



PlumFresh Harvest Subscription

Season 8, Week 12

Wednesday August 23, 2023

A mercifully cooler morning today. Yesterday was definitely a tough one. Despite wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses, my eyes still feel cooked by the end of the day. It will be nice to have a bit of a respite.

We continue to get more crops in and tended for your fall bags. On Sunday, Ray created a “net house” for the cucumbers to protect them from cucumber beetles. Our 2nd crop this year was pretty much decimated by the pests so we are trying to exclude them from the pests. The netting is tulle – like the stuff used to make bridal veils and ballet tutus! It’s much less expensive than some of the higher tech fabrics and we’ve found that it works to keep out some pests. We’re hoping that cucumber beetles are one of them!

Another pest we’ve just discovered is rabbits – we think. Our new planting of kale was pretty well mowed down and we don’t think it was deer. We always have a few rabbits around, but they usually don’t damage our crops too much. We’ve got more kale to plant and will add another line to the fence – it’s always something!

Enough gloom! Let’s talk about this week’s bag. We had enough of the Carolina Gold peaches to give everyone some this week. We got the last of their crop – and I’m glad we did! They are definitely one of my favorite peaches now! The spaghetti squash is from Harmony Ridge Farms in Tobaccoville. Isaac Oliver and his crew grow a bunch of winter squash and the spaghetti squash is one of the earliest. These are very versatile, and I’ve enclosed a “Spaghetti Squash 101” guide to give you some ideas and tips (like cut the squash along the midline, not lengthwise if you want longer strands!)

Here’s what you’ll find in this week’s bag.

- Basil – *Prospera Genovese*
- Lettuce -- *Muir*
- Tomato Fruit Box – *Mix of cherry and grape tomatoes including Valentine, Red Pearl, Cherry Blossom, Chocolate Drop, Citrine, Jasper, Lollipop, Sweet Golden Grape*
- Slicer Tomatoes – *Mix of Heirloom and Hyloom tomatoes*
- Peaches – *Carolina Gold from Hill’s Orchard*
- Spaghetti Squash from Harmony Ridge Farms

Add/Sub Items:

- Beets – *Boro and Touchstone Gold*
- Farmstead Chevre from Buffalo Creek Farm and Creamery
- Garlic – *Georgian Crystal and Music*
- Creamer Potatoes
- Potatoes – *Bintje, Fingerling, German Butterball, Nicola, Norwiss, Plum Gold*
- Shishito Peppers
- Sweet Pepper Mix – *Lunchbox, Lipstick Red, Jimmy Nardello, Marconi, Carmen, Sweet Sunrise*

Regular Bags

- Okra – *Burgundy and Cajun Jewel*

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 your veggies and fruit before eating.
- **Basil** should be placed in a jar with water on the counter – like flowers in a vase. Since you have the rootball intact, the basil will last much longer. Do not refrigerate!
- **Beets and Peppers** store best in plastic bags in the crisper drawer.
- **Okra** should be stored in a plastic bag in the middle of your refrigerator – not the crisper. Keep it dry by placing a paper towel in the bag.
- **Spaghetti Squash** should be stored in a cool, dry, dark place at around 50 degrees. Under the best conditions, they should keep for 3-4 months. Once cut, you can wrap them in plastic and store them in the refrigerator for 5 to 7 days.
- **Peaches** should be refrigerated if they are ripe. The peaches had been stored in the walk-in cooler at the orchard to slow down their ripening process. If they need a bit more time to ripen (hard as a rock), store them out of the sunlight on the countertop until they are soft and aromatic 2-4 days. Once they are ripe, place them in a plastic bag in the fridge. Use ripe peaches within a week.
- **Garlic** is best stored in a cool dark place or in a bowl on the counter (away from the sun). Do not store in the refrigerator!
- **Tomatoes** belong on the kitchen counter. Do not refrigerate!

Things to Know + How do I use this stuff?

- 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.

Please enjoy this week's adventure in fresh, Organic and local food!



Recipes

PEACH CRISP

Source: <https://www.loveandlemons.com/peach-crisp/>

This easy peach crisp recipe is such a delicious summer dessert! Serve it warm with scoops of vanilla ice cream. Gluten-free.

Prep Time: 15 mins

Cook Time: 25 mins

Serves 4 to 6

Ingredients

- 5 ripe peaches, pitted and sliced
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon cane sugar
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Vanilla ice cream, for serving

Topping

- ½ cup whole rolled oats
- ½ cup almond flour
- ⅓ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup crushed walnuts
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- ¼ cup firm coconut oil

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F and grease a 10-inch cast-iron skillet.
2. In a large bowl, combine the peaches, cornstarch, sugar, lemon juice, and vanilla and toss to coat.
3. Make the topping: In a medium bowl, combine the oats, almond flour, brown sugar, walnuts, cinnamon, and salt. Using your hands, work in the firm coconut oil until the mixture is crumbly.
4. Scoop the peach filling into the prepared skillet. Sprinkle with the topping and bake for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the fruit is soft and the topping is golden brown.
5. Remove from the oven and let cool for 5 minutes. Serve with vanilla ice cream.

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

Oven-Fried Okra

Yields: 4-6 servings

from *OKRA: A Savor the South® Cookbook* by Virginia Willis. Copyright © 2014 by Virginia Willis. Used by permission of the University of North Carolina Press.

Ingredients

- | | |
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| 1 cup fine cornmeal (not self-rising) | 1 large egg, lightly beaten |
| ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste | 1 pound okra, stem ends trimmed, cut into 3/4-inch pieces |
| Coarse kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper | Cooking spray |
| ½ cup buttermilk | |

Directions

1. Place a rimmed baking sheet in the oven. Preheat the oven to 450°.
2. Combine the cornmeal and cayenne pepper in a shallow dish. Season heartily with salt and pepper.
3. Whisk together the buttermilk and egg in a large bowl. Add the okra and season with salt and pepper. Stir to combine and set aside to marinate, about 3 minutes.
4. Using a slotted spoon, remove the okra from the buttermilk and add it to the cornmeal mixture. Dredge the okra in the cornmeal mixture. Remove the baking sheet from the oven and spray it with cooking spray.
5. Place the okra on the heated pan and lightly coat it with additional cooking spray. Bake for 25 minutes, stirring once. Stir and spray again. Cook an additional 10–12 minutes. Remove from the oven and season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

GRILLED OKRA WITH SPICED YOGURT, PEANUTS AND MINT

Source: Steve Satterfield featured in the Wall Street Journal, July 17, 2017
(<https://www.wsj.com/articles/grilled-okra-with-spiced-yogurt-peanuts-and-mint-20-minute-recipe-1500561110>)

TOTAL TIME: 20 minutes SERVES: 4

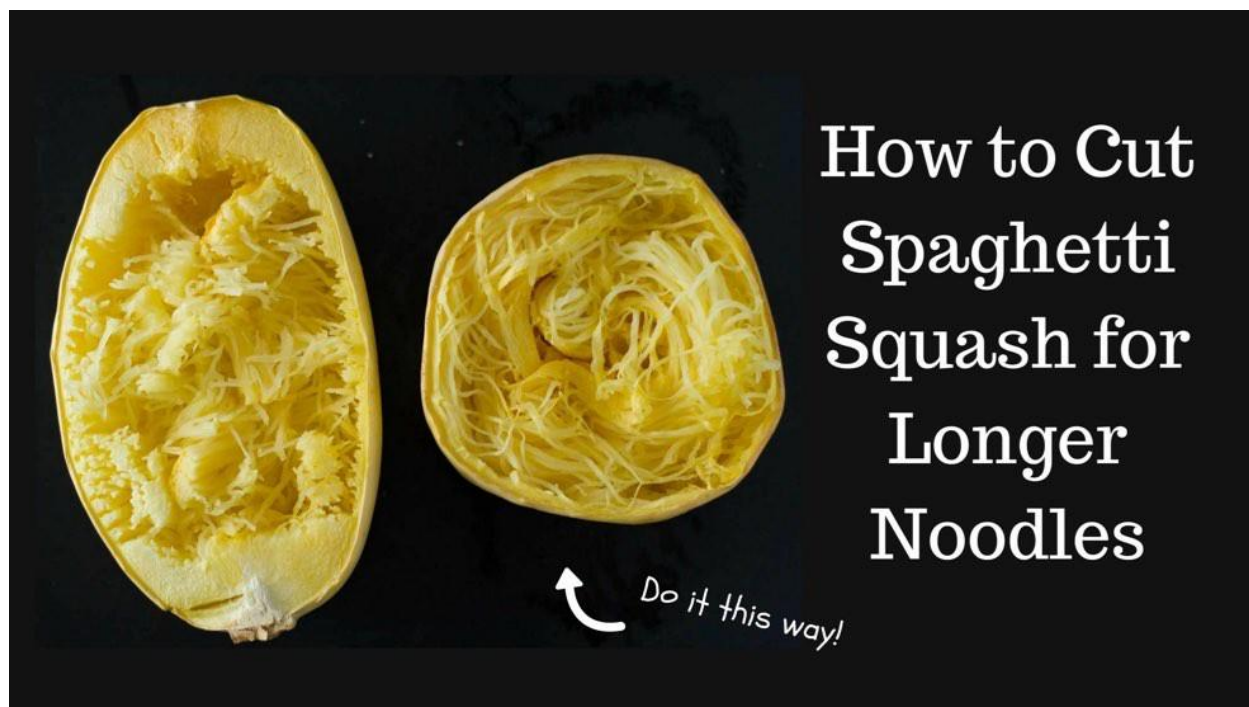
- 1 cup whole Greek yogurt
 - 1 large garlic clove
 - 1 lemon
 - 1 teaspoon cumin seeds, toasted and coarsely smashed
 - 1 teaspoon coriander seeds, toasted and coarsely smashed
 - 1 teaspoon pepper flakes
 - Kosher salt
 - 1 pound fresh okra
 - 3 tablespoons olive or peanut oil, plus more for drizzling
 - ~1 cup roughly chopped dry- roasted peanuts
 - ~1 cup torn fresh mint
1. Submerge several 6-inch wooden skewers in water to soak. Preheat a grill.
 2. Place yogurt in a medium bowl. Use a fine grater to grate garlic and lemon zest over yogurt. Halve lemon and squeeze one half into yogurt. Add cumin, coriander, red pepper flakes and season with salt and more lemon juice, if needed. Stir to combine and refrigerate until ready to use.
 3. Thread a skewer through 4-6 okra pods just below caps. Thread a second skewer through the same pods, about 1/2 inch from the tapered tips, creating a secure plank of skewered pods. Repeat with remaining skewers and okra, leaving about 1 inch of bare skewer at each end.
 4. Brush both sides of okra with oil and sprinkle with salt. Place okra skewers on hot grill and cook until okra begins to char, about 2 minutes. Flip and grill opposite side until charred, about 2 minutes more. Transfer grilled okra to a platter and discard skewers.
 5. To serve, spread yogurt sauce over a serving platter or individual plates. Drizzle with oil and top with okra. Garnish with peanuts and mint.

Spaghetti Squash

101

The black sheep in the winter squash family.





How to store:

Store in a cool, dry, dark place at around 50 degrees, but make sure they do not freeze. Under the best conditions, they should keep for 3-4 months.

Prep:

Wash squash. You can either bake/roast/microwave the squash whole (then remove the seeds), or cut it in half across the belly, and scrape out the seeds. The skin is not eaten.

Substitutes:

Be careful substituting other winter squash for spaghetti squash. They are not usually interchangeable.

Best Uses:

- **Pasta Substitute**
- **Stuffed**
- **Baked in shell**
- **Casserole**
- **Pie**
- **Muffins/Baked Goods**
- **Pad thai or stir fry**
- **Latkes**
- **Skillet Meal**
- **Tater Tots**
- **Frittata**

How to Freeze:

Scoop out cooled, cooked squash strands into Ziplock bags. Label the bags with the date, and squeeze out the air.

Fun Hacks:

1. You can cook it whole.

It will take a little longer to cook (about an hour total), but after it's cooked, the squash will be tender and easier to cut. Simply poke holes in the squash all around. Bake on a cookie sheet at 375 F for an hour. Cut in half and pull out the strands.

2. Cut crosswise around the waist of the squash for even longer strands.

Spaghetti squash strands are arranged in a circular formation around the interior. Cutting the squash across the waist keeps the whole strand intact, as opposed to slicing from end to end, which halves the strands.

3. You can microwave spaghetti squash.

Halve it around the “belly” and remove the seeds. Then cook it in the microwave on a glass plate for about 5-10 minutes on high.

4. Pre-salt your spaghetti squash before cooking to draw out the water and reduce mushy texture.

Salting the squash first draws out a ton of moisture, which really helps reduce the wet texture. Sprinkle kosher salt on the cut slices of squash. (You can be really liberal with the salt, because you'll wipe it away before cooking, along with all the water that the salt draws out).

Suggested Recipes:

Simple Baked Spaghetti Squash

Ingredients:

- 1 (2-3 pounds) spaghetti squash
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Directions:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Lightly oil a baking sheet or coat with nonstick spray. Cut the squash in half lengthwise from stem to tail and scrape out the seeds.* Drizzle with olive oil and season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Place squash, cut-side down, onto the prepared baking dish. Place into oven and roast until tender, about 35-45 minutes. Remove from oven and let rest until cool enough to handle. Using a fork, scrape the flesh to create long strands.

Italian Style Spaghetti Squash Bake

Ingredients:

1 Spaghetti squash, sliced in half and seeds scooped out
2 t. extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoons sea salt
1/2 t. black pepper
1 t. extra-virgin olive oil
1 clove garlic, crushed
3 handfuls fresh spinach
1 lb. boneless chicken breasts, baked or boiled and shredded
1 cup tomato sauce
1 egg
1 1/2 T. Italian seasoning, more to taste
1/2 t. red pepper flakes, more to taste
1 T. garlic powder
1/2 t. freshly ground pepper
1/2 t. salt
Optional: 1/4 cup fresh parmesan cheese, more for topping

Directions:

Preheat the oven to 375 °F.

Cut spaghetti squash in half and scoop out seeds. Drizzle with olive oil, sea salt, and black pepper. Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Lay spaghetti squash face down on baking sheet, and add 1/4 cup water. Bake for about 30 minutes until fork tender. Let cool.

Once cool, scrape out spaghetti squash using a fork and place in a medium mixing bowl and set aside. In a small skillet over medium-heat, heat oil and sauté garlic. Add spinach and sauté until wilted.

Add spinach and garlic mixture, shredded chicken, tomato sauce, egg, cheese if using and spices to the bowl with the spaghetti squash. Mix until well combined. Transfer entire mixture to a baking dish. Sprinkle with fresh parmesan and red pepper flakes. Bake at 375 °F for 10 minutes. Broil on high for 3-5 minutes, or until the cheese has started to bubble and brown.

Breakfast Spaghetti Squash Bowls

Adapted from yummly.com

Ingredients:

1 spaghetti squash (about 3 lbs)
olive oil (for brushing)
salt
pepper
5 bacon (slabs, chopped)
4 eggs
1/2 cup cheddar cheese
green onions (garnish)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400 degree F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
With a knife, carefully score squash lengthwise where you're going to cut it in half. Poke a few holes along the score. Microwave the squash for 5 minutes or until the scored skin is soft enough to cut. Allow to cool. Carefully cut the squash in half. Scoop out the seeds.
Brush the inside of both halves of the squash with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.
Place the two halves cut side down on the prepared pan and roast until tender, about 30 minutes. Allow several minutes to cool.

Using a fork, scrape the insides to create a spaghetti-like texture. Leave insides in the squash. Sprinkle bacon and cheese on top of the fluffed squash. Make 2 wells in each half and break an egg in each well. Place breakfast squash halves back in the oven, and bake until egg whites are set and yolks are starting to thicken, about 10-15 minutes, depending on how you like your baked eggs to be. Garnish with chopped green onion and black pepper.

Mexican Spaghetti Squash Boats

Adapted from HoneyandSpiced.com

Ingredients:

1 medium spaghetti squash
1 T. olive oil
1/2 cup onion, chopped
2 larger garlic cloves, minced
1/2 cup red pepper, chopped
1 jalapeno pepper, chopped (remove seeds for less spice)
1/2 cup canned corn, drained and rinsed
1/3 cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed
1/2 pound lean ground turkey
2 T. taco seasonings
cheese and cilantro (optional)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Place full spaghetti squash in the oven on a baking sheet and cook for 45-50 minutes. Let cool completely. Cut in half and use a spoon to scoop out the seeds. Loosen up the rest of the 'spaghetti' with a fork.

While the spaghetti squash is cooking, heat olive oil in a medium pan over medium heat. Throw in the onion and garlic, cooking until slightly browned. Add in the red pepper and jalapeño pepper, cooking for another 3-5 minutes. Stir in the corn and beans.

In a separate pan, cook the ground turkey until completely cooked through and no longer pink. Stir in the taco seasonings and spices, and then add to the cooked vegetable and pepper mix.

Scoop the veggie/turkey mixture into each squash boat and top with cheese (optional). Place in the oven on low broil for 2-4 minutes until slightly browned. Top with cilantro, sour cream, salsa, or your favorite toppings!