



## A Place on Earth CSA Notes

June 24, 2020

### In your share this week:

Cucumber; Cabbage; Dill; Chard; Squash/Zucchini; Broccoli or Radishes; Basil; Garlic Scapes; Snap Peas; Head Lettuce; Collards

**Greens:** How long do you cook greens? What else should I know about greens? I've been asked this question quite a lot, and must share that *it depends*:

- Most of the stems are tough, and may be discarded, except for chard. I chop the chard stems and sauté them first before adding the greens. You can also add the chard stems to stews and soups. I have known CSA members who fried the stems of various greens, but since I rarely fry anything, I have not tried that.
- For young tender greens, I wilt them--after sometimes sauteing a little bit of onion/garlic scapes--and maybe cook them a couple of minutes, seasoning as you wish with butter, bouillon, salt & pepper.
- For tougher greens, proceed as above, but simmer with a little water or broth for 10-20 minutes, depending on how tough. I cook collards 15-20 minutes.
- Note, that almost all greens are edible but notable exceptions are rhubarb and potato greens which are poisonous. But you can cook the leaves from broccoli, cauliflower, kohlrabi, etc. just add them to whatever greens you are cooking.
- To freeze greens, wash, cut into ribbons (bite size pieces) and plunge them into boiling water for 3 minutes. Remove and put in cold water for a few minutes. Drain on towels and package into good quality freezer bags, and freeze.
- Greens in soups and stews: Yes, if you have too many, it's fine to freeze them and add to pots of vegetable or cream soups for flavor and mega nutrition.

**Herbs:** We will get a lot of herbs in this CSA share, especially basil. Some freeze well; others don't but may be used in pestos. Here's what works for me:

- **Basil** (leaves only) may be dehydrated using a slow oven (100-110 degrees, or oven with pilot light). Store in an airtight, dark container. It doesn't freeze well unless you make a pesto out of it, but if you get too much, it's ok to grind it in a blender with a little water or oil, and freeze it in ice cube trays or tiny airtight containers in the freezer. It may be added to soups, sauces, and stews just like fresh basil.

- **Dillweed:** Snip onto a small flat pan and freeze for a few hours. Store the frozen fronds in the freezer in a zippered plastic bag, adding to dishes fresh or cooked. It may also be dehydrated.
- **Cilantro** (leaves only) I have not had good luck trying to freeze cilantro in any way except in pesto. If you can't make the pesto, you can try to grind it in a blender in olive oil and freeze in tiny containers/ice cube portions.
- **Parsley** (leaves only) freezes well to use in cooked dishes. It loses flavor if you dehydrate it.
- **Green Onions, including tops:** Chop and freeze in good quality freezer bag.
- **Celery leaves:** They dehydrate well (for adding to stock) and freeze well.

**Another Amazing Salad Dressing:** This dressing has become one of my favorites, not only for a "keeper" salad, but for cooked beets, as well. Powdered sumac can be purchased at Al Watan Middle Eastern store. Or leave it out.

### **Yogurt Dressing:**

3-4 tablespoons plain yogurt (Greek yogurt preferred)

3-4 tablespoons lemon juice

1 ½ teaspoons ground cumin

½ teaspoon powdered sumac

2-3 tablespoons olive oil

½-1 teaspoon salt

Mix dressing ingredients and pour over salad, mixing well. Stores well 3-5 days.

**Spinach and Potato Patties:** I have been saving this recipe for when we have a type of tender greens, since the recipe calls for spinach. But quite honestly, any tender greens such as beet or chard greens also work. This is a delicious & unusual patty, which you can season or top off with a chutney, sour cream/cucumber raita or even ketchup. The recipe came from Suvir Saran, and recently appeared in the New York Times. I really like this.

- 2 pounds red boiling potatoes, scrubbed and quartered
- 4 firmly packed cups finely chopped, stemmed, washed spinach (about 3/4-pound leaves)
- 1 fresh, hot green chili, finely chopped
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon garam masala

- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- Salt to taste (Suvir Saran uses about 1 1/4 teaspoons)
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup panko or chickpea flour (you will not use all of it)
- 2 tablespoons grape seed oil (or any neutral oil)

1. Steam potatoes over 1 inch of boiling water until tender, about 15 minutes. Transfer to a wide bowl and mash with a fork. Add remaining ingredients except panko or chickpea flour and oil and mix well with your hands, squeezing the ingredients together. There will still be small chunks of potato and potato skin in the mixture. Taste and adjust seasoning.

2. Scoop out about 1/2 cup of the spinach-potato mixture, roll it with the palm of your hand to make a ball, and coat with panko or chickpea flour. Then press down to flatten to a 3 to 3 1/2-inch cake. Continue with remaining mixture. Chill for at least 1 hour.

3. When you're ready to cook, place a rack over a sheet pan. Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a large frying pan over high heat. Swirl pan to coat with the hot oil. Lower heat to medium. Place 4 to 5 patties in the pan (do not crowd), and cook until well browned on one side, about 4 minutes. Turn and brown for about 4 more minutes. Remove to the rack. Heat remaining oil in pan and cook remaining patties. Keep patties in a low oven until ready to serve. Serve with a salad and your choice of toppings, such as the usual (ketchup, mustard, relish), or yogurt raita, garlic yogurt, or chutney.

Note: my laptop crashed this week, and I am trying to work without my usual tools, including Microsoft Word. (Data for dummies is even too difficult for me.) Hopefully, by next week I'll have this sorted out.

*Peace!*

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