



A Place on Earth CSA Notes

July 8-11, 2020

In your share this week:

Fresh Garlic; Onions; Green Beans; Cucumber; Kale, Collards; Squash/Zucchini; Broccoli; Basil; Head Lettuce.

Green Beans: Last week I mentioned a couple of ways to serve fresh green beans. Mary Beth Brown, former CSA member living temporarily in Florida shared her favorite way to make green beans a main dish: Cut the beans into the size they prefer and cook just to the al dente stage. Sprinkle blue cheese on the hot, cooked beans—as much as you like, along with seasoning such as salt and pepper. Stir well until the beans are not only coated but add a little extra. I used this as a side, but Mary Beth uses it as a main dish.

Summer Squash: Some folks get confused about what's a “yellow” squash, and what is a zucchini. You could get in the CSA share a yellow zucchini, or a 2-colored “yellow” squash. In fact, all of them will work, though most prefer the actual yellow squash for this recipe. My sister Phoebe Brown has a favorite recipe for yellow squash, and it is a great dish to take to a potluck. Admittedly, it has a good bit of fat, but is delicious. She has found some ways to reduce the fat/calories, so I'll print her recipe, and suggest fat-reducing with the ingredient list.

Yellow Squash Casserole

4 cups cooked yellow squash (or use part zucchini)
Salt and pepper to taste
1 tablespoon onion flakes (or ½ cup chopped onions)
1 package seasoned stuffing mix (such as Pepperidge Farms) (or 2-3 cups toasted bread cubes**)
¼ to 1/2 cup butter
1 cup sour cream (low fat works, too)
1 can Cream of Chicken soup
1 cup shredded carrots

Melt butter and mix with the stuffing mix. Place half of the mixture in bottom of a 2-quart (greased) casserole. Mix remaining ingredients and place on top of stuffing mix. Cover with remaining stuffing. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-30 minutes, or until bubbly.

*This is her original recipe, but her adaptations are in parenthesis. She no longer puts stuffing cubes in the bottom of the dish; top only. That reduces the amount of butter needed for the stuffing/bread cubes.

**Season plain bread cubes with a mixture of dried herbs such as sage, thyme, and oregano.

Onions: Early bulb onions are not the same as onions you buy in the supermarket. Those are “seasoned,” and are good keepers at room temperature. The onions we received in our shares are fresh onions, and will rot after a few days if not refrigerated. Use them now; you will probably get “keepers” later.

One-Pot Pasta with Ricotta and Lemon

This elegant, bright pasta dish from Ali Slagle from the New York Times food page comes together in about the same amount of time it takes to boil noodles and heat up a jar of store-bought marinara. The no-cook sauce is a 50-50 mix of ricotta and Parmesan, with the zest and juice of one lemon thrown in. That’s it. To make it more filling, add peas, asparagus, zucchini, green beans, or spinach in the last few minutes of the pasta boiling, or stir in fresh arugula or watercress with the sauce in Step 3. It’s a weeknight and for-company keeper any way you stir it. Dish takes about 15 minutes to cook; serves 4.

Kosher salt

1-pound short, ribbed pasta, like gemelli or penne

1 cup whole-milk ricotta (8 ounces) (cottage cheese will work, too)

1 cup freshly grated Parmesan or pecorino (2 ounces), plus more for serving

1 tablespoon freshly grated lemon zest plus 1/4 cup lemon juice (from 1 to 2 lemons)

Black pepper

2 cups sliced or chopped zucchini, green beans, broccoli, etc.

Red-pepper flakes, for serving, optional

1/4 cup thinly sliced or torn basil, parsley, or cilantro leaves, for serving (optional)

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook according to package instructions until al dente. A few minutes before the pasta is done, add to the pasta water 2 cups raw zucchini, green beans, broccoli, etc. for the number of minutes needed to cook crisp vegetables. Reserve 1 cup pasta cooking water, then drain the pasta and vegetables; set aside.
2. In the same pot, make the sauce: Add the ricotta or cottage cheese, Parmesan, lemon zest and juice, 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper and stir until well combined.
3. Add 1/2 cup pasta water to the sauce and stir until smooth. Add the pasta and continue to stir vigorously until the noodles are well coated. Add more pasta water as needed for a smooth sauce.
4. Divide the pasta among bowls and top with some of the sauce that’s pooled at the bottom of the pot. Garnish with grated Parmesan, black pepper, red-pepper flakes, and herbs of choice, if using. Serves 5-6.

Do You Have Fruit in your Freezer? I want to share this amazing dessert by Clare Boer that is similar to “Soft Serve” ice cream, which is ready in just a few minutes in the blender/food processor. It won’t hold over, so prepare to serve it immediately in a frosted glass. And no, it is not from today’s CSA box, but if you have frozen (not thawed) strawberries, blueberries, peaches, bananas, mangos, you can have an instant dessert. Makes about 2 cups.

Fruit and Sesame Swirl Soft Serve

2 cups frozen fruit (about 10 ounces)

½ cup full-fat Greek yogurt or labneh

2 tablespoons heavy cream

2 tablespoons tahini

4 teaspoons confectioners’ sugar

¼ cup sesame halvah (about 2 ounces), plus more for garnish (Middle Eastern confection) (or granola)

1. Place the frozen fruit, yogurt, cream, tahini and sugar in a blender or food processor, and blitz, scraping down the sides as needed, until smooth.
2. Crumble the halvah on top and stir through to distribute. Serve in chilled glasses with more halvah or granola crumbled on top. Eat quickly.

Collards: Sometimes collards feel kind of heavy, since they are a bit tough, unless you cook them for a bit longer than other greens. I learned to add a half can of coconut milk to the cooking liquid, along with onion and garlic, and a tablespoon of grated ginger. Just before serving, add a tablespoon, each, of lime juice and tamari/soy sauce. It lightens up the flavor quite a bit.

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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