

# Great Basin Basket CSA

Summer, Week 6

August 16th, 2011



## We want to hear from you!

Each week we scour books and website for recipes and ideas but we have been missing our best resource, our members. If you have a recipe or a story about your experiences with your box of produce, we would love to hear it! We will use our favorites for the newsletter. We hope you have found some great uses for all the produce, the old favorites and the strange new items.

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**Note on Alum** – One of our members pointed out to us that alum is an unnatural additive and is unhealthy in doses greater than an ounce (please see USDA for more information). Alum is used in canning to maintain fruit and vegetable crispness. If you would rather not use alum when making your pickles you can take extra steps to make sure your pickles are crisp. Soaking your cucumbers for 2 hours in ice water will assure they are at their crispiest before canning. Also, the grape leaves will help to hold the crispness without the alum.

## What's in your basket this week:

Organic Carrots	Organic Eggplant
White Onion	Organic Tomatoes
Spanish Onion	Organic Cantaloupe
Organic Squash	Organic Sage
Organic Bell Peppers	Organic Spinach
Organic Cherry Tomatoes	Organic Jalapenos
Organic Lemon Cucumbers	
Organic Mickey-Lee Watermelon	
Organic Anaheim Peppers	
Organic Romanian Peppers	
Organic Sweet Genovese Basil	
Organic Slicing Cucumbers	

## **Spinach**

We are lucky this week to have fresh spinach from Salisha's Delicious. She has great talent in growing greens especially during the hotter months, when they tend to wilt and are difficult to grow.

## **Eggplant**

This week you will be receiving new varieties of eggplant. Raveena green eggplant and the orient charm light purple eggplant. These slender Asian eggplant magically hold their shape as you sauté it, without going mushy, and yet it collapses in the mouth with a final suggestion of the dishes flavor. Because of its nutritional and culinary properties (rich in taste, flavor and various preparation possibilities) the eggplant can be used to substitute meat in many dishes as well as in pastries and pasta.

## **Mickey-Lee Watermelon**

This red, flavorful, seeded watermelon is weighing down your box this week. Mickey-lees are cute, sweet with minimal seeds. Originating in Africa, watermelons were first cultivated in Egypt where testaments to their legacy were recorded in hieroglyphics painted on building walls. The fruit was held in such regard that it was placed in the tombs of many Egyptian kings.

## **Lemon Cucumbers**

These funny looking cukes are very popular among our customers. Once you try them they may become your favorite cucumber. They are called lemon cucumbers not because of their taste but because of their size and color. They actually have a lovely mild taste that is a bit sweeter than a normal cucumber and the peel is soft and easy to eat, so no peeling is necessary.

## **Ambrosia Cantaloupe**

This melon is one of our sweetest melons we have. Don't be fooled by the greenish color of their skin, it doesn't mean that they are not ripe. Its flesh should be deep peach color with juicy, tender extra sweet flavor. The best way to tell if a melon is ready to eat is to smell the blossom end of the melon. If it smells sweet and fragrant it will taste as such. You can also gently test the area for softness, if it is hard as a rock, let ripen for 1 or 2 days, but eat before it gets too soft.

## **Spicy Glazed Eggplant**

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1/4 lb Asian eggplants (about 4), trimmed, halved lengthwise, and cut diagonally into 1 1/2-inch pieces  
2 tablespoons mirin (Japanese sweet rice wine)  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1/2 teaspoon finely grated peeled ginger  
1/8 teaspoon Japanese seven-spice powder (sometimes labeled "*shichimi togarashi*")  
3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
1 tablespoon finely chopped chives

## Directions

1. Toss eggplant with 1 teaspoon salt and drain in a colander, stirring occasionally, 45 minutes.
2. Rinse eggplant under cold water and dry well, pressing out any excess moisture.
3. Stir together mirin, soy sauce, ginger, and seven-spice powder.
4. Heat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-high heat until it shimmers, then sauté eggplant until browned, about 8 minutes. Stir in mirin mixture and cook, gently stirring and turning frequently, until sauce becomes a glaze and eggplant is browned and tender, about 1 minute.
5. Serve hot or at room temperature, sprinkled with chives.

## Avacado, Tomato and Mango Salsa

1 mango - peeled, seeded and diced  
1 avocado - peeled, pitted, and diced  
4 medium tomatoes, diced  
1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced  
1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro  
3 cloves garlic, minced  
1 teaspoon salt  
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice  
1/4 cup chopped red onion  
3 tablespoons olive oil

## Directions

In a medium bowl, combine the mango, avocado, tomatoes, jalapeno, cilantro, and garlic. Stir in the salt, lime juice, red onion, and olive oil. To blend the flavors, refrigerate for about 30 minutes before serving.

## Lemon Cucumbers with Toasted Sesame Seeds

Take a few tablespoons of sesame seeds and toast them in a pan until light golden brown. They become scented and slightly darker. Take care not to overdo them, once they get to toasting temperature they go quickly!

After the sesame seeds have cooled to room temperature, mix in a bit of salt and blend thoroughly. Next, slice your cucumber and simply press both sides into the sesame seeds.

## Portobellos stuffed with Sausage, Spinach and Smoked Mozzarella

3/4 pound mild Italian sausage  
1 medium Spanish onion, sliced  
6 tablespoons olive oil  
1/2 cup dry red wine  
8 ounces fresh spinach leaves, coarsely chopped  
1/2 cup water  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
4 tablespoons chopped fresh basil leaves  
4 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley  
12 ounces fresh smoked mozzarella, cut into small cubes  
4 large portobello mushrooms, stems removed  
2 plum tomatoes, thinly sliced

## Directions

1. Preheat grill to medium-high heat.
2. Brush sausages and onion slices with olive oil and place on the grill. Cook until browned on all sides.
3. Put the sausage and onion into a saute pan, add the wine and cook until the wine is completely reduced. While the wine is reducing, break up the sausage into small pieces. Add the spinach, 1/2 cup of water and season with salt and pepper. Cook until the spinach has wilted, about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in the 2 tablespoons of the basil, 2 tablespoons of the parsley and the cheese and let cool slightly.
4. Heat the grill to high.
5. Brush the mushroom caps on both sides with the remaining oil and season with salt and pepper. Place the mushrooms on the grill, top side down and cook until golden brown, about 4 minutes. Remove the mushrooms from the grill and place on a flat surface, cap side down.
6. Fill the mushrooms with the sausage mixture and top each with a few slices of tomato. Season the tomatoes with salt and pepper and place on the grill, cap side down, close the cover and cook until the mushroom and filling have heated through, the cheese has melted and the tomatoes are soft, about 5 minutes. Remove to a platter and sprinkle tops with the remaining parsley and basil.