



A Place on Earth CSA Notes

July 1-4, 2020

In your share this week:

Fresh Garlic; Green Beans; Cucumber; Chard; Squash/Zucchini; Broccoli; Basil; Head Lettuce; Kale

Summer Squash: Last week we received a few small squashes, and I remembered what I used to do with small ones, so I used both the zucchini and yellow squash, with a great result. Even my 22-year-old granddaughter Riley loved it, and it was incredibly easy.

Zucchini Boats (Also works for small yellow squash) Cut the squash in half lengthwise and score the halves with a fork. Smear with sour cream and sprinkle with parmesan cheese—even the powdered kind works fine—and top off with salt, pepper and herbs of choice (I used Bourbon Barrel Smoked Paprika). Bake at 400 degrees until bubbly, fork tender, and it begins to brown about 15 minutes. You are going to love it!

Stellar tip!! Another summer squash idea from my friend (and good cook), Eleanor Newnan: For just a little variety when cooking zucchini, try sauteing sliced zucchini coins in olive oil with a little garlic or garlic scapes. Salt to taste, then top with breadcrumbs which have been toasted in olive oil/and or butter. (I always keep toasted breadcrumbs in my freezer and add them to so many dishes to turn plain foods into something a little more special, for example, cooked broccoli. I also use toasted breadcrumbs when making meatloaf--somehow toasted crumbs make meatloaf much tastier than plain crumbs.) To make toasted breadcrumbs place 1 to 1 1/2 cups of crumbs in a large bowl, toss with about 1/2 cup of olive oil or melted butter or a mixture of both. You may use more or less oil as you desire. Toast in a 350 oven until golden brown, being sure to stir every 10 minutes to prevent burning and uneven browning.

Garlic: Welcome back, old friend! I just can't cook without you! If you don't have a good garlic press, it's time to invest in one that minces garlic very fine. No need to refrigerate; the bulbs & cloves keep for months without refrigeration. Some folks like to peel them and put in a small jar of olive oil, stored in the fridge. I suggest you not store them for more than a few days, since they are not preserved, and can mold, causing all kinds of digestive problems. They will freeze well, and next winter when they are starting to dry up, you might wish to peel and freeze.

Salads Outside the Box: We all tend to build salads on lettuce, then think of other add-ons. We do have lettuce today, but since we will not always have lettuce in our boxes, start thinking *outside* the box, but using part of what we find in our weekly share, and adding non-traditional

items. If you're still thinking *inside* the box, feel free to peruse the menu of Vinaigrette Salad Kitchen <https://vinaigrettesaladkitchen.com/menu/>, which has the best non-traditional salads in town, and they don't have to start with lettuce. Consider some of these ingredients:

Sugar snap peas
Cooked or raw beets
Radishes, celery, carrots, onions, cucumbers, tomatoes
Cooked beans or cooked sweet potato cubes
Raw or barely cooked broccoli
Fruit: apples/berries/pears/etc.
Peppers—any color
Boiled eggs/cheese/nuts/water chestnuts/meat
Kale, chard, beet greens (tender greens)

Add your favorite dressing—oil and vinegar, or your fave—and you not only have tonight's salad, but tomorrow's, as well.

Cucumbers: To peel or not to peel; that is the question. Remember, our food is being raised using organic methods, but it may depend on several factors. If they are pickling/all-purpose cucumbers, the peel may taste bitter, so I tend to peel with a potato peeler. Try it with and without; it's your choice. English cucumbers do not usually need peeling. Here is a recipe from my friend Tomese Buthod's Facebook post; *this lady can cook!!*

Cucumber Watermelon* Salad with Hoisin Lime Dressing

2 cups chopped/sliced cucumbers (peeled, if desired)
3 cups cubed watermelon
3 ½ tablespoons lime juice
2 tablespoons fresh mint leaves, minced
1/3 cup chopped peanuts
3 tablespoons Hoisin sauce

Mix lime juice, mint, peanuts, and Hoisin sauce, combining well. Pour over cut up cucumbers and watermelon. Delish!

*This time of year, I am craving watermelon for breakfast, so I often splurge, and can use it for other purposes, too.

Refrigerator Pickles: Sometimes, when it rains 4" in a day, you get cucumbers, squash, melons, etc. that have grown many inches in one day. I got a couple of exceptionally large cucumbers this week, and I promise that there's something good to do with them. If they are large enough to have tough seeds, cut in half lengthwise, and scrape out the large seeds and pulp. Slice into half-rounds—maybe "smiles" is a better description, and place in the brine, listed below.

Refrigerator Bread & Butter Pickles: Some of my grandchildren love these pickles so much that a one-quart jar will not last the meal, so I can't make enough! The cool thing about these

pickles is that you may make one jar or 50 jars—as many as you have refrigerated space for—but they do need to remain refrigerated. Adjust the recipe for the volume of cucumbers you have. You may also substitute zucchini, but in a different jar.

4 cups sugar
4 cups white vinegar
¼ cup canning (or Kosher) salt
1 teaspoon, each, turmeric, celery seed, and mustard seed
2-3 onions, sliced
4-6 cucumbers

Bring sugar and vinegar to a boil and cook enough to melt the sugar. Cool. When liquid is cool, add salt and spices. Wash and slice 4-6 cucumbers and the onions. Put cucumbers and onions in a large container, and pour brine overall, and refrigerate. (I use glass quart jar, and do not recommend plastic.) They do not have to be canning jars, but clean, sterilized jars with lids. You may wish to make several jars at once. They are ready to eat in 24 hours. They will keep in the refrigerator for up to one year. * You may add more cucumbers and onions to the brine when you have room in the jar, but not forever.

**This recipe/method has been around for a long time. As a Home Economist, it is my duty to tell you that the Cooperative Extension Service recommends that these pickles be used within 2 weeks. I suspect that some people contaminate the brine by using unclean jars, plus inserting fingers and dirty utensils into the pickle jar. I would recommend sterilizing the jars for 5 minutes in boiling water before making the pickles, and only using clean utensils when removing pickles from the jar, especially if you use them after 2 weeks.*

Green Beans: I'll bet you all know how to cook green beans to death, the way my mother cooked them, maybe with bacon or ham. I'd like to challenge you to consider one of these options from "Simply in Season," by Mary Beth Lind and Cathleen Hockman-Wert. For one pound of green beans, cut in 1" pieces, cook in a small amount of water until crisp-tender, 5-10 minutes. Drain and use one of these options:

Parsley-Lemon option: In 1 tablespoon butter or oil lightly sauté 2 cloves minced garlic and 2 tablespoons finely chopped parsley. Add the cooked beans, season to taste with salt and pepper, Stir gently and heat through. Sprinkle with the juice of 1 lemon and serve. (I promise this is delicious!)

Mint option: In 1 tablespoon butter or oil sauté ¼ cup minced onion. Add 2 tablespoons minced mint leaves. Add cooked beans and season to taste with salt & pepper.

Please share your favorite recipes by sending them to me; I'll put in the notes. If you have food/nutrition questions, don't hesitate to e-mail me and I'll answer quickly.

Stay healthy!

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