



COMMUNITY NEWS

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August 23, 2009



by Erin McKinney

Hooray! We still have tomatoes! Thinking back to a month ago when the blight started to cover the area and all the nervousness that ensued, I am grateful to have 40 pound baskets of heirlooms to haul out of the field. Occasionally, hard work does pay off. At the time, I couldn't believe that we wouldn't have tomatoes in August. Not only because we had spent so much time on them since April, but because I have heard people say that tomatoes are a main reason that they would join a CSA. We are still catching up on weeding from weeks ago, but all in all, things are doing well. The fall crops are taking off with the perfect intervals of rain and warm days. I am personally beginning to crave turnips, particularly for split pea soup. (I know - crazy!)

This week we have lettuce again. From our experience, we know everyone likes it. We went a little longer than we would have liked without it, but finally it is time for the summer salads. With red onions, tomatoes and cucumbers to dress it, what could be better?

We will put a chart of the heirloom tomatoes varieties at distribution this week. For anyone who isn't familiar with them, don't let their funny colors and shapes keep you from trying them. The 'Japanese Trifles' for instance, are claimed to have the best, richest tomato flavor of all. They are best harvested when their shoulders are green, and the inside will be a dark burgundy/brown... different for sure, but delicious. I prefer the Brandywines, Yellow over the normal Pink or Red. They usually are the ones I am referring to when I say funny shapes. They weigh in at some of the biggest that we grow, and I don't know what's better, their color or flavor when cooked. (I know, their flavor, but man, are they pretty!) The green zebras are ripe when green of course. Giving them the squeeze test for ripeness is the best way to pick one of these. They are a little more tart and do visual wonders for a raw tomato salad. Cherokee Purples are purple with green shoulders, a big favorite, and probably most common of all heirlooms. With many others in addition to these, give a new one a try. We take a lot of pride in this year's harvest of tomatoes that once seemed doomed! So, as always, enjoy!

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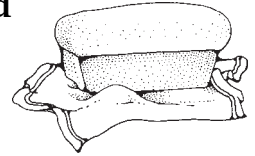


Cook's Column

By Steve Spanelli

Chocolate Zucchini Bread

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|-------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 3 large eggs | 2 cups flour |
| 2 cups sugar | 1 tsp baking soda |
| 1 cup vegetable oil | 1 tsp salt |
| 1 tsp vanilla extract | 1 ½ tsp cinnamon |
| 2 Tbl butter | 2/3 cup semi sweet chocolate chips |
| 6 Tbl cocoa powder | 2 tsp flour |
| 2 cups zucchini, grated | 1 cup chopped nuts |



- ~ Preheat oven to 350°F. Whisk together the eggs, sugar, oil, and vanilla until well blended. In another bowl melt the butter and mix in the cocoa powder, set aside to cool.
- ~ Combine the grated zucchini and butter/cocoa with the egg mixture. In a separate bowl, mix together the flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon. Add the dry ingredients to the batter and stir only enough to combine. Coat the chocolate chips with the 2 Tbs of flour. Stir the chips and the nuts into the batter. Spoon into two greased 9x5x3 loaf pans. Bake for 60-70 minutes.

Courtesy of Katy Cleary

Squash and Tomato Gratin

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 Tbl olive oil | 1/3 cup bread crumbs |
| 2 medium onions, sliced | ¼ cup parsley, chopped |
| 1 ½ pounds tomatoes, sliced | 2 Tbl basil, chopped |
| 1 pound zucchini, sliced | 1 ½ cups Parmesan, grated |
| 1 pound yellow squash, sliced | salt and pepper |
| 3 Tbl olive oil | |

- ~ Saute the onions in the 2 Tbl of oil until they just begin to turn golden brown. Spread them on the bottom of a baking dish. Sprinkle half of the parsley and basil over the onions.
- ~ Layer the tomatoes, zucchini, and squash in a single, slightly over-lapping manner in the baking dish. Drizzle with the 3 Tbl olive oil, season with the remaining herbs, salt and pepper.
- ~ Top with the parmesan and bread crumbs. Bake in a 375°F oven for an hour until well-browned and the juices have reduced.



IN THE GREENHOUSE

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Summer Hours
 Mon-Fri ~ 9am to 6pm
 Sat ~ 9am to 5pm
 Sunday ~ 10am to 5pm
Harvest Shop (814) 466-3411
 taitfarmfoods.com

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Needed:

Clean, plastic grocery bags

Volunteers are always welcome at the farm. Please call 466-2386 for more information or email Erin at communityharvest@earthlink.net.

State College Farmers Market
Fridays ~ 11:30am to 5:30pm
on Locust Lane

Community Harvest members receive a 10% discount on Harvest Shop purchases. (excluding consignment & sale items)