fungicide and to protect from damaging wind.

With this vibrant first quarter waxing moon, brilliant red sunsets, and potential for thunderstorms, it is as if Mother Nature is

saying to take action! It is both exciting and overwhelming to bring in this season's bounty and I am taking note of all the beauty to remember on a cold day later. I hope you are enjoying the bounty of the season and getting through this time with good food.

Farm Updates
Half and Full Egg Shares
Week 12 Produce
Recipes

Cucumber Sauce
Simplified Green Bean casserole



Week 12 Veggies

Cucumbers: Varieties are Suyo Long, Marketmore, and/or Straight 8. Try a cucumber salad with radish, scallion, mint, and a dash of sesame oil and rice vinegar. More cucumbers should be coming!

Radish: Remove radish tops from root and remove rubber band. Store greens in a bag with a paper towel. Green tops can be stir fried, or added to a miso soup, or roasted with radishes.

Scallions: Tokyo long white bunching onions can be thin sliced on a bias using both the green and white portion. Add to stir fry, miso soup, salads, or casseroles. Store in bag with radish tops to keep moist.

Swiss Chard: Spinach of the summer- large leaves can be sautéed, juiced, added to radish tops for cooking in soup or stir fry, cooked with butter, cream, and nutmeg, or try the swiss chard gratin.

Little Gem Romaine: Miracle lettuce

that survived hail and the heat wave! Make a salad with the cucumber sauce or use for tomato sandwiches.

Tomatoes: Green Zebra and other heirloom tomatoes plus more cherry and grape varieties from the caterpillar tunnel. Tomatoes should keep coming.

Mint: A cooling and refreshing herb for cooking or an herbal infusion. Add cucumbers to an infusion for extra hydration.

Beans: To tenderize larger beans, trim ends, cut into 1 inch pieces, and blanch in salted, boiling water for 1-3 minutes. Add to a casserole for a satisfying side dish.

Full shares: Also receive baby Bok Choi and onion. Bok choy can be added to stir fry, soup, or eaten fresh in a salad. It can be thin sliced and marinated almost like a cole slaw.



Recipes

Cucumber Sauce

½ cucumber, grated
 1 cup yogurt
 Juice of ½ lemon
 ¼ teaspoon sugar
 1 clove garlic, grated or minced

Salt and pepper to taste
 Fresh chopped mint (5-10 leaves)

Wash cucumber and grate using the large size on a box grater. Sprinkle with salt and set in a colander over a bowl for 5-10 minutes. Press to squeeze out excess moisture.

Combine yogurt, lemon juice, salt and pepper, sugar and garlic and stir until smooth. Add cucumber and fresh chopped mint and stir to combine. Sauce will store in the fridge for up to 3 days.

Simplified Green Bean Casserole

1 lb fresh beans
 1 teaspoon herbes de province
 1 lb fresh mushrooms (shitake, button, and/or cremini)
 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
 ½ yellow onion, sliced
 ½ stick butter

3 Tablespoons flour
 1 cup milk
 ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
 ¼ cup sour cream
 Dash of white pepper
 Panko bread crumbs

Boil a large pot of water and heat oven to 375 degrees. Butter an 8x8 casserole or baking dish.

To prepare beans, trim the stem end and then cutting into 1 inch pieces. Blanch the beans in batches in boiling salted water for 2-3 minutes and shock in ice water, allowing water to come to a boil between batches. Transfer cooled beans to a colander to drain. Set aside.

In a sauté pan, heat oil over medium heat. Slice onion half lengthwise, and slice mushrooms. Add mushrooms, onion, and herbes de province to sauté pan and sweat over medium heat until softened and slightly caramelized but not browned, about 10 minutes. Turn off heat and set aside.

To make the béchamel sauce, heat 3 tablespoons butter in a heavy pot over medium heat. Sprinkle flour over the butter and mix. Cook flour and butter until the mixture is golden, about 5 minutes. Add milk while whisking and increase heat to medium high. Add nutmeg and white pepper. Continue cooking, whisking occasionally, until the sauce has thickened and coats the back of a spoon. Stir in sour cream and whisk until combined.

Add the beans half the onion and mushroom mixture to the béchamel sauce and stir until coated. Pour the mixture into the casserole dish and spread out into an even layer. Spread the remaining onion and mushroom mixture over the top. Sprinkle evenly with breadcrumbs and dot with butter. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 30-40 minutes, removing the foil for the last 5-10 minutes until the casserole is bubbling and golden. Cool for 10 minutes before enjoying.