

Berries on Bryan Station CSA Farm

Newsletter #12

August 11th and 12th, 2010



“Awesome tomatoes”

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Coming up

- ⇒ tomatoes
- ⇒ peppers
- ⇒ Butternut squash
- ⇒ Acorn Squash

"At home I serve the kind of food I know the story behind.

- Michael Pollan

Welcome to your twelfth basket pickup! We have another outstanding basket for you:

Greens

We plan to have Swiss chard, Pak Choi and kale this week.

Tomatoes

This will be a big week for tomatoes! Just like



last week, each member will be able to choose from an excellent selection of wonderful tomatoes! Some of the names of tomato varieties that you will receive include: Jeanne Flambe, brandywine, purple Russian, golden jubilee, mortgage lifter, and pineapple among many others.

Herbs

We will have Holy basil, nufar basil, oregano, parsley, rosemary, and

sage. Holy basil is named after Jerusalem where it is from.

Cut Flowers

Everyone will be able to choose an arrangement of zinnias and sunflowers.

Choice Table

We plan to have eggplant, blackberries, peppers, okra, royal burgundy and French travera beans, kale, Swiss chard, cucumbers, beets and summer squash on the choice table this week.



Around the Farm

We have enjoyed the spell of dry weather to catch up on our weeding.

Thank you for keeping your “veggie dollars” local. Go forth and be



healthy! We'll see you this week!

Going on vacation?

Please let us know in advance and we'll have an extra basket for you upon returning. In order to make certain we prepare enough baskets for everyone, we do need to know in advance. Thanks!

Our Members

Please let us know if we can help you help each other. We continue to list several of our members' business links on Page 4 of the newsletter and are always happy to add more. Contact us if you'd like to promote your local business or if you have a website link to share.

Deb Outland's little cooking corner ...

It's Tomato Time!

This year there is a bumper crop of tomatoes! Gayle says she feels like Bubba from the movie *Forrest Gump*, except she's thinking about endless recipes using tomatoes instead of shrimp! That's great for us! We get lots of them in our baskets. What to do with them? Well, let me put on my Bubba hat, and we'll see! Fresh homegrown tomatoes are one of the true delights of summer. This time of year there are just so many great things to do with those fresh tomatoes, even after you've had all the Bacon and Tomato sandwiches your diet will allow and you're bored with sliced tomatoes at every meal—ratatouille, fresh tomato sauce for pasta, salsa, tomato salads, roasted tomatoes, grilled tomatoes, tomato sandwiches, hamburgers on the grill with tomatoes, tomato pie, scalloped tomatoes, even tomato dumplings! Eat as many as you can while they are here, because when it gets even a little cool, they'll be gone. At least till next year! If you have favorite tomato (or other) recipes, let us post them here in the cooking corner. Send them to me at djo@insightbb.com, or on Facebook, where I'm Deborah Outland. Happy Cooking!

If you are lucky enough to have a few leftovers, or a lot, try some of these ideas for keeping them for later.



Freeze Them

Tomatoes can be frozen successfully in a variety of forms. If you love the flavor of fresh lightly-cooked tomatoes, you can have it! Raw tomatoes are a toss-up, though. Extension services say that they will develop an off flavor and become very watery and mushy, but other sources disagree. My suggestion is to try a few if you want, and judge for yourself. Here are guidelines for successful tomato freezing.

Choose tomatoes that are ripe and wholesome. Wash thoroughly, and (if desired) peel by blanching in boiling water to loosen skins. Core tomatoes, and cut up as desired.

For Raw tomatoes, be sure to pack them tightly in containers or freezer bags, getting rid of as much air as possible from bags. Freeze them whole or cut up. Peeling is recommended.

For stewed tomatoes: Simmer the tomatoes (cut in wedges or cubes) until fairly tender (10 to 20 minutes). Cool and freeze in zip bags or containers.

Juice or light sauce: Simmer unpeeled chopped tomatoes until tender, and then press through a sieve or food mill to remove seeds and peels. Freeze in zipper bags or containers.

Make your favorite spaghetti sauce, salsa, or



other cooked tomato product as usual and freeze it in recipe-size quantities. Use zipper bags or containers as you prefer. When freezing these items, remember that the seasoning will remain much more like it was when first made than if the product is canned. Salsa doesn't have to be as acid as a salsa that is intended to be canned, and you can stir in fresh basil just before freezing spaghetti sauce, as long as it isn't going to be cooked for a long time after thawing. This is one of the major advantages to freezing, so capitalize on it!

Other tips: zipper bags, if properly filled (not too full) and stacked in the freezer, are probably the most space-efficient way to store "soupy" foods like tomatoes. To thaw, slide the unopened bag into warm water in the sink, and let sit until thawed enough to use. The time varies with the food, but is usually in the neighborhood of an hour. For many recipes, this is not needed. Just add the frozen tomatoes to the pot, and they will melt quickly in the heat.

Putting the tomatoes in 2-cup and 4-cup portions allows you to substitute a bag of frozen tomatoes for a 16 or 28 oz can of tomatoes. If you use tomatoes in other quantities, consider making no-waste portions for those circumstances too.

Canning Tomatoes

Of course you might want to can tomatoes. I've done that many times, and canned tomatoes are con-

venient, don't take up freezer space, and are safely canned in a water-bath canner as opposed to a pressure canner. If you want to try this, get yourself a reliable canning reference book, such as Putting Foods By, my favorite, or The Ball Blue Book, which is also very reliable. Follow their instructions to the letter! If you do, you'll love the result. If you don't it can be very unpleasant! Properly canned food is very safe, but improperly canned food is at best smelly garbage, and at worst deadly. The County Extension Service can help you with questions.

Drying or dehydrating tomatoes

Oven or dehydrator drying tomatoes is another good option. These tomatoes taste fantastic, and you can substitute them for purchased sun-dried tomatoes in recipes. Last year's newsletter for August 5 and 6 has instructions for slow-roasted tomatoes (oven method).



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Deb Outland's little cooking corner ...

(continued from Page 2)

It's easy, and you don't even have to peel the tomatoes. If you're going to be home all day, the oven method works well. It is even easier if you have a dehydrator, since you almost don't have to watch them at all. It takes a little while to get the tomatoes ready, but then you just pop them in the very low temperature oven for the rest of the day, and peek at them every couple of hours to check them for doneness. Once dried or roasted, pop them in a freezer container and keep them individually frozen for later use.



Summer Panzanella



This Ina Garten recipe is delicious, and you can make it almost entirely with herbs and vegetables from Berries on Bryan Station! This Italian favorite is a perfect summer meal for a hot day. Enjoy!

3 Tbsp olive oil
6 cups 1-inch cubes of sturdy Italian Bread (1 small loaf)
1 tsp kosher salt
2 large tomatoes, cut into 1-inch

cubes
1 cucumber, seeded, and sliced 1/2" thick
2 bell peppers, cut into 1-inch cubes
1/2 red onion, cut in half and thinly sliced
20 large basil leaves, coarsely chopped
3 Tbsp capers, drained

For the vinaigrette

1 tsp finely minced garlic
1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
3 Tbsp champagne vinegar
1/3 cup olive oil
1/2 tsp kosher salt
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the oil in a large saute pan. Add the bread and salt; cook over low to medium heat, tossing frequently, for 10 minutes, or until nicely browned. Add more oil as needed.
2. For the vinaigrette, whisk together the ingredients.
3. In a large bowl, mix the tomatoes, cucumber, red pepper, yellow pepper, red onion, basil, and capers. Add the bread cubes and toss with the vinaigrette. Season liberally with salt and pepper.
4. Serve immediately, or allow the salad to sit for about half an hour for the flavors to blend.

Farmgirl Susan's Less Fuss, More Flavor Fresh Pizza Sauce



This totally free-form sauce is such a simple and good way to use tomatoes. Make up a lot, and freeze what you don't use! The amounts are up to your own taste! This recipe is courtesy of the blog Farmgirl Fare.

Olive oil, garlic, peeled and coarsely chopped
Tomatoes, cut into chunks 6 cups should make 2 to 3 cups of sauce
--Fresh basil, more than you think you'll need
--Fresh oregano
Optional: peppers, onion or mushrooms

Peel and chop the garlic. Sprinkle some salt over it, and mash with the side of the knife. Allow this to sit while you prepare the tomatoes and herbs.

Heat the olive oil in a heavy saucepan, then add the garlic and if using, the other vegetables. Cook for 1 to 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Do not allow the garlic to brown. Add the tomatoes, basil, and oregano and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until most of the liquid cooks out. Cooking time will depend on the juiciness of the tomatoes.

When there is still some liquid left in the pan, carefully puree the sauce using a blender, food processor or immersion blender. Bring it back to a boil, and continue simmering until desired consistency. Let cool, then spread on pizza dough, or frozen for later use.

Yeah! Tomatoes!

Berries on Bryan Station CSA Farm USDA Certified Organic

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Join our Facebook fan page and keep up to the minute on what's happening at Berries!

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Berries-on-Bryan-Station-a-Community-Supported-Agriculture-farm/107845789237316?ref=ts>



Reduce and reuse

Please remember to return produce containers to us each week. We reuse many items and accept the following each week: clean/rinsed pint and quart containers, egg cartons and bags of fireplace ashes.

Around the Farm

- There are plenty of toys in the barn for our younger member's entertainment. Please watch your children carefully to make sure they are safe. The concrete floor is hard so please stay close to the rocking horse.
- A rest room is available in the back corner of the barn for members. Please ask children to wash their hands if they have held our chickens.
- Pickup times are your choice of Wednesday & Thursdays from 4-8pm. You can change your day whenever you like by contacting us!
- Got stale bread? Our chickens love it! Feel free to bring yours out on pickup day and watch how excited they'll be to see you!
- Seth Hill from "Lose Your List" will be happy to deliver your basket to you whenever you are unable to come to the farm. For more information visit his website at www.loseyourlist.com.
- Robin Shliakhau, one of our loyal multi-year members, is also a Pampered Chef representative. She has a new catalog that she will be handing out during basket pickups. There are many very useful cooking utensils that will help you cook like a pro! You may email Robin at robinsshliakhau@gmail.com
- Licensed Massage Therapist Maria "Brij" Pagli-alungo, AMTA, provides nourishment for your body, mind and spirit. Since 1994, Maria has provided professional Intuitive Healing Touch for clients of all ages and backgrounds. You may view her flyer on our website at: <http://berriesonbryanstation.com/heartmedicine.pdf>

Freezer Tomato Sauce

This recipe, compliments of Dianaskitchen.com, is one of our members favorites and she promises that no matter what variety mix of tomatoes you use from Berries, it will always taste awesome.

Freezer Tomato Sauce

- 6 pounds ripe tomatoes; peeled, seeded, chopped (about 12 large tomatoes or 18 medium)
- 1 1/2 cups chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 3 large garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

- 2 teaspoons Sugar
- 1 to 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cayenne pepper, seeded and finely chopped OR 1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper
- 2 teaspoons dried crushed oregano
- 1 tablespoon To 2 tbsp. fresh thyme, snipped OR 1 teaspoon To 2 tsp dried crushed thyme

In large pot, cook onions, celery, and garlic in hot oil for about 5 minutes or until tender. Add to-

matoes, sugar, salt, black pepper, and cayenne pepper. Bring to boil; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, about 45 minutes or until desired consistency is reached, stirring occasionally. Add oregano and thyme. Simmer, uncovered, for 15 minutes longer. Cool slightly. In food processor bowl (or blender), process sauce, about 1/4 of the mixture at a time, to desired texture. Place sauce in a bowl; set in ice water to cool quickly. Fill freezer containers; seal tightly, label, and freeze. Makes 6 to 8 cups of tomato sauce.