



## A Place on Earth CSA Notes, July 14-17, 2021

### **In your share this week:**

Cucumber; Sweet Onion; Cabbage; Yellow Squash; Carrots; Garlic; Zucchini; Garlic Scapes; Green Peppers; Bulb Fennel, Red Onion.

**Looking for a vegetarian spaghetti sauce?** I always ask for your favorite recipes, but only occasionally do folks help me out. This week, CSA member **Holly Plescia** sent me a recipe that vegetarians are sure to love, and it uses odd amounts of vegetables from our summer shares. She says, “The sauce is from a vegetarian lasagna recipe, but I don’t think I’ve ever made the lasagna! I always just stop at the sauce. It is great for summer CSA, especially for when we get the odd zucchini or one of those “banana” eggplants. I know eggplant can be bitter, but I’ve never had a problem when I add just one of the long skinny ones. I’ve added carrots, mushrooms, etc. You can switch up any of the veggies, but you need to keep the roasted red peppers, they are key. If I’m feeling ambitious, I use tomatoes from Carden that I run through my food mill, but I keep some big cans of crushed tomatoes on hand just for this.”

1 cup chopped onion.  
3 cloves garlic minced.  
A pinch of red pepper flakes  
2 medium zucchinis, cut into 1/2-inch pieces.  
2 medium yellow squash, cut into 1/2-inch pieces.  
12 oz jar of red peppers drained and cut into 1/2-inch pieces.  
28 oz can of crushed tomatoes  
Generous handful of basil leaves

Heat oil in frying pan and saute onion until translucent, 3-5 minutes. Add garlic, zucchini, red pepper flakes, squash, and a pinch of sea salt, stir occasionally until softened and the edges just begin to brown; 5-8 minutes. Next add roasted red peppers and crushed tomatoes. Stir, then bring to a low simmer. Simmer until liquid has thickened and been reduced by half, 5-8 minutes. Add basil and additional salt and pepper to taste. Sometimes she adds a scoop of ricotta cheese to each serving, or even stirs it in for a creamy sauce. She serves it with pasta, and her family loves it!

We will feature another of Holly’s recipes when just the right veggie appears in our shares.

**Bulb Fennel, How do I Love Thee?** For all the years I have been a subscriber of A Place on Earth CSA, this may be the first time I have received fennel, though I admit to buying it at the farmers market often. And yes, I am crazy about fennel, but have not always known how to use it! If you are new to fennel, there are a couple of tricks that could help you out. Melissa Clark shows how to cut a fennel bulb and gives ideas on how to use it:

<https://www.finedininglovers.com/article/how-use-fennel-beginners-guide>

In addition to cooking fennel with the potatoes, onions, and carrots when making pot roast,

- I love to slice the fennel (once the core is removed) into a salad.
- Another way I like to use it is to use the long skinny pieces, sliced lengthwise, then cut horizontally to form a dice much like thinly sliced celery. When I don't have celery to put in chicken, tuna or egg salad, the diced fennel makes a wonderful crisp substitute.
- And of course, the lovely fronds decorate many plates.

**Zucchini:** I feel sure we will get lots of zucchini this summer, and that I will share several zucchini recipes. Today's recipe is particularly good for extra-large zucchini—which happens overnight—so we will probably get a few of the larger ones. Today I made the Dark Chocolate Zucchini Brownies and took them to a gathering where they were much enjoyed. Make sure you test with a toothpick and cook them longer if the batter seems a bit runny, but these brownies do not even hint at zucchini.

### **Dark Chocolate Zucchini Brownies**

1 cup all-purpose flour (I substitute half of the flour with whole wheat pastry flour)  
1/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
1½ teaspoons baking soda  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/3 cup melted butter.  
2 eggs  
1 cup sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
2 cups shredded zucchini (about 1/2 lb.)  
1/3 cup chopped walnuts or pecans.  
1½ cups dark chocolate chips  
1/2 teaspoon salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F, with a rack in the center of the oven.  
Spray or coat 8x8 square baking pan.

In a medium bowl, sift the flour, cocoa powder, baking soda and salt.  
In a large bowl, add butter, sugar, vanilla extract, zucchini, and eggs to a large bowl, and stir well to combine. Add dry ingredients to wet and stir well until you get a nice batter. Add chocolate chips and nuts; mix to incorporate.  
Pour batter into the prepared pan.

Bake for 30 to 40 minutes, or until the center is just set and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out relatively clean. Allow to cool completely before slicing. Makes 16 brownies.

*Recipe adapted from Scaling Back Blog.*

**Carrots:** I rarely give carrot recipes, since our family tends to eat them raw, out of hand, added to coleslaw, or cooked in a stew. But since soup is my favorite food, I must share this recipe, particularly because my friend Stephanie taught me to add cream cheese to make a soup creamy. Duh! Why didn't I think of that?

### **Carrot Soup**

Adapted from the 1977 edition of Moosewood Cookbook) via my friend Stephanie Barnett.

2 pounds carrots (peeled/chopped)  
4 cups vegetable or chicken stock  
1 1/2 teaspoon salt  
3-4 tablespoons butter (can substitute olive oil)  
1 cup chopped onion.  
1-2 small cloves crushed garlic.  
1 teaspoon each of (dried) thyme, marjoram, and basil  
1/4 block of an 8-ounce block of cream cheese (optional)

Place carrots, liquid and salt into a medium sized soup pot and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer it for 12-15 minutes. Let it cool to room temp.

Saute the onion & garlic butter (or olive oil) until the onions are clear. You can sprinkle in a little salt to help draw the moisture out of the onions. Towards the end of cooking, stir in the herbs. Add the onion mixture to the carrots. Puree everything together (an immersion blender works best). You can add 1/4 to 1/2 block of low-fat cream cheese at this juncture if you want a creamier texture. Serves 5-6.

**Did you lose a recipe from another year?** My friend Jan Eastburn has been putting these on my website, [www.phyllisfitzgerald.com](http://www.phyllisfitzgerald.com). Feel free to look for a recipe there, or send an e-mail to me at [phyllisfitzgerald@yahoo.com](mailto:phyllisfitzgerald@yahoo.com), and I'll forward it to you.

**Would you like to submit a recipe?** I'll be happy to share your favorite recipes for using CSA food. Just e-mail them and I'll include them in the notes.

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