



## ***PlumFresh Harvest Subscription***

**Season 8, Week 16  
Saturday, September 23, 2023**

Happy Autumn! The arrival of my favorite season occurred at 2:50 a.m. – bringing with it a tropical storm. 😞 Thankfully we have not had any issues so far – fingers crossed for all of us.

This week's bag has a special treat. We are SO excited to bring you some delicious apples from [Levering Orchard](#) in Ararat, Virginia. This 115-year-old orchard is run by the third generation of the Levering family and boasts more than 70 acres of fruit trees. A great thing about Frank Levering is his commitment to use a low spray approach to growing fruit. Orchards are notoriously high in their use of pesticides and fungicides – typically fruit is sprayed 12-15 times. Growing fruit can be very challenging in the conditions found in the Southeast – higher humidity creates more disease and pest issues than what is found in the Northwest. Frank, although not Organic, sprayed these apples only TWICE during the growing season. He says that his fellow growers look at him with disdain! His apples have a few more spots and cosmetic blemishes than your grocery store varieties but you can feel better about eating less chemicals. The apples are truly delicious! We will be getting apples from Levering two more times this fall.

Another treat in this week's bag is Red Kuri Squash. It is grown by our friend Kip Grabs, who lives just up the road from us. Although he is not Organic, he uses sustainable methods. We hope you enjoy this squash – I am looking forward to cooking with one this weekend.

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

- Apples – *Spartan from Levering Orchard*
- Lettuce – *Gourmet Mix and/or Nancy and New Red Fire*
- Okra – *Cajun Jewel and Burgundy* **OR** Eggplant – *Annina and Rosa Bianca*
- Lunchbox Sweet Peppers
- Slicer Tomatoes – *Mix of Heirloom and Hyloom tomatoes*

### **Small Bags Only**

- Potatoes – *Bintje*

### **Regular Bags Only**

- Snacking Cucumbers – *Picolino*
- Tomato Fruit Box – *Mix of cherry and grape tomatoes including Valentine, Red Pearl, Cherry Blossom, Chocolate Drop, Citrine, Jasper, Lollipop, Sweet Golden Grape* **OR** Additional Slicer Tomatoes
- Winter Squash – Red Kuri from Farmer Kip Grabs

### Add/Sub Items:

- Celery -- *Tango*
- Farmstead Chevre from Buffalo Creek Farm and Creamery
- Eggplant-- *Annina and Rosa Bianca*
- Figs – *Louisiana Purple*
- Garlic: *Inchelium Red*
- Creamer Potatoes
- Potatoes – *Fingerling, German Butterball, Nicola, Norwiss*
- Hot Peppers – *Jalapeño*
- Shishito Peppers
- Sweet Italian Peppers – *Carmen and Escamillo*
- Sweet Peppers - *Jimmy Nardello Sweet Italian*
- Sweet Potato Greens
- Winter Squash – Red Kuri from Farmer Kip Grabs

### 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.
- **Store apples** in the refrigerator in a plastic bag. They are odor-absorbent, so keep them away from onions, potatoes and other strong-flavored items.
- **Red Kuri Winter Squash** should be stored 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. And they get sweeter in storage as the starch converts to sugar. Once cut, you can wrap them in plastic and store them in the refrigerator for 5 to 7 days.
- **Tomatoes** belong on the counter – not in the refrigerator!
- Refrigerate **Peppers** unwashed in a sealed plastic bag in hydrator drawer for 1-2 weeks.
- **Potatoes** should be kept in a cool, dry, dark place, such as a loosely closed paper bag in a cupboard. Do not store in plastic or 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.
- **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.
- **Snacking Cucumbers** should be stored in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer.
- **Sweet Potato Greens** should be stored in their plastic bag in the refrigerator.
- **Tomatoes** belong on the kitchen counter. Do not refrigerate!

### Things to know + How do I use this stuff?

- Red Kuri are one of our favorite winter squashes. Winter squash is called winter squash because it can be stored over winter for an extended period after harvest in the fall. Squash have high levels of vitamin A and some vitamin C, folate and potassium. Red Kuri are a type of Hubbard squash, these are medium- size, teardrop-shaped red squashes that are especially good for pies and purees.
- The variety of apples in this week's bag is Spartan. "Spartan" is a Macintosh-cross variety that wins new fans every year for its not-too-sweet, not-too-tart balance and juicy crispness. Spartan won the apple taste-off at the Blacksburg Farmers Market a couple of years ago – and after eating one, we know why! It is terrific for eating out of hand and for cooking. Do we see pie in your future?

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



# Recipes

## RED KURI SQUASH TIPS

- The skin of a Red Kuri is hard and takes some effort to cut. Use a large sharp knife and cut lengthwise from the stem end to the flower end – be careful! Halve and scoop out the seeds. Despite this hard skin when raw, once it is cooked the skin of a red kuri is edible (like a delicata squash). No need to peel it!
- To bake, slice in half lengthwise, scoop out seeds, and place facedown on rimmed sheet. Pan. Add 1/2 inch of water to pan. Bake at 400 degrees for 45 minutes to an hour until shells are soft and starting to collapse. Remove and fill with butter, brown sugar, maple syrup, seasoning or fillings.
- The squash are also excellent roasted – rub the squash quarters with some olive oil and put on a baking sheet. Roast at 400 until the flesh is soft and it is caramelized on the edges (approximately 30 minutes).
- To freeze: Winter squash freezes well. Simply cook squash and mash or puree it. Then pour it into ice cube trays and freeze. Pop the frozen cubes into freezer Ziplock bags.

## ROASTED RED KURI SQUASH WITH SPINACH SALAD

*Source: New Morning Farm*

Red kuri squash has very thin skin that is edible! There is no need to peel it before cooking.

### Ingredients

For the Roasted Squash:

- 1 red kuri squash
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- salt & pepper, to taste

For the Salad:

- |                                      |                                       |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • 1 4oz bag spinach                  | • handful of cilantro, finely chopped |
| • 1.5 cups cannellini beans          | • handful of dill, finely chopped     |
| • 1/2 red onion, finely chopped      | • 2 tablespoon olive oil              |
| • handful of parsley, finely chopped | • juice of 1 lemon                    |
|                                      | • salt & pepper, to taste             |

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Cut the squash in quarters by slicing lengthwise and then crosswise. Scoop out the seeds with a spoon. Place the squash pieces on a baking dish. Rub with oil and add salt and pepper. Roast until tender when poked with a fork - about 40-45 minutes.
2. While the squash is roasting, build the salad. Add the spinach, beans, onions and herbs to a salad bowl. Whisk the oil and lemon juice together and add to the salad. Mix until evenly coated. Add salt & pepper, to taste.
3. To serve, top each squash piece with some of the salad.

## COCONUT CURRY WITH RED KURI SQUASH



**Serves 4**

**Prep time**

15 mins

**Cook time**

25 mins

**Total time**

40 mins

A delicious, creamy coconut Thai curry with red kuri squash and broccoli.

Source: *WhatTheHeckDoIEatNow.com*

Adapted From: *Thai Green Curry With Red Kuri Squash. Carpe season.com*

### Ingredients

- 1 tbsp organic canola oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 inch piece of fresh ginger, grated
- 1½ tsp Patak's Mild curry paste
- 2 tbsp curry powder
- 1 tsp turmeric
- 1½ cans coconut milk
- 2 tbsp tamari (or soy sauce)
- 1 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
- 4 cups peeled and cubed red kuri squash
- 1 tbsp lime juice
- ½ cup water
- 1½ cups broccoli cut into florets
- ½ tsp salt

### Instructions

1. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
2. Add chopped onion and ginger and sauté for about 3 minutes.
3. Add garlic and sauté for another minute.
4. Add curry paste, curry powder and turmeric and cook for another minute while stirring constantly.
5. Stir in coconut milk, tamari (or soy sauce), chili sauce, lime, squash and water.
6. Bring it to a boil and then lower the heat to a simmer and cook uncovered for about 15 minutes until the squash are tender.
7. Add broccoli and cook for another 5 minutes.
8. Add salt, stir and serve with rice.

*If you are feeling overwhelmed by peppers, save them for the winter! I know I hate paying \$4 for ONE pepper when I had oodles of them in the summer that I composted. Make like a squirrel and save 'em!*

### FREEZING SWEET PEPPERS

Blanch peppers if you want to use them in heated dishes; for uncooked preparations, don't blanch if you want a more crispy texture. To blanch, wash the peppers and remove their seeds. Blanch halved peppers in boiling water for 3 minutes; sliced or diced ones for 2 minutes. Then plunge them into ice water for 5 minutes to stop the cooking process. Remove and drain. Pack in zipper-lock freezer or vacuum food sealer-type bags, or freezer containers. Squeeze out any excess air and leave ½ inch of headspace (unless you are using the vacuum sealing method). Frozen peppers will keep for up to 12 months at 0°F.

## ROASTED SWEET PEPPERS (FOR FREEZING)

Place peppers over a gas burner (or under a broiler or on a grill) until the skin is blackened on all sides. Put peppers in a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and let steam for 10 minutes. When peppers are cool, peel or rub away the blackened skin. Cut in half, remove and discard the stem and seeds. Toss with olive oil. Freeze in 1-cup containers.

Source: *The Farmers Market Cookbook: The ultimate guide to enjoying fresh, local, seasonal produce.* Julia Shanks and Brett Grohsgal

*Another great recipe from The New York Times Cooking!*

## Bell Pepper Salad With Capers and Olives

By David Tanis

Time 30 minutes

Rating 4 ★★★★★ (136)

At summer's end, sweet peppers of every color are ripe and ready, far better than the bland supermarket hot-house varieties available year-round. Thinly sliced and dressed with an assertive vinaigrette, these peppers make an ideal first course or antipasto.

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### Ingredients

#### Yield: 4 servings

4 sweet bell peppers, in different colors  
1 anchovy fillet, plus more for garnish  
1 small garlic clove  
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
1 teaspoon capers, chopped, plus whole capers for garnish  
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil  
Salt and pepper  
1 cup halved cherry tomatoes, lightly salted  
½ cup green or black olives, such as Castelvetrano or Moroccan, pitted, if desired  
Arugula, for garnish (optional)  
Dried Italian oregano, for sprinkling (optional)

### Preparation

#### Step 1

Cut peppers in half from top to bottom. Remove stems, seeds and veins, then slice peppers into strips about ⅛-inch wide.

#### Step 2

Make a vinaigrette: Using a mortar and pestle, smash anchovy fillet and garlic into a paste. Transfer to a small bowl, and add red wine vinegar and chopped capers. Stir in olive oil and season vinaigrette with salt and pepper.

#### Step 3

Put sliced peppers in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper, and toss. Add vinaigrette and toss again. Leave for 10 minutes, then taste again and adjust seasoning. (The salad can sit for 15 to 20 minutes without suffering.)

#### Step 4

Transfer to a serving platter. Garnish with cherry tomatoes, whole capers, olives and anchovy fillets. Surround with arugula, if using. Sprinkle with oregano, if using.

# Apple Muffins

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Prep Time: 20 mins

Cook Time: 20 mins

Total Time: 40 mins

Serves 12

These cinnamon apple muffins are moist, tender, and bursting with spiced apple flavor. We love them with the crumble topping and glaze, but they're also delicious without any topping if you prefer a less sweet breakfast treat.

## Ingredients

### Crumble Topping

- ½ cup all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ cup soft coconut oil

### For the Muffins

- ¾ cup plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, spooned and leveled
- ¾ cup whole wheat flour, spooned and leveled
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons almond flour, spooned and leveled
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoons apple pie spice
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- ½ cup unsweetened almond milk
- ½ cup unsweetened applesauce
- ½ cup cane sugar
- ¼ cup avocado oil, or another neutral oil
- 2 large eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups peeled and diced apple

### For the Glaze

- ¾ cup powdered sugar
- 1 to 1½ tablespoons unsweetened almond milk

## Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F and grease a 12-cup muffin tin.
2. Make the crumble topping: In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, brown sugar, and cinnamon. Add the coconut oil and use a

spatula to combine. Mix just until there is no dry flour remaining and the mixture is crumbly. Don't overmix.

3. Make the muffins: In a large bowl, whisk together the all-purpose, whole wheat, and almond flours, baking powder, apple pie spice, and salt.
4. In a medium bowl, vigorously whisk together the almond milk, applesauce, sugar, avocado oil, eggs, and vanilla.
5. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir to combine. Gently fold in the apple. Use a ⅓-cup measuring cup to scoop the batter into the prepared muffin cups. Sprinkle the crumble topping on top. Bake for 17 to 22 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Let cool for 10 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool completely.
6. Make the glaze: In a small bowl, whisk together the powdered sugar and 1 tablespoon almond milk until smooth. If the glaze is too thick, add more almond milk, 1 teaspoon at a time, until it reaches a drizzleable consistency. Drizzle over the cooled muffins.

## APPLE CRUMBLE

Source: — Paul Anater, as appears in *Bounty from the Box: The CSA Farm Cookbook*, by Mi Ae Lipe

Serves 8 to 10

### Apple Mixture

- 5 to 6 medium apples, peeled, cored, and sliced
- (about 8 to 10 cups)
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup water

### Topping

- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F.
2. In a large bowl, prepare the apple mixture by combining the prepared apples, white sugar, flour, cinnamon, and salt. Let it sit for about 5 minutes to allow the apples to sweat and the flavors to combine. Place the apple mixture in a 9-by-13-inch pan, and pour the water over the apple mixture.
3. To make the topping, combine the oats, flour, brown sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and melted butter. Work this mixture together with a fork until it comes to a uniform, crumbly consistency. Sprinkle the topping evenly over the apple mixture.
4. Bake for about 45 minutes. The fruit should be bubbling and the topping browned. Let cool (to allow it to set up) before serving.



# One Pot Eggplant Parmesan Orzo

**PREP TIME**

10 minutes

**COOK TIME**

20 minutes

**TOTAL TIME**

30 minutes

## Ingredients

- 3 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 1 medium eggplant, cut into large cubes
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- 1 tsp black pepper, more for serving
- ½ tbsp chopped fresh thyme leaves, more for serving
- 1 tbsp low sodium soy sauce
- 12 ounces/350 g orzo
- 3 ¾ cups/900 ml chicken broth
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 4 ounces/120 g sun-dried tomatoes, drained
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2.5 ounces/70 g grated Parmesan
- chili flakes, for serving

This recipe comes highly recommended from PlumFresh member, Janie Hughes.

Recipe intro: *One pot eggplant parmesan orzo. This one could very well become your new favorite stress-free weeknight dinner. There's so much to love here! Bright flavors, sweet sun-dried tomatoes, hearty sautéed eggplant and silky parmesan orzo. Quick, easy and so delicious!*

Source: [One Pot Eggplant Parmesan Orzo - Serving Dumplings](#)

## Instructions

1. Get your prep done before you start cooking. Chop the thyme leaves, mince the garlic, finely chop the shallot. Cut eggplant into cubes. Chop the sun-dried tomatoes.
2. Add oil to a large high-sided/thick-bottomed skillet. Heat over medium, add eggplant. Cook until it starts to brown, about 2 minutes. Then add the remaining oil, cook until the eggplant starts to soften, about 3 minutes. Add garlic and shallot, sauté for 2 minutes. Stir in pepper, thyme and soy sauce. Add orzo, stir to combine.
3. Pour in half of the chicken broth, and add tomato paste. Stir until dissolved. Then add sun-dried tomatoes and the remaining broth. Bring to a boil.
4. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 10-15 minutes or until the orzo is al dente. Stir occasionally to prevent orzo from sticking to the bottom of the skillet.
5. When ready, add lemon juice and Parmesan. Stir until silky. Top with freshly ground black pepper, chili flakes and some extra fresh thyme. Enjoy!

## Notes

Calories Per Serving: 452 kcal Nutritional information is only an estimate. The accuracy of the nutritional information for any recipe on this site is not guaranteed.



## ANOTHER WAY TO LOVE EGGPLANT Source: From Bounty from the Box: The CSA Farm Cookbook, by Mi Ae Lipe

Here's a salty, savory, simple dish: Heat a preferred oil in a saucepan until hot (peanut or vegetable are good choices). Add eggplant that has been cut into 1-inch chunks, and brown them on each side. Then add garlic, shallots, and tamari or soy sauce. Top with chopped green onions and serve hot or cold.

## LENTIL AND ORZO STEW WITH ROASTED EGGPLANT

Source: Yewande Komolafe in NYT Cooking (<https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019860-lentil-and-orzo-stew-with-roasted-eggplant>)

• **YIELD:** 4 servings

**TIME:** 45 minutes to 1 hour

*Cheryl note: I am so glad that eggplant is starting to kick into gear because I have been wanting to make this recipe since last Fall. It is SO Good! This recipe has become my absolute favorite! I think I could eat this every day! And leftovers are wonderful too -- just add more eggplant. Coriander is the perfect spice -- not something I would have considered. And the lemon juice and zest really are essential and makes the flavors pop.*

*Source note: For rich, golden cubes of roasted eggplant, a high-temperature oven is crucial. Here, lentils and pasta make for a hearty stew, and the coriander seeds introduce a robust, clean flavor. Use a mortar and pestle, a spice grinder or the base of a wine bottle to crush the seeds, opening them up before they're tossed with the eggplant. Serve this stew warm or hot, topped with an aged, salty cheese like ricotta salata or feta, and a soft-poached egg if you like. The lemon zest and juice are essential and enhance the finish.*

- 1 ½ pounds eggplant (2 small or 1 large, skin on, or peeled, if desired), chopped into 1-inch pieces
  - ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons olive oil
  - 1 tablespoon coriander seeds, crushed
  - Kosher salt and black pepper
  - 1 medium carrot, finely chopped
  - 1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
  - 2 celery stalks, finely chopped
  - 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
  - 1 tablespoon tomato paste (Note: I used more)
  - 1 cup dried lentils (green, black or brown)
  - 5 cups chicken or vegetable stock, or water
  - ½ cup orzo or other small pasta, such as ditalini, stelline or macaroni
  - Zest and juice from 1 lemon, plus 4 lemon wedges for garnish
  - ¼ cup shaved ricotta salata or crumbled feta
1. Heat the oven to 425 degrees. In a large bowl, toss the eggplant with 1/4 cup olive oil and crushed coriander seeds until coated; season with salt and pepper. Arrange in an even layer on a large rimmed baking sheet and roast until eggplant is tender and golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes, giving the baking sheet a shake halfway through roasting to toss the eggplant pieces for even cooking.
  2. In a large skillet, heat the remaining 2 tablespoons oil over medium. Add the carrot, onion and celery. Season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, until vegetables are softened, about 3 minutes.
  3. Stir in the garlic and tomato paste and cook, stirring occasionally, until tomato paste begins to darken on the bottom of the pan, about 5 minutes.
  4. Stir in the lentils until coated. Pour in stock or water and bring to a boil over high heat. Lower to medium and simmer until lentils are tender, 20 to 30 minutes, depending on the type and age of lentils you use.
  5. Stir in the orzo and cook until softened, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in the lemon zest and juice.
  6. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Top with the roasted eggplant pieces and large shavings of ricotta salata, and serve with lemon wedges for squeezing.