



In the Share

Melon, 1 piece
Carrots, 1 bunch or bag
Scallions, 1 bunch
Eggplant, 1 Globe OR 2 Japanese
Salsa Basket, 1 bag
Summer Squash, 5 pieces
Cucumber, 2 pieces
Kale, Collards, or Chard, 1 bunch
Choice of Herb, 1 bunch
Garlic, 1 bulb
Tomatoes, as noted on signs

Yesterday Jill, our Executive Director was giving a tour and happened upon our wash shed while we were in the middle of packing this week's shares. The visitors complimented us on the variety and beauty of our share. I couldn't agree more!

We are truly entering the height of the season with an array of coveted items like the salsa basket. One of our workers shares, Annie, said she could drink this with a straw!

Another treat are the cucumbers. A member shared this recipe with me: skin and de-seed the cukes, blend with yogurt, avocado, and cilantro, season with salt, chill and serve. So simple I doubted him! I had to try it and when I made it this week, I omitted the avocado and it was still delicious.

(continued on the back)

Jake's Comments

Melon of Troy

My son, Oliver, has no idea how good he has it when it comes to where his food comes from. He doesn't realize that not every kid in the world has the luxury of eating a diet made up exclusively of beautiful, organic vegetables harvested hours before they show up on his plate, from a field 500 feet outside his back door. Usually, when I proudly come home with the season's earliest carrots or the first fresh bean that he has seen in many months, he greets the occasion in the underwhelmed manner that only a four and a half year old can muster. The beginning of cherry tomato season does usually warrant a bit of excitement and a smile on his face. But melons, that is a different thing all together. When I came home with a split cantaloupe the other day, he looked at me as if his dad just displayed his Super Powers for the very first time. "You grew this?!", he asked in disbelief as he took a big bite out of the first slice. With juice dripping down his cheeks and chin he exclaimed, "Papa, I didn't know that you could grow things that tasted this good!" I decided to take that as a compliment.

Honestly, we have not been particularly good melon growers in recent years. The list of potential complications is long and daunting. We generally have a hard time getting the melons to germinate in the greenhouse, which means we usually don't start with enough plants in the field. Most melon growers in the area have found black plastic mulch essential for a successful melon harvest, because of its weed suppression and its ability to warm up the soil for this heat loving crop. Here at Troy, however, we have made a conscious choice to forgo the use of this plastic ground cover because it is not reusable from year to year and generates an enormous amount of landfill waste. Even when we do manage to get a melon near maturity, it can be tricky to harvest them at just the right time. They get overripe very quickly and can split or rot, and I have even been surprised a couple of times by a cloud of angry wasps pouring out of a single hole they've drilled into an otherwise good looking fruit. And, of course, there are also the melon vandals (who visited the melon patch again this past weekend, but thankfully managed less damage this time.)

This year, though, through some significant changes to our management practices, some extra love, and a little luck, we managed to grow enough melons so that everyone will receive a melon in their share (and have an opportunity to buy an extra at the farm stand if you reasonably decide that one just isn't enough). Some of you will go home with an Asian-style specialty melon, called a Sun Jewel. When you open up these lemon yellow, oblong fruits, you'll find white, crisp flesh (think honeydew texture) that is wonderfully sweet. These unusual melons have been gaining quite a following among some of our interns and worker shares. The rest of you will get a cantaloupe. This year, we grew two varieties: Halona has the deeper ribs, while Sarah's Choice is a bit smoother. Both have proven to have a delicious musky sweet taste and a juicy, chin-dripping texture.

With a little continued luck, these won't be the last melons you'll see this year. I hope that you all enjoy the melons as much as Oliver does!

Recipes

Sadly, I don't speak Spanish and I've never been to Mexico. Therefore, I can't pronounce the name of the recipe or tell you what "in Michoacán style" means, but I can tell you it's delicious. It's adapted from Diana Kennedy's The Cuisines of Mexico. The original recipe calls for epazote, which I never have and skip every time because according to Ms. Kennedy "If the herb is not available do not try to substitute anything else." If you have it, though, add 4 tablespoons.

- Julie Engel, Farm Crew Leader

Calabacitas Guisadas, Estilo Michoacan

"Squash Cooked in Michoacán Style"

4 Tbs. oil	1 jalapeno, charred (skip if you don't like the spice)
2 lbs. zucchini or summer squash	
4 heaped Tbs. white onion	2 cloves garlic, peeled
12 oz. tomatoes, broiled	Salt to taste

Heat oil in a heavy saucepan. Add squash, onion, epazote, and salt. Stir well, cover the pan, and cook over a medium flame, stirring occasionally until just tender- about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, broil the tomatoes and jalapeno (place on a cookie sheet under the broiler until skins blacken). Blend together tomatoes, chili and garlic in food processor, and stir puree into squash mixture. Cook over medium flame, uncovered, until squash is soft and tomato puree has been absorbed. The vegetables should be moist but not too juicy. Adjust the seasoning and serve immediately.



Sarah has been making this recipe as a change from our usual greens preparation. It is fast and delicious served over rice.

- Claire Strader, Farm Director

Assertive Greens with Honey Mustard Sauce

from The Best Vegetable Recipes from the Editors of Cook's Illustrated

1 1/2 Tbs. Dijon mustard	1 clove garlic, minced
1 Tbs. honey	1 bunch kale, collards, or chard
1/4 cup vegetable stock	salt and pepper
2 Tbs. unsalted butter	

1. Mix the mustard honey, and broth together in a small bowl.
2. Remove stems and roughly chop the greens. Steam them until just wilted.
3. Heat the butter in a large sauté pan over medium heat. When the foaming subsides, add the garlic and cook until the garlic is fragrant and starts to sizzle, about 1 minute. Add the greens and stir to coat them with the butter. Stir in the mustard mixture. Cover and cook about 2 minutes. If any excess liquid remains, remove the lid and continue to simmer until the liquid has thickened slightly, about a minute longer. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

(continued from "In the Share")

When I was a kid, I begged my mom to take me to the market so I could buy summer squash! We sautéed it lightly with garlic, scallions, mushrooms and thyme. It is still a beloved dish. I've branched out as you see in the recipe for Squash in the Michoacan style. I also recently tried another Mexican dish that braises the squash in cream with tomato, mint, cilantro, clove, cinnamon, peppercorns, and a Serrano pepper; delightful! Perhaps this is a particularly mid-western weakness, but I have to admit that I never tire of zucchini bread. I skip the loaf pan and opt for muffins tins; they bake faster and they're great as a quick breakfast or snack, especially if there are walnuts in them. Pay no mind when the recipe calls for only 2 cups, I always put in everything I shred and it's fine.

You know I love eggplant. My latest venture was pan-frying it in butter and serving with risotto that's been steeped with wine, parmesan cheese, and sage.

Chard is one of my favorite greens because it cooks down to such a lovely velvety texture and the flavor is unsurpassed. I love it sautéed with scallions, garlic, and a little red wine vinegar.

The scallions are from a younger planting and are therefore small and tender. They would augment any dish, either raw or not.

This is not the Year of the Tomato. We keep waiting for them to outgrow their blemishes, and I believe they still will, but not this week. However, I can guarantee they're beautiful on the inside and taste better than any tomato from Cali.

— Julie Engel, Farm Crew Leader

Next week: more carrots, summer squash, scallions, tomatoes, and (maybe) melons; plus beets and possibly the first peppers.

Troy Community Farm

Claire Strader • 442-6760 • claire@troygardens.org