

THE TIPI TIMES

September 8, 2011, week 17 (purple EOW)

Tipi Produce, 14706 W. Ahara Rd., Evansville, WI 53536, 608-882-6196, csa@tipiproduce.com, www.tipiproduce.com

THIS WEEK'S BOX CONTAINS:

Tomatoes, mixed, 4 lb
Italian frying peppers,
mostly red, 4 or 5 total
Eggplant, globe or Japanese
Edamame soybeans
Broccoli, about 1.25 lb
Zucchini/squash, about 1 lb
Yellow onions
Jalapeno pepper, 1
Basil, one sprig

A few sites will receive an heirloom tomato.

Some sites will receive 1 pt raspberries this week. We will rotate raspberries to all sites over the coming weeks.

NEXT WEEK'S BOX WILL PROBABLY CONTAIN:*

Red potatoes, tomatoes, peppers, edamame, garlic and more

*depending on weather, critters & other forces of nature.

Fun with Raspberries. Steve and I are enjoying our new raspberry field as it comes into production. After many years of farming, it is fun to grow a new, challenging crop. There's lots to figure out. What's the most efficient way to pick the berries? How many pints will we get each week? Did we trellis the plants properly? How long should we wait before picking again? There have already been a few surprises. I planted a small patch of raspberries for our family five years ago, so we have some experience with fall-bearing raspberries. I confidently predicted that the plants would not reach their mature height this year (we planted last year.) This is important to know when deciding how to support the plants. To our surprise, they reached their full height and we scrambled to get them roped up. Steve and I made a quick trip to visit our friends Paul and Lou of Blue Skies Farm. They've grown raspberries for many years and it was helpful to look at their fields. The trip was like a mini-date for Steve and me. This is what farmers do on a date.

Of course, grazing is the greatest pleasure of a big raspberry patch. Our kids wander out to nibble and collect a pint or two for snacks. Our daughter Sophie is an expert. We found she could pick berries before she could talk. As a toddler, she'd make a beeline for our raspberry patch. She would pluck and carefully examine a berry, then taste it. Unripe ones were immediately spat out. Raspberries clearly show their ripeness by their color, so she had a quick learning curve.

Beth

Raspberry U-Picks. We continue to offer raspberry u-picks by pick-up site, and expect to continue for another two weeks. As I explained last week, we need to schedule the u-picks by pick-up site because our field is too small to host the entire membership at once. Watch for an email from me when it is your turn. Milwaukee members, please call by 9 a.m. Saturday to tell us you are coming so we can reserve a part of the patch for you (608-669-0557, on days of farm events only.) We don't want you to make the long drive, then find that the berries are all picked.

U-pick price: \$2.50 per pint

Final Basil. Sadly, this is our final basil harvest. A disease called downy mildew has spread through our plantings. This is the same disease that ended our basil crop prematurely last year. 2010 was the first year we (or anyone in Wisconsin) experienced this disease. We are not sure what to expect in the future; it is unclear if the fungus overwinters in Wisconsin. It may have blown into the state both years. Downy mildew was found in Madison again this year, so you might find it in your gardens. The leaves turn yellow. If you look at the bottom of the leaves, you'll see faint grey fuzz. The plant stops growing and the leaves turn brown. We don't want to abandon basil during tomato season again next year, so we've planted a selection of basil varieties in hopes of identifying one with tolerance to downy mildew. I will keep you posted if we identify a useful variety.

The basil this week is neither pretty nor abundant, but we want to send a bit while we still can.

Farm and Veggie Notes. The tomatoes are finally at their peak harvest. This is quite late. The plants in our second tomato field sprouted massive vegetative growth during the hot weather in July. Weeks later, they finally decided to set flowers and fruit. As a result, our tomato harvests are delayed but look good. The tangled growth is intimidating. From the edge of the field, it looks like one enormous mass - the paths are completely overgrown. The crew kept asking "How are we going to pick those tomatoes?" Our only answer has been "Go ahead and step on the vines." It is the only way to wade into the field. Now we've trodden narrow paths through the field. They look like wandering wildlife trails.

Tomatoes - We have 4 lbs mixed tomatoes for you this week, about 2.5 - 3 lb slicing tomatoes plus Romas. We expect to send similar quantities over the next few weeks.

Basil - See above.

Edamame edible soybeans - There is a bundle of edible soybeans in your box today. These are a treat. Pull the pods from the stem, wash well, and boil until the beans are quite tender. Season with salt and pop the beans out of the pods into your mouth. This Japanese specialty is becoming more and more popular in the USA. Storage: Remove the pods from the stems promptly and refrigerate.

Jalapeno chile (small, dark green or red) - These chiles are hot.

WINTER SHARE (this is a repeat of the same info as last week).

We offer a winter share for hungry members who want to extend their CSA season. Our winter share consists of two deliveries, the first on November 17/18 and the second on December 8/9. Please note that you get both the November and December deliveries when you sign up for one winter share.

To register for a winter share, go to <http://tipiproduce.csasignup.com/members/updatemembership> and follow the instructions.

Cost: The cost is \$150 for the two deliveries.

Deadline: The deadline to register is Monday September 26. We need advance notice to order potatoes and cranberries. Our winter share is limited to 150 shares this year.

The produce: These deliveries are much larger than deliveries during the CSA season. We expect to pack two large boxes for each winter share delivery. The contents will depend on the weather, and what is available and good quality. Each delivery will include potatoes, carrots and onions, plus a mix of stored crops such as various winter squash, leeks, garlic, cabbage, beets, celeriac, parsnips, rutabagas and winter radishes. When possible, we will include something fresh from the garden such as Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, broccoli or greens. Some veggies will need to be refrigerated, but others can be stored at room temperature. [Click here](#) to see what we delivered in the 2010 winter shares.

Not sure if you already ordered a winter share? Send yourself an email with your membership info at <http://tipiproduce.csasignup.com/members/statusemail>. Look under Membership Details/ Member Type 1 to view whether you have already signed up for a winter share.

FOUR EGGPLANT RECIPES THIS WEEK.

I love eggplant and want to facilitate each of you learning to love it too. Therefore, I am providing four eggplant recipes this week. **Baba Gha-Hummus** is for those who believe they do not like eggplant. My friend Kim Miller resisted eggplant for years (even when I offered her tastes of prepared dishes) yet she finally found an eggplant dish that she likes. **Lentil-Eggplant Salad** offers an unusual preparation for eggplant. **Pasta with Eggplant, Tomatoes and Bread Crumbs** is prepared with the classic combination of eggplant, tomatoes and garlic. **Eggplant Preserved in Olive Oil** is for the adventurous cooks. Our farm crew has swapped this recipe among themselves for a few years.

Visit our recipe archives to read one of my favorite eggplant recipes ([Ratatouille Salad](#), 8/26/2010 newsletter) and read another tale of an eggplant convert.

Baba Gha-Hummus

CSA member Kim Miller contributed this recipe. Kim writes "I found an eggplant happy place! I've tried eggplant a few different ways and so far this is the only way I like it. Makes a lot so I have been eating it for a while- mainly as sandwiches."

http://find.myrecipes.com/recipes/recipefinder.dyn?action=printerFriendly&recipe_id=709811

Adapted from Cooking Light, May 2002

"I came up with this recipe because I had an eggplant I wanted to use. I noticed, when looking at my favorite recipes for hummus and baba ghanoush, that they were quite similar, so I combined the two, making a large amount of dip with half the work. I make this dish for parties. Leftovers are great for snacks and sandwiches (especially served in a pita with lettuce and roasted peppers)." -Cooking Light Reader

Yield: 2 cups

1 large eggplant
3 tablespoons tahini (sesame-seed paste)
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon ground coriander
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas (garbanzo beans), rinsed and drained

- Preheat oven to 375°.
- Pierce eggplant with a fork. Place eggplant on a jelly roll pan. Bake at 375° for 30 minutes or until tender.
- Cool and peel; discard skin.
- Combine eggplant, tahini, and remaining ingredients in a food processor; process until smooth.

LAST-MINUTE CRUNCH. Pasta with Eggplant, Tomatoes and Bread Crumbs

Mark Bittman, August 10, 2005, New York Times. Time: 40 minutes. Yield: 3 to 6 servings.

"The trick to this recipe is adding crisp-cooked bread crumbs to the sauce at the last minute, which brings the crunch. You can cook the crumbs separately or in the same olive oil you use for the eggplant, removing before the eggplant is added. For this to work, though, they must be fresh: not the stuff sold in cardboard tubes but bread that has been chopped into large (pea-size) pieces in a food processor."

Salt and pepper

1/4 to 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil (use lesser amount if using meat)
1/4 cup diced pancetta, guanciale or bacon (optional)
1 cup coarse fresh bread crumbs
2 small-to-medium eggplants, about 12 ounces, in 1/2- to 1-inch chunks
(sprinkle with salt for about half an hour; rinse and dry before cooking)
1 pound spaghetti or linguine
6 small or 3 medium tomatoes, about 12 ounces, cored, seeded and in 1/2- to 1-inch chunks
1 to 2 teaspoons thinly sliced garlic
Chopped fresh basil or parsley for garnish.

1. Set a large pot of water to a boil and salt it. Put half the oil in a large skillet and turn heat to medium-high. Cook meat, if you are using it, stirring occasionally, until just about crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon. Add bread crumbs and cook, stirring almost constantly, until nicely browned, 3 to 5 minutes; season them with a bit of salt and pepper as they cook. Remove with a slotted spoon and add remaining oil.

2. Cook eggplant, stirring occasionally and seasoning with salt and pepper, until browned and tender, about 15 minutes. When it is done, begin cooking pasta. Add tomatoes and garlic to skillet and cook, stirring occasionally, until they soften, about 10 minutes. By this time, pasta will be just about tender; when it is, drain it.

3. Toss pasta with eggplant-tomato mixture, bread crumbs and meat, if you used it. Taste and adjust seasoning, garnish, and serve.

Lentil-Eggplant Salad

This recipe was created by Berent Enc of Madison, and contributed by CSA member Julie Smith. It is good as a vegan main course with a green salad.

2 small eggplants or one large one
1 cup cooked lentils, cooked in vegetable stock without salt
1 large tomato
1 Tbs. brandy
1/2 Tbs. tomato paste
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
1 tsp. smoked paprika
dash of cayenne
1 large onion, chopped
2 Tbs. wine
1 Tbs. mushroom powder (I get this by pulverizing a dried mushroom or two in a clean coffee grinder)
1 Tbs. balsamic vinegar
black pepper
kosher salt
safflower oil for frying

1. Prepare the eggplant(s): zebra-stripe the eggplant(s) and slice into 1/2" slices. Put on a baking rack with a cookie sheet beneath. Sprinkle Kosher salt over the top and lightly rub in. Wait about one hour or until brown liquid pools on top of the eggplant. Turn on the other side and repeat. [Some people skip the salting, but it does remove some bitterness and, most importantly, the water, which makes them fry better and seem "meatier."] Rinse the slices well to remove excess salt & pat dry with towel. Cut the slices into wedges, about six wedges from large slices, halves or four wedges from smaller ones.
2. Heat about 2 Tbs. of safflower oil (safflower takes high heat without smoking) in a large skillet. Fry the wedges of eggplant until brown in very hot pan, turning to brown both sides. Remove to a plate with paper towel.
3. Add another Tbs. of oil to the pan [it may be necessary to cool the pan off somewhat by taking it off the heat for a minute or two]. Saute the onions but do not let brown. Add 1 Tbs. heated brandy and shake. [B. used to ignite the brandy at this point.] Add 1/2 cup vegetable stock and cook to reduce the liquid. Continue to reduce while adding the wine, tomato paste, mustard, smoked paprika, cayenne, mushroom powder, balsamic vinegar, and black pepper. Cook until liquid is almost evaporated.
4. Add cooked, drained lentils to the mixture. Add the eggplant. Gently warm until all ingredients blend. Tastes even better if allowed to sit an hour or two. Serve at room temperature.

Eggplant Preserved in Olive Oil

This recipe is for the adventurous cooks. It comes highly recommended by our farm crew. Farmhand Maggie Schley introduced this recipe. Kerry, Anne and Eric have each made the dish and raved about it. I've always resisted because the dish sounds so odd and oily. But they say it is great, so I will give it a try too. The resulting dish is like a pickled eggplant, but preserved in oil. The recipe below says that the preserved eggplant can be stored for months, but we don't trust it. Botulism, anyone? So we recommend that you eat the dish more promptly than that. Kerry suggests to salt lightly in the first step to avoid over-salting the dish. You can always increase the salt later but you cannot take it away.

Adapted from <http://www.theslowcook.com/2009/09/03/preserving-eggplant-in-olive-oil/>

"Thank the genius who discovered that eggplant (other things, too) can be stored almost indefinitely when covered with olive oil. My wife normally does not care for eggplant - she especially dislikes the texture - but we served this preserved eggplant at our wedding and have held a special fondness for it ever since. I like to pull out a jar with cocktails.

The preparation is extremely kind to the cook. There are no boiling pots or canning gadgets to worry about. All you need are some jars with lids and a few basic ingredients that you no doubt have already grown in your garden.

Don't even worry about a recipe. Simply peel your eggplant and cut it into thin squares or rectangles about 2 inches long. Toss these with plenty of salt, then set them in a colander inside a large bowl to drain for at least 12 hours. They will shed lots of liquid. At the end of that time, use your hands to press as much remaining liquid out of the eggplant as you can.

Toss the drained eggplant with enough red wine vinegar to thoroughly coat, then set aside for 1 hour. Now pack the eggplant into pint jars, layering it with occasional leaves of basil, crushed garlic cloves and pinches of red pepper flakes. Press each layer down firmly, draining off any excess vinegar. When the jar is full, cover the contents with your favorite extra-virgin olive oil. Secure the lids on the jars and refrigerate.

Let the flavors mellow for at least a week, preferably longer. We are still eating eggplant we put away last year. Each bite reminds us of our wedding buffet."