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Stoneledge Farm News

Dear Member,

Summer Squash needs to be picked continuously and not allowed to get large or the plant will stop producing squash. Summer Squash can reach an amazing size in a couple of days if they are hiding under a leaf and not discovered the first picking. Each vegetable seems to have a peak when the plant is producing more than thought possible. This week, Summer Squash is the vegetable that is in abundance.

There are four kinds of Summer Squash this year and each week we mix them in the delivery so you may get any combination. The summer squash are: Zucchini, Zephyr (green with yellow), Sunburst (yellow pattypan) and Starship (green and yellow pattypan with deep center). The Sunburst and Starship are both patty pan type and have a great sunburst shape. They are great when small and still wonderful when larger. They are much drier than the other types of Summer Squash and so the large pattypan hold well when sliced and grilled. I also salt and pepper, flour the large patty pan that are sliced so each has the star shape and fry them in olive oil. They can be used like eggplant in eggplant parmesan or just enjoyed hot out of the pan.

This is also the Sugar Pea week. We were not able to get seed for the Sugar Snap Peas like in the past and had to substitute with a new variety called Sugar Snow Peas. They were like trying to pick and fill baskets with tiny slips of paper. They are sweet and have a more definite string than the variety we have previously planted. They are so thin that they can be used uncooked or only briefly steamed. We're glad they are picked-what a chore. Enjoy the vegetables-Pete and Deb

Wilting & Braising Techniques

To *wilt* tender greens, pile them in a skillet (preferably nonstick), turn the heat on, and toss the greens with tongs until they're all collapsed and moistened. If your greens are very dry at the start, you'll need to add a tablespoon or so of water to your pan, but usually the little bit of moisture left clinging to the leaves after washing is enough. Even then, some greens (like spinach) will give off a lot of moisture when wilted, and you'll need to drain them in a colander before proceeding with your recipe so that water doesn't dilute your finished dish. For the simplest dishes (like Wilted Tender Greens with Orange & Ginger), I take the drained, wilted greens and add them back to the skillet, where, in the meantime, I've sauted a few flavorful tidbits in a little oil or butter. Tossed together, the result is delicious. Wilted greens are also a handy base for baked gratins, pasta fillings, or quiches and tarts.

WHAT'S IN THE SHARE?

- Buttercrunch Lettuce-2 head
- Garden Cress-1 bunch-*this is a peppery addition to a salad. Similar to Water Cress, but we can grow it in the garden.*
- Sugar Snow Peas-1 pint basket
- Perpetual Spinach-1 bunch-*this is a variety of spinach that is hardier and more prolific than the spinach you will find in the store. We only grow this variety because it has a longer harvest window and will produce more than one crop. It is more similar to Swiss Chard in its texture, but still has a spinach flavor.*
- Opal Basil-1 bunch-*purple type basil with the flavor of basil but beautiful purple color. Immerse in a mild white vinegar and the basil will change the color to a bright pink with the flavoring of basil to be used for salad dressings.*
- Summer Squash-12
- Garlic Scapes-4 each-*this is the very end of the scapes. Garlic bulbs will come next, but not until September. We will be harvesting the garlic in a couple of weeks and then it will need to cure and dry in the barn.*

OVEN FRIED SUMMER SQUASH

- Oil cooking spray (the recipe calls for canola, but I would use olive myself)
- 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/2 cup all purpose flour
- 2 Tbsp cornmeal
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground pepper
- 1 1/2 lbs zucchini or squash, cut into 1/2 by 3 inch sticks
- 2 egg whites, lightly beaten

Preheat oven to 475°. Coat a large baking sheet with cooking spray. Combine flours, cornmeal, salt and pepper in a large sealable plastic bag. Dip zucchini in egg white, shake in bag to coat, and arrange, not touching, on a baking sheet. Coat all exposed sides with cooking spray. Bake on center rack for 7 minutes. Turn the zucchini and coat any floury spots with cooking spray. Continue to bake until golden and tender, about 5 minutes more. Serve hot.

Farmer's shortcut alternative: Skip the flour commmeal mix. Instead, use seasoned bread crumbs that are finely ground. Use whole eggs (we only live once!). Heat refined safflower oil (high heat tolerance) on the stove top and pan fry for a minute or two, until golden and soft. Flip, fry, and remove when golden, then place on a paper towel or paper bag. Press lightly with paper towel to remove excess oil (cool slightly first!). Yum! Top with fresh parmesan and minced basil.

Eating Well, August/September 2005

Fresh Herbs Store in a loose bag in the fridge, remove rubber band to increase air flow. Soft-leaved herbs (basil, cilantro) should not be washed until ready to use. Use or dry within one week.

Zucchini & Summer Squash Gratin with Parmesan & Fresh Thyme

For this gratin, use all the interesting green and yellow summer squashes. Serves six to eight as a side dish; four as a main dish.

for the onions

- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 2 medium onions (14 oz. total), thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

for the gratin

- 1-1/4 lb. ripe red tomatoes, cored and cut into 1/4-inch slices
- 3/4 lb. (about 2 small) zucchini or other green summer squash, cut into 1/4-inch slices on the bias
- 3/4 lb. (about 2 small) yellow summer squash or golden zucchini, cut into 1/4-inch slices on the bias
- 3 Tbs. olive oil
- 1/4 cup fresh thyme leaves
- 1 tsp. coarse salt
- 1-1/4 cups freshly grated parmigiano reggiano
- freshly ground black pepper to taste

To cook the onions -- In a medium skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onions and sauté, stirring frequently, until limp and golden brown, about 20 min. Reduce the heat to medium-low if they're

browning too quickly. Add the garlic and sauté until

soft and fragrant, 1 to 2 min. Spread the onions and garlic evenly in the bottom of an oiled 2-qt. shallow gratin dish (preferably oval). Let cool.

To assemble the gratin. -- Heat the oven to 375°F. Put the tomato slices on a shallow plate to drain for a few minutes and then discard the collected juices. In a medium bowl, toss the zucchini and squash slices with 1-1/2 Tbs. of the olive oil, 2 Tbs. of the thyme, and 1/2 tsp. of the salt. Reserve half of the cheese for the top of the gratin. Sprinkle 1 Tbs. of the thyme over the onions in the gratin. Starting at one end of the baking dish, lay a row of slightly overlapping tomato slices across the width of the dish and sprinkle with a little of the cheese. Next, lay a row of zucchini, overlapping the tomatoes by two-thirds, and sprinkle with cheese. Repeat with a row of squash, and then repeat rows, sprinkling each with cheese, until the gratin is full.

Season lightly with pepper and the remaining 1/2 tsp. salt. Drizzle the remaining 1-1/2 Tbs. olive oil over all. Combine the reserved cheese with the remaining 1 Tbs. thyme and sprinkle this over the whole gratin. Cook until well-browned all over and the juices have bubbled for a while and reduced considerably, 65 to 70 min. Let cool for at least 15 min. before serving.

SESAME SNOW PEAS

- 1/2 pound snow peas, trimmed and strings discarded
- 1 teaspoon Asian sesame oil
- 1 scallion, sliced thinly on diagonal
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds, toasted lightly

Cut snow peas on diagonal into long thin slices. Have ready a large bowl of ice and cold water. In a saucepan of boiling salted water blanch snow peas 15 seconds and drain in a colander. Immediately transfer snow peas to ice water to stop cooking and drain well. In a bowl toss snow peas with oil, scallion, sesame seeds, and salt to taste.

Gourmet, September 1996

BUTTERED SNOW PEAS AND CARROTS

- 4 carrots, cut crosswise on the diagonal into 1/8-inch slices (about 1 cup)
- 1/4 pound snow peas, trimmed, discarding the strings, and cut crosswise on the diagonal into 1/2-inch pieces (about 1 cup)
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter

In a large saucepan of boiling water cook the carrots for 3 minutes, or until they are crisp-tender. Add the snow peas, cook the vegetables for 30 seconds, and drain them well. Return the vegetables to the pan, add the butter and salt and pepper to taste, and heat the vegetables over moderately low heat, stirring, until the butter is melted.

Gourmet, January 1993

GRILLED CHICKEN WITH SWEET OPAL BASIL SAUCE

Dazzle 'em with this easy flavorful sauce inspired from Japan. Serves 4

- 2 whole boneless chicken breasts, brushed with olive oil and grilled until just done
- 2 tablespoons each soy sauce, fresh lime juice, fresh orange juice, brown sugar and safflower or peanut oil
- 1/2 teaspoon Asian chili sauce
- 1 tablespoon finely minced ginger
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1/4 cup purple opal basil, chopped

In a small nonreactive bowl, mix all ingredients. Serve over grilled chicken.

TUNA SALAD WITH PURPLE OPAL BASIL

A tuna face lift.

- 1 large can high quality tuna
- 1 small stalk celery, chopped
- 2-3 green onions, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1-2 teaspoons fresh lime juice to taste
- 1-2 teaspoons chopped purple opal basil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Mix everything together and enjoy.