



PlumFresh Harvest Subscription

Season 6, Week 16
Saturday, September 11, 2021

We hope you had a great Labor Day weekend and were out enjoying the beautiful weather that we've been having! This week we've been getting ready for some fall planting, prepping fields for greens and strawberries along with installing a new cooling unit for our walk-in cooler. We've also been getting ready for our **Fall Plant Sale on Sunday, September 12 from 1-5**. A list of what is available can be found at our website: [Fall Plant Sale 09/12 – Plum Granny Farm](#).

Another thing we are getting ready for is a **Crop Mob** on Monday to get the blackberries in shape for winter. If you would like to help us prune the plants and get them trellised, we'll be gathering on **Monday, September 13 from 8:30-1**. It's not hard work but it does require some bending – and we'll treat you to lunch! If you would like to give us a hand (and show those delicious blackberries some love), just shoot us an email at farm@plumgrannyfarm.com.

Here's what you'll find in this week's bag:

- Potatoes – *Plum Gold*
- Basil – *Genovese*
- Shoots & Microgreens Mix – *Sunflower Shoots mixed with 2 special blends of microgreens: Confetti Mix (purple and green radishes) and Mild Mix (kale, mizuna, cabbage, kohlrabi)*
- Muscadine Grapes
- Shishito Peppers
- Farmers Choice – Tomatoes OR Sweet Peppers OR Asian Pears
- Add-ons: Green Chile – Medium is *Big Jim* and Hot is *Hatch Doublecross*

Storage Tips

- Please make sure that you always wash all of your produce – while we wash many of our products (but not all) and we don't use chemical pesticides, there may be field dirt or other residue.
- **Muscadines and Shishito Peppers** should be stored in plastic bags in the refrigerator.
- **Potatoes** should be stored in a PAPER BAG in a cool, dark place. Don't store in the refrigerator or in a plastic bag.
- **Shoots/Microgreens Mix** stores well in its bag – please wash them in cool water and spin dry before eating!
- **Tomatoes** belong on the counter. The best way to store them is stem end down.
- **Basil** should be stored in a jar on the counter. Don't refrigerate!

Things to know + How do I use this stuff?

- The muscadine grapes are another heirloom fruit that Cheryl's Daddy planted many years ago. We have both muscadines – the purple ones – and scuppernongs – the lighter colored, "champagne" ones. Muscadines are earlier than the scuppernongs. These grapes tend to produce heavily every 2-3 years – and this seems to be a good year!

- North Carolina is a major producer of muscadine grapes since they are native here. A lot of research on the grapes has been conducted in this region and has come up with some pretty amazing findings. Here's some information as reported by the [NC Muscadine Grape Association](#): The muscadine grape is a nutritional powerhouse. Like many intensely colored fruits, vegetables, and berries, the muscadine grape is a rich source of polyphenols. The skins and seeds of muscadine grapes are particularly rich in the polyphenolic compound resveratrol, which has been studied for its antioxidant benefits in numerous diseases, including cancer and heart disease. However, many of the health benefits of the muscadine have been linked to other polyphenolics, including ellagic acid. [A recent study at NC State University](#) found that a compound contained in muscadines, green tea, and chocolate may inhibit the Covid-19 virus!

Exciting research at Wake Forest University School of Medicine over the past five years investigated the use of a highly concentrated muscadine grape extract in both animal studies and clinical trials in humans. The researchers showed that the muscadine grape extract reduced human breast and prostate tumors growing in mice, improved gut health and cardiovascular health in rodents, amplified the effectiveness of standard breast cancer therapies in mice with human tumors, improved exercise capacity in hypertensive rats and reduced self-reported fatigue in cancer patients. The research team includes over 25 faculty members from multiple departments. This work is supported in part by a \$20 million gift made in 2015 by an anonymous donor. The studies are on-going; the concentrated extract is still in research and development and is not commercially available at this time. However, muscadine grapes and other muscadine grape products are available to everyone now! [Learn more about this research and muscadine health benefits here.](#)

- If you aren't familiar with this quintessential Southern fruit, here's a quick primer on how to eat them:

How to Eat a Muscadine Grape



- To eat a muscadine, place the grape with the stem scar facing upward in your mouth and squeeze or bite the grape. The pulp and juice will burst through the skin into your mouth. You have several options for what to do next, as there are several schools of thought, and this is often much argued over!
- You can take the skins out from your mouth right away, **OR** you can chew the skins lightly first to get more juice out, **OR** you can chew up the skins and swallow them. Some varieties have skins that are thinner and more flavorful than others.
- You can swallow the pulp and seeds together **OR** you can work the seeds out of the pulp with your tongue and spit them out before you swallow the pulp.
- For the greatest nutritional benefit, eat the skins and seeds as well as the pulp and juice.

We hope you enjoy this week's adventure in fresh, Organic and local food!



Recipes

ROASTED MUSCADINE GRAPES

Source: Lindsay, Please Pass the Peas blog (pleasepassthepeas.com/roasted-muscadine-grapes/)

Yield: about 2-3 cups

Inspired by the roasted grapes at [Lovey's Market](#) (in Wilmington). I love the tart-sweet flavor of muscadines in this recipe but run of the mill grocery store grapes will work fine. The end result will be more sweet, less tart, and still delicious. Muscadine seeds are easy to remove but if you use other grapes a seedless variety would be best. Try them alongside a rich, creamy polenta laden with gorgonzola for which the grapes are the perfect foil. I think they'd also make an unexpected accompaniment to a cheese plate and I have a hunch they might pair well with ice cream too.

- 1 pound (about 4 cups) muscadine or other grapes (see headnote)
 - 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 - 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
 - 2 3"-4" sprigs of fresh rosemary
1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Select a baking dish or rimmed sheet pan that is large enough to hold all of the grapes in a single layer. Line it with parchment paper and set aside.
 2. If using muscadines, slice each grape in half and flick out any seeds. They will be about the size of a sunflower seed and easy to remove. Place the grapes in the parchment-lined pan.
 3. If using other, seedless, grapes you can slice them if you want or leave them whole and put them directly into the pan.
 4. Pour the olive oil and vinegar over the grapes. Add the rosemary.
 5. Toss to combine. Make sure the grapes are in a single layer and then roast in the oven for about 30 minutes or until the grapes have slumped down and begun to give off some liquid.
 6. Discard the rosemary and serve the grapes, making sure to include the syrupy pan juices.
 7. Grapes can be served warm or allowed to cool first. I suspect they would keep for several days in the refrigerator, but we've never had any around long enough to find out.

MUSCADINE ALMOND SMOOTHIE

Yield: 2 servings

- 10 fully ripe muscadines, rinsed
- 2 cups unsweetened almond milk
- 12 almonds
- 2 cups crushed ice

Directions

1. Blend muscadines, almond milk and almonds in blender or smoothie mixer
2. Add ice: pulse/mix until desired consistency
3. Serve in a glass. Enjoy!

ITALIAN GREEN BEAN AND POTATO SALAD

Source: Michael Hastings, Winston-Salem Journal (7/22/2020) https://journalnow.com/lifestyles/food/food-hold-the-mayo-theres-more-than-one-way-to-make-potato-salad/article_b0f67d3a-a928-5736-9f1c-b80252f5c56d.html#1

NOTE: *Michael did a feature on different potato salads – check out the link for more ideas!*

Makes 4 to 6 servings

- 2 pounds red potatoes, whole, unpeeled
- Salt
- 1 pound green beans, trimmed and cut into 2-inch lengths
- 3 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 1 cup thinly sliced onion (about 1 large)
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley or dill, or a combination
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- ¼ cup olive oil

1. Cover the whole potatoes with plenty of water – about 2 inches' worth. Add 1 tablespoon salt, and bring to a boil. Cook potatoes 8 to 10 minutes. Add the beans and cook 5 to 7 minutes until beans are crisp-tender and potatoes are just barely tender. (Timing this can be tricky; an alternative is to cook the beans and potatoes in separate pots.) Drain the beans and potatoes.

2. Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, stir vinegar, garlic, onion and herbs. Add about ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper, then stir in olive oil. As soon as the potatoes are cool enough to handle, cut them into 1- to 1½-inch pieces. While the potatoes and beans are still warm, toss them in the vinaigrette. Taste and add more salt, pepper or vinegar as needed. For best results, let sit at room temperature about an hour before serving, or refrigerate overnight. If refrigerated, bring to room temperature before serving.

Note: Other possible addition to this salad could include marinated artichokes, salami, cherry tomatoes, fresh mozzarella balls.

More tips from Michael for making great mayo-free potato salads:

- The best potatoes for all kinds of salads are those low in starch, which gives them a denser, moister texture. The low amount of starch helps them hold their shape after cooking, even when cut. Sometimes called boiling potatoes or waxy potatoes, low-starch potatoes include red-skinned potatoes. Red Bliss is probably the ideal boiling and salad potato. New (small and thin-skinned) potatoes typically are low in starch. **Fingerlings fall into this category, too.**
- Some all-purpose, medium-starch potatoes sometimes used in potato salads include Yukon Gold and Kennebec, but they don't hold together quite as well in salads as low-starch potatoes — and when they fall apart they are particularly noticeable in mayo-free potato salads because the broken pieces can't hide in mayo. Russets and Idahos — high-starch potatoes that are great for French fries and baked potatoes — are not recommended for potato salad.
- Ideally, potatoes are cooked whole to retain the most flavor. The skins help the potatoes to avoid leeching flavor into the cooking water. But sometimes it's more practical to cut the potatoes before cooking them — as with the thin slices in French potato salad.
- Cook potatoes gently in plenty of water. To make the cooking process gradual and gentle, start the potatoes in cold or room-temperature water. That way, the potatoes are heated gradually along with the water. Once the water comes to a simmer or light boil, reduce the heat to maintain a low simmer.
- Most mayo-free potato salads call for leaving the skin on, partly because the varieties of potatoes used typically have thin skins.
- Cutting potatoes with a serrated knife will minimize tearing of the skin.
- It is best to dress the potatoes while warm. The warm temperature is key is helping the potatoes absorb the dressing.