



PlumFresh Harvest Subscription

Season 7, Week 15
Wednesday, September 7, 2022

We made it through Arrgh-ust and are now in the lovely month of September! Or maybe we should say rainy month of September. More than 3 inches of rain have fallen since Sunday! We are continuing to scurry around getting beds prepped and plants planted. It's a bit of a Rubik's Cube trying to figure out how to fit things (by plant family!) into a limited number of spaces. Somehow, we figure it all out!

We hope you are enjoying the tomatoes! Ray asked folks at last week's on-farm pick-up if they were tired of tomatoes yet and the answer was a resounding "NO!" We hope you are feeling the same way! We'll probably have a bit of a dip in slicer production in the next couple of weeks. The heat from a couple of weeks ago caused a fair amount of blossom drop which results in fewer tomatoes. Plus, there are a number of caterpillars moving in to the plantings that are creating lots of culls.

And speaking of tomatoes. Please mark your calendar for our first ever PlumFresh Tomato Tasting! We will have it here at the farm on **Sunday, September 11 from 2-4 p.m.** We sent out an invitation on Sunday – please let us know if you will be able to attend!

Lots of extra choices this week! This week's menu includes:

- Fruit Tomatoes Mix – *Valentine, Red Pearl, Chocolate Drop, Cherry Blossom, Citrine, Jasper, Lollipop; Saladettes: Clementine, Sunrise Bumble Bee, Purple Bumble Bee, Pink Bumble Bee, Verona*
- Slicer Tomatoes – *Carbon, Estiva, Franchi Red Pear, German Johnson, Giant Italian, Martha Washington, Pink Berkley Tie Dye, Ken's New Zealand (green shoulders); Orange varieties: Kellogg's Breakfast, Valencia*
- Potatoes – *German Butterball*
- Sweet Potato Greens

Regular Bags Only:

- Italian Flat Leaf Parsley OR Rosemary
- Summer Squash: *Smooth Operator, Jaune et Verte (pattypan), Zephyr, Dark Star Zucchini OR Yellow Crookneck from Felsbeck Farm*
- Member's Choice:
 - Eggplant – *Annina, Little Finger, Ping Tung Long, Rosa Bianca*
 - Okra – *Burgundy, Cajun Jewel*
 - Nicola Potatoes
 - Shishito Peppers
 - Sweet Pepper Mix – *Lunchbox Peppers, Carmen, Escamillo, Sweet Sunrise, Orange Bell, Jimmy Nardello, Sweet Chocolate, Charleston Bell, Jupiter, Golden California*
 - Sunflower Shoots

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!
- **Tomatoes** belong on the counter – not in the refrigerator!
- The **potatoes** belong in a cool, dark place in a paper bag.
- **Sweet Potato Greens** should be stored in its plastic bag in the refrigerator.
- Wrap unwashed **Eggplant** in a towel (not plastic) to absorb any moisture and keep it in the veggie drawer of your refrigerator. Or store unrefrigerated at a cool room temperature. Use within a week and it should still be fresh and mild.
- Refrigerate **Peppers (sweet and shishito)** unwashed in a sealed plastic bag in hydrator drawer for 1-2 weeks.
- **All summer squashes** are surprisingly perishable; avoid washing them until just before using – **based on this advice, your squash have not been washed!** They also can dehydrate quickly. Put them in a perforated plastic bag and store in the crisper drawer of your fridge.
- **Sunflower Shoots** store well in their bag. Please wash and spin dry before eating!
- **Okra** is also perishable and should be used within a few days. Store the dry, unwashed pods in a paper bag in the warmer part of the refrigerator (usually the upper area). Okra, in keeping with its tropical origins, does not like temperatures below 45°F.

Things to Know + How do I use this stuff?

- **Sweet Potato Greens?** Come on! Actually, these are a very nutritious and delicious part of the sweet potato plant (the tubers will be ready in about 3 weeks!) The edible leaves and stem tips of sweet potato vines are well known in many parts of the world. According to Texas Cooperative Extension, sweet potato foliage has a rich protein content that helps supplement the nutritional value of the roots and is often considered a “poor man’s food.” Some research has shown that yam leaves are more nutritious than spinach, celery, carrots and cucumbers when it comes to vitamin B, iron, zinc, protein, antioxidants, and calcium. They supposedly enhance immune function, boost metabolism, lower blood sugar, improve eyesight, and act as an anti-inflammatory. Give them a try with the recipes below – they may become one of your new favorite greens! And what a nutritional powerhouse!
- Here's an **Eggplant** tip from our friends at Bounty from the Box: Thoroughly wash the outside of eggplants before slicing, then trim off the stem end. The skins are edible, but they may be tough on older or white eggplants. You may peel the skins before cutting, or, if you are baking the eggplant, scoop the flesh out of the shell after cooking. Some people think that salting and rinsing eggplant slices before cooking removes bitterness and makes them more tender. The effectiveness of this method is debatable, and it generally applies only to larger, older fruits.
- **Don't Forget!** Feeling overwhelmed with **Fruit Tomatoes**? Here's a tip from Jack Bishop at America's Test Kitchen:

When I run out of friends to give my SunGolds to (PGF note: Or any other fruit tomato), I freeze them whole in zipper-lock bags. They are perfect for wintertime pasta sauces. No prep needed other than a quick wash and thorough drying—and then into the freezer and ready to perk up a cold January evening.

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

Recipes

STIR-FRIED SWEET POTATO LEAVES

Source: The Woks of Life at <https://thewoksoflife.com/2018/01/yam-leaves/>

Prep time 30 mins **Cook time** 5 mins **Total time** 35 mins **Serves:** 4-6

Source Note: Sweet potato leaves are an under-rated vegetable that you can find at more and more Asian grocery stores these days. Here's how to prepare them.

Ingredients

- 1 pound sweet potato leaves (Note: you have about 2/3 lb of just the leaves and stem, not the vine so you have enough for the full recipe)
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 3 cloves garlic, smashed and chopped
- 2 slices ginger, julienned
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon Shaoxing wine (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon ground white pepper
- 2 tablespoons water
- Salt, to taste
- A pinch of sugar

Instructions

1. Pinch off each leaf, including the stem, from the main stalk and any other tender parts of the vegetables. Wash and rinse thoroughly a couple of times and set aside to drain off any excess water before cooking.
2. Heat the oil in a wok over medium heat. Add the garlic and ginger and cook for about a minute. Now turn the heat to high and add in the sweet potato leaves.
3. Stir and add in the sesame oil, Shaoxing wine (optional), ground white pepper, water, salt (to taste) and a pinch of sugar. Stir to cook for a couple of minutes until all the leaves are wilted. Serve immediately.

SWEET POTATO GREENS CHIPS

I saw a post from Debbie Roos, the Extension Agent in Chatham County, about the Sweet Potato Greens Chips that she made last week. I am so glad someone asked her for the recipe! Delicious!

From Debbie Roos: Someone asked how I made these. It's so easy! First preheat the oven to 400°. Then wash and dry the leaves. Put them in a big bowl and drizzle a little olive oil over them and lightly mix with your hand to coat the leaves. Spread in a single layer on a baking sheet and lightly sprinkle with salt. Bake for a few minutes, checking often. It doesn't take long for them to crisp up. I bake them in several batches since they are in a single layer.





This got great reviews from one of our Saturday PlumFresh members – she says she would happily make it again!

rice-stuffed tomatoes

Rice-Stuffed Tomatoes [Pomodori Ripieni di Riso]

Adapted from a blend of [Rachel Eats](#), [Wednesday Chef](#), [Silver Spoon](#) and trial and error

As I mentioned above, you could deck these out with any number of compatible ingredients — crisped bits of prosciutto, mozzarella or pecorino cheese, olives or artichokes and more! Even I couldn't resist straying from the pure tomato-rice-and-seasonings course with a clove of garlic and few tablespoons of minced onion, as well as a starchier risotto variety of rice. But I'm telling you, it needs none of these things to be late summer dinner bliss. The rice cooks inside the most clear-noted, pure tomato sauce you've ever scooped onto a fork and I want August to always taste like this.

Serves 6 as a side and 3 as a main. We had these with sausages, but they'd be equally good with last week's [kale salad](#) and/or some salumi. Or, you can do this, which is the way it is done in Rome: Peel and cube a few Yukon gold potatoes, toss them with olive oil, salt and pepper. Arrange them in the baking dish around the tomatoes and bake them simultaneously. This not only keeps the tomatoes upright, it provides a delicious accompaniment.

2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil

Coarse or Kosher salt

6 medium-to-large (mine were 3 inches across, averaged 8 1/4 ounces in weight) tomatoes

Red pepper flakes, to taste

1/4 medium or 1/2 small onion, finely chopped

1 garlic clove, minced

9 tablespoons arborio or another short-grained starchy rice

Few tablespoons chopped parsley, oregano or slivered basil (or mix thereof)

Handful breadcrumbs, if using (unless using gluten-free breadcrumbs, this will of course negate the dish's gluten-free status)

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly coat an ovenproof baking dish with olive oil.

Prepare tomatoes: Cut the tops off the tomatoes and scoop out tomato juices, seeds and flesh into a non-reactive (i.e. just about anything but aluminum) bowl. I like to use a grapefruit knife to make the first cuts, then a spoon to remove the rest, but you can use anything you have around, being careful not to pierce the bottom of the tomatoes. Salt the cavities of the tomatoes and turn them upside down on a plate to drain.

Prepare reserve: Run scooped-out tomato flesh and juices through a food mill or pulse in a blender until coarsely pureed. Heat a large skillet over medium heat, then add 2 tablespoons olive oil, heating it too. Once hot, add onion, garlic and red pepper flakes, cooking them together for 2 minutes, or until onion begins to soften. Add rice and cook them together for about 3 minutes, or until rice toasts a little. Add tomato puree and bring to a simmer, then reduce heat to medium-low. Season with 3/4 teaspoon salt, then cover skillet with a lid, and let simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until rice is par-cooked. Adjust seasoning if needed.

[If using the potatoes, as mentioned in the Notes up top, prepare them while the rice simmers.]

Reassemble tomatoes: Stir fresh herbs into tomato-rice mixture. Arrange tomatoes right-side-up in baking pan then spoon mixture into tomatoes, filling them just 7/8 of the way to leave room for the rice to finish expanding. Coat with breadcrumbs that you can drizzle lightly with olive oil, if using, or you can replace the tomato lid on each (though, do not spend 10 minutes trying to match them back up, as I did last summer. It's pointless.)

Bake: Uncovered for 30 minutes, until tomato walls are soft and the rice inside has finished cooking. Serve hot. Repeat again tomorrow.

Let's celebrate eggplant, shall we? Two options for the great summer dish, Ratatouille. Enjoy it while watching the Disney movie of the same name! 😊

PEAK-OF-SUMMER ROASTED RATATOUILLE

Serves: 3

Source: Linda Ly in The CSA Cookbook via <http://honestcooking.com/cooking-the-csa-way/>

Ingredients

- 3/4 pounds tomatoes, cut into 1-inch chunks
 - 1/2 pound crookneck squash, cut into 1/2 - inch slices
 - 1/2 pound eggplant, cut into 1/2 -inch slices
 - 1 bell peppers, cut into 1-inch pieces
 - 1/2 yellow onion, cut lengthwise into eighths
 - 5 garlic cloves, smashed with the flat side of a knife
 - 2 T olive oil
 - 3/4 teaspoons kosher salt
 - 1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper
 - 1 rosemary sprig
 - Thinly sliced fresh basil
1. Preheat the oven to 400°F. If your oven cannot fit two large baking sheets side by side, place one rack in the top third of the oven and one rack in the bottom third of the oven.
 2. As you prepare all the vegetables, cut the tomatoes first and let them drain in a colander while you break down the remaining ingredients.
 3. In a large bowl, gently toss all the vegetables with the garlic, oil, salt, and pepper until evenly coated.
 4. Strip the leaves off the rosemary sprig and scatter them on top.
 5. Spread the vegetables across two large rimmed baking sheets in a single layer, with the tomatoes cut sides up. You want the vegetables packed in tightly, but not piled on top of each other.
 6. Roast until most of the vegetables are soft, shriveled, and slightly browned, about 45 minutes. If your baking sheets are on two separate racks, swap their positions halfway through the roasting time for even cooking.
 7. Transfer the vegetables and all their juices to a serving bowl and toss with the basil. Serve warm or chilled.

RATATOUILLE

Source: <http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/member/views/RATATOUILLE-FROM-MOOSEWOOD-COOKBOOK-50049551> Original

Source: Moosewood Cookbook

- 3 Tb olive oil
 - 4 med cloves garlic, minced
 - 2 cups chopped onion
 - 1 bay leaf
 - 2 medium eggplant, peeled and cubed
 - 1 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1 1/2 tsp basil
 - 1 tsp marjoram or oregano
 - 1/2 tsp rosemary
 - 1/2 tsp thyme
 - 2 medium red peppers, seeded and cut into 1-inch chunks
 - 2 medium tomatoes or 1 14-oz can diced tomatoes (with juice)
 - 2 medium zucchini, cubed (optional)
 - black pepper
 - fresh minced parsley
 - sliced olives (optional)
 - fresh parmesan cheese, grated (optional)
1. Heat olive oil in a deep pan. Add garlic, onion and bay leaf and sauté over medium heat for about 5 minutes.
 2. Add eggplant, salt and herbs and stir. Cover and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, for 15-20 minutes until eggplant is soft.
 3. Add zucchini, peppers, black pepper, and tomatoes. Cover and simmer for about 10 more minutes, or until zucchini and bell peppers are tender.
 4. Top with grated parmesan cheese and/or other goodies to serve.