



PlumFresh Harvest Subscription

Season 7, Week 13
Saturday, August 13, 2022

Finally, some rain! Most of the rain that had been falling elsewhere during the past couple of weeks had missed us. The Sauratown Mountains do a good job of holding back rain (and storms) here – sometimes that is welcome and sometimes not! The 2+ inches that arrived last weekend were a definite blessing. Things were starting to get pretty crisp, and our irrigation system was working overtime. Our crops are much happier!

Lots of fun stuff in this week's bag! The first of the winter squash is starting to come in from Farmer Kip Grabs. Kip does a great job of growing winter squash, and he will have more as we get into fall. Last year's members will likely recall those delicious butternuts that we got from him! Spaghetti squash, along with acorn and delicata squash, do not need to cure before eating. They are ready to eat immediately after harvest.

We also have a new (to us) veggie for you this week – Summer Spinach. Actually, this is a special variety of Asian green and is harvested young, with light to dark green leaves and tender stems. The flavor and texture is subtly earthy, slightly chewy, and a hint of nuttiness. Overall, it has a very clean and mild flavor. Enjoy a taste of spinach in high summer!

Another treat are Pears. These are from Felsbeck Farm and are incredibly sweet! If they are hard, you may want to let them soften a bit. Check out the tips in the **"Things to Know + How do I use this stuff?"** section.

Another fruit in the Regular bag – Figs! These figs are from our solitary fig tree, and it is loaded this year! We harvested almost 25 pounds yesterday. They are very sweet – reportedly one of the sweetest varieties. These figs are from our first harvest and we may have more in the next couple of weeks. Having this tree in the Demo Garden area is such a blessing – it's hard to walk by it without picking a fresh fig and popping it in your mouth. I hope you enjoy this special treat!

This week's bag also has a surprise for Regular members – Blueberries! J French of Felsbeck Farm came by to tell us that he had one final harvest of berries last week and wanted to know if we would like any. Of course! This really, truly is the LAST of the blueberries for 2022!

This week's menu includes:

- Spaghetti Squash from Farmer Kip Grabs
- Microgreens/Shoots Mix – *Confetti Blend Radish Mix and Pea Shoots*
- Pears from Felsbeck Farm – *Red Bartlett*
- Tomatoes from Felsbeck Farm – *Big Beef*

Regular Bags Only:

- Figs – *LSU Purple*
- Blueberries from Felsbeck Farm
- Onions from Felsbeck Farm -- *Candy*
- Tomato Fruit Box Mix

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. And yes, you may even find a bug (or slug!) in your veggies! Please wash them!
- **Spaghetti Squash** should be stored in a cool, dry, dark place at around 50 degrees, but make sure they do not freeze. Spaghetti squash is not a long keeper. Under the best conditions, they should keep for 2½ months. Once cut, you can wrap them in plastic and store them in the refrigerator for 5 to 7 days.
- If your **pears** are a bit under-ripe, place in a loosely closed paper bag out of the fridge at room temperature until the skin responds to a gentle pressure at the neck of the fruit. After pears have ripened, store them in a plastic bag in the fridge in your crisper drawer.
- **Microgreens/Pea Shoots Mix** will store well in their box in the fridge. You may want to put the box in a plastic bag since the lid doesn't seal tightly. **As they have not been washed, please wash and spin dry the micros before eating!**
- **Tomatoes** belong on the counter – not in the refrigerator!
- **Blueberries** store well in their clamshell in the fridge. Don't wash until ready to eat. They are very ripe, so enjoy as soon as possible. Rinsing the berries in a 3:1 solution of water and vinegar helps remove any bacteria and also extends the shelf life of the berries. Here's a link for more info: [Everything You Need to Know About Washing and Storing Berries | Martha Stewart](#)
- **Figs** are extremely fragile! They won't last long in your fridge. I learned this tip on storing figs from Lifehacker, who found it in Cook's Illustrated: store them upright in an egg carton, each nestled in its own cup. I tried this with 10 fresh figs and found mold on only *one* of them three days later; ordinarily, most of them would have been disgustingly mold-covered by then. Caveat: out of an abundance of caution I always eat the ripest, most bruised ones first, but an entire week later, the remaining figs were all still viable, a phenomenon I'd never experienced previously. Here's the link to the article: [How to Store Fresh Figs So They Really Last \(lifehacker.com\)](#)
- **Store onions** in any cool, dark, dry place with adequate air circulation for several months if they are cured. Be sure to store onions and potatoes in separate places. Moisture given off by potatoes can cause onions to spoil.

Things to Know + How do I use this stuff?

- Classically added to salads, the Summer Spinach can also be wilted down in quinoa with eggs for breakfast. If cooking it brings out a mineral flavor too much, try a fresh spinach salad with warm bacon bits and a creamy poppyseed dressing.
- Spaghetti Squash is super easy to cook in the microwave. It takes about 20 minutes, depending on the size of the squash. Make sure that you prick the squash with a fork so that it can steam – and not explode – in your microwave. Microwave in 5-minute increments and take it out to check doneness and to rotate the dish. See more cooking tips in the Recipes section.

We hope you enjoy this week's adventure in fresh, local food! Until next week,



Recipes

HOW TO COOK SPAGHETTI SQUASH – one method

Source: www.thespruceeats.com/how-to-cook-spaghetti-squash

- Heat the oven to 375 F.
- Prick the spaghetti squash all over with a metal skewer or fork so it will not burst while baking.
- Place whole squash in a shallow baking pan.
- Bake for 1 hour.
- Let baked spaghetti squash cool until it can be handled.
- Cut it in half lengthwise with a serrated knife.
- Scoop the seeds and fibrous strings from the center of each half of cooked spaghetti squash.
- Discard the seeds and strings or save for composting.
- Gently scrape the tines of a kitchen fork around the edge of the spaghetti squash to shred the pulp into strands.
- Continue until you have as many "noodles" as you can get. Use in a recipe.

FOOD NETWORK'S METHODS: OVEN, MICROWAVE, INSTAPOT

[How to Cook Spaghetti Squash Three Ways](#) | [Cooking School](#) | [Food Network](#)

Great tips on 2 ways to use the oven, essential information on microwaving and using an Instapot!

SPAGHETTI SQUASH WITH BASIL, GARLIC AND CAPERS

YIELD: 4 entree servings

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • 1 spaghetti squash | • 1/4 c. parmesan cheese |
| • 2 T. extra virgin olive oil | • Salt |
| • 3 small cloves garlic, minced | • 1/2 t. pepper |
| • 2 T. capers, drained and rinsed | • 1 T. basil, chopped |

PREPARATION

1. Prick spaghetti squash and place in a covered microwaveable dish. Microwave 6-8 minutes or until soft. Let cool and cut in two. Remove seeds. Use a fork and pull squash from peels.
2. Heat olive oil in a sauté pan. Sauté garlic until soft (about 1 minute).
3. Add squash and capers and stir. Season with salt and pepper. Heat for 1-2 minutes more.
4. Add cheese and basil. Remove from heat and serve.

TOMATO IDEAS!

Although we are f-a-r from “Peak Tomato,” we wanted to share some ideas of other ways to use a bounty of tomatoes.

Source: “Bounty from the Box: The CSA Farm Cookbook,” by Mi Ae Lipe

- *Try serving a traditional English breakfast: Fry up bacon in a pan and reserve the fat to fry thick slices of sourdough or French bread until crisp. Serve with poached eggs and grilled tomato slices on the side.*
- *Add whole cherry tomatoes to kebabs.*
- *Top sliced tomatoes with thin slices of Cheddar, American, or mozzarella cheese, and broil until the tomatoes become soft and the cheese is melted and bubbly.*
- *Who says BLTs are just for sandwiches? Try a bacon, lettuce, and tomato salad, along with hard-boiled eggs and a little of the bacon drippings added to the dressing.*
- *For that quintessential Italian appetizer, bruschetta, top grilled or toasted slices of garlic-and-oil-rubbed baguette with diced fresh, ripe, peeled tomatoes that have been combined with olive oil, salt, pepper, and fresh herbs.*
- *Combine fresh tomato puree, mint, sugar, champagne, and fresh lemon juice for a refreshing sorbet.*

RECIPE SWAP: TOMATO PIE

Source: Michael Hastings, Winston-Salem Journal

https://journalnow.com/entertainment/dining/recipe-swap-tomato-pie-a-southern-summer-tradition/article_99b834bc-0e97-11ed-a935-afaef8bee60b.html

PGF Note: I know there was another recipe from Southern Living in last week’s newsletter but I saw a post from Mary Haglund citing this one from Michael Hastings. It is far less complicated and sounds delicious!

Notes from Michael Hastings: *If you’re looking for something different to make with tomatoes this summer after your hundredth tomato sandwich, consider a tomato pie. A classic of the Southern summer repertoire, tomato pie is like a hot tomato sandwich with lots of cheesy goodness. Low-calorie it isn’t, but it does make a nice lunch or light supper during August’s dog days. Now is the time to make one, too — peak-season fresh tomatoes are a must here. I think the best tomato pies contain two or three different varieties of tomatoes — for complexity of flavor as well as visual appeal. The same goes for the cheeses. I rely mostly on Parmesan, a tomato’s friend if there ever was one, but I usually supplement the Parmesan with a bit of sharp white cheddar, Gruyere or fontina. In the recipe below, I even suggest a bit of tangy feta for fun.*

I always add onion, but you could replace it or supplement it with a clove or two of minced garlic. I also like to add fresh basil in my tomato pie, but that, too, is up for negotiation. Maybe you’d prefer oregano, chives or tarragon — or no herbs at all.

Two things are not negotiable in a good tomato pie: removing the excess moisture from the tomatoes, and then cooling the pie after it bakes.

To remove moisture, salt the tomato slices and leave them to rest on paper towels for at least 30 minutes, followed by a final patting down with clean, dry paper towels. A half-hour usually does the trick. But I’ve heard of other cooks who let the tomatoes drain for six hours. In short, I can’t overemphasize the importance of draining. You do not want a soggy pie with puddles of tomato water.

It’s also important to let the tomato pie sit and cool. Not only does it taste best when lukewarm to room temperature, but the cooling-off period helps the pie set up, evaporating the last bits of moisture and allowing for cleaner slices.

Tomato Pie

Makes 6 to 8 servings

For the crust:

1 pie crust, enough for a 9-inch pie

For the filling:

2½ to 3 pounds assorted heirloom tomatoes, divided use

Salt

1 sweet onion, chopped

1 cup grated Parmesan cheese

½ cup grated fontina, gruyere or white cheddar

¼ to ½ cup crumbled feta, optional

½ cup mayonnaise

1 egg, beaten

1 to 2 tablespoons freshly chopped basil or other herbs

Freshly ground black pepper

Cornmeal

1. Gently press dough into bottom and sides of pie pan. Crimp edges along the top, then trim excess dough. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

2. Slice all but one large or two medium tomatoes about ¼ inch thick. Reserve the remaining tomato for later. Place on double layer of paper towels. Sprinkle with about 1 teaspoon salt and let sit at least 30 minutes.

3. Combine cheeses, mayonnaise, egg and herbs. Season with salt and plenty of pepper.

4. Heat oven to 425 degrees. Gently but thoroughly pat tops or tomato slices with clean paper towels to remove excess moisture. Sprinkle a thin layer of cornmeal, about 2 tablespoons, over the crust. Spread onion evenly over cornmeal. Top with ⅓ of the cheese mixture. Layer half of tomatoes over cheese mixture in overlapping pattern. Top tomatoes with ⅓ of cheese mixture. Repeat with another layer of tomatoes and cheese mixture. Cut remaining tomato into ¼-inch slices and arrange on top of pie in an overlapping pattern.

5. Place pie on baking sheet and place in oven. Bake for 40 to 45 minutes.

6. Let rest at least 20 minutes before serving. Serve at room temperature. Garnish with fresh herbs if desired.

One of our employees, Elise (a TikTok devotee), told me about these cookies that she saw on TikTok – 7 ingredient Blueberry Cookies. She brought them to work on Thursday and they were quite good! Unlike the cookies in the video, hers weren't blue – I think because she just folded the blueberries in without blending them. Nice and moist, a perfect bite with coffee or milk!

This recipe was developed by Justine Doiron (@justine_snacks). Here's a link to the TikTok post: [7 ingredient magic 🍪🍪🍪 #cookies #blueberries #cookiedough #tiktokpartner #blueberrycookies #bakingszn #tiktoktaughtme](#)

Blue(berry) Cookies | Vegan & Naturally Blue!

★★★★★
4.80 from 15 votes

I can confidently say these will be the best (and maybe only?) blueberry cookies you've ever had! They are soft in the middle, crispy on the edges, and are filled with melt-in-your-mouth goodness. This recipe uses frozen blueberries to make the cookies naturally blue, but that's not all they do! They help make this cookie recipe vegan, sweet and filled with blueberry flavor. A total winner in my books!

Prep Time: 6 mins Cook Time: 15 mins Chilling Time: 30 mins

Course: Dessert, Snack Cuisine: American

Keyword: blueberry, chocolate chip cookies, cookies, dairy free, vegan Servings: 12 cookies

INGREDIENTS

- 135 grams all-purpose flour about 1 cup
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 76 grams unsalted vegan butter, softened about 1/3 cup. I like Country Crock plant-based olive oil butter
- 90 grams granulated sugar about 1/3 cup and 1 tbsp
- 80 grams frozen blueberries about 1/3 cup
- 70 grams white chocolate chips, chopped about 1/2 cup

BLUE(BERRY) COOKIE RECIPE CONTINUED...

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat your oven to 400F.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt.
3. Either in the microwave or on the stovetop, thaw the frozen blueberries until they are soft and jammy. In the microwave this should take about 30 seconds on high heat, and on the stovetop it should take about 2-3 minutes on medium heat.
4. Let the blueberries cool for about 2-3 minutes. While they are cooling, use an electric mixer or a stand mixer to cream together the butter and sugar. You want to cream the sugar and butter until the mixture is noticeably lighter and fluffy.
5. Add the blueberries to the butter and sugar and cream at a high speed. You want to essentially "mash" the blueberries into the mixture, making it so that they are pureéd and fully combined with the butter and sugar. The mixture should be a deep purple color.
6. Gradually fold the dry ingredients in with the wet ingredients to form a dough. Mix in the white chocolate chips.
7. The dough will be very slack, so chill in the freezer for 30 minutes before shaping into 12 balls.
8. Bake the cookies at 400F for 10-13 minutes or until slightly brown on the edges. Let cool on a cooling rack for 5-10 minutes and then serve!

FIG INFORMATION: STORING, FREEZING, PRESERVING + RECIPES

This fact sheet is from Louisiana State University, the developer of the LSU Purple figs in your bag. Terrific information!

[pub3018LouisianaFigsLOWRES.pdf \(lsuagcenter.com\)](#)

NEED SOME FIG INSPO?

- The classic appetizer of figs wrapped in prosciutto is still a great one. Use the best-quality prosciutto or Spanish jamon you can find.
- Quarter figs and mash them with a little sugar and rum or brandy, then serve with vanilla ice cream.
- Figs and goat cheese or mascarpone are made for each other. Serve them together in salad or as appetizers.
- Figs take well to stewing or poaching, either by themselves or with other fruits.
- The savory sweetness of figs goes well with hearty meats like ham, lamb, beef, rabbit, and pork; use them in dishes that accompany these meats or as an ingredient in steak sauces or glazes.
- Make figs into rich salsas and surprising chutneys.
- Caramelized onions and figs are a delicious combination that can enhance meats, poultry, and pasta.
- Chopped figs, arugula, and goat cheese make an unexpected topping for homemade pizza.
- Morning oatmeal or Greek yogurt can be made instantly glamorous with chopped figs and a drizzle of orange-blossom honey.
- Skewer figs and grill them lightly for an unexpected taste treat. Or toss halved figs in a mix of honey, chopped fresh thyme, and either water or a sweet white wine like Muscat. Then grill.