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Corn

Brianne Sherwood
Utah State University

Amanda Hawks
Utah State University

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USU STUDENT ORGANIC FARM

September 19, 2011

Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 19



Some of our many beautiful corn stalks

Conquering the Bounty: Corn

And there is SOO much bounty. So what to do with it all? Here are a few ideas:

- ❖ Steam it instead of boil. It's faster because you don't have to wait for a big pot to boil.
- ❖ Grill it OR wrap shucked corn in foil and put it in a 375°F oven for 20-25 minutes
- ❖ Cut off the kernels and make corn chowder on a stormy day (fresh kernels are so much tastier than frozen- see winter squash newsletter)
- ❖ Cook it, cool it, cut kernels off and keep in fridge or freeze in meal-sized containers
 - Put the kernels on a taco salad (see lettuce newsletter recipe)
 - Put the kernels in veggie, bean, and/or meat enchiladas
 - Add to omelets or frittatas (see spinach newsletter)
 - Put fresh corn kernels into cornbread (about ½ cup kernels for one pan of cornbread)
 - Make a fresh corn salad with cooked corn kernels, chopped tomatoes and a little pesto or other herbs

Featured Vegetable: Corn

Newsletter by: *Brianne Sherwood*

We have so much corn right now it's coming out of our ears (great pun, right?). And it's SO incredibly cheap! This is probably because the U.S. produces 42% of the world's corn! Most of it is used for animal feed, but other uses include exporting to other countries, human food, seed, and industrial uses such as ethanol production. Because there is so much corn available here in the U.S. you can find it in a lot more foods than you think. It's in peanut butter, snack foods, soft drinks, multivitamins, ketchup, mustard, ground beef, and frozen yogurt just to name a few. Many of these foods contain corn in the form of high fructose corn syrup, a sweetener that is not nutritious like fresh corn.

Corn is officially a grain because of its high protein and carbohydrate content. It has been an important nutrition resource around the world for thousands of years because of this fact. These days a lot of corn is genetically modified or is a genetically modified organism (GMO). The only way to ensure you are not getting genetically modified corn is to either buy organic or ask the farmer you are buying from at the market. Of course, the corn you receive in your share is organic. Can we count the bonuses to buying local organic produce again?

Storage and Preparation

Store your corn in the refrigerator to help it retain its sweetness and vitamin C content. Keep the husk on until you are ready to cook it. This helps retain the moisture content. Also, corn is just like everything else when it comes to sweetness. The sooner you eat your corn from the time it was harvested, the sweeter it will be.

To prepare the corn for steaming or boiling, shuck the corn along with all the silky strands just before cooking. Pick off as many of the silky strands as you can. Steam for about 8-9 minutes, boil for 4-5 minutes. To prepare the corn for grilling, just peel back the husk, remove the silky strands and then fold the husk back over the corn. Grill with the husk over the kernels for about 10-20 minutes, turning occasionally.

Pan-Grilled Corn with Chile

At some point in the summer you may get sick of plain corn on the cob or even grilled corn; at times such as those, this is the recipe to turn to. When browned like this, corn takes on a brand-new flavor.

- 6 ears fresh corn, shucked
- 1 Tbsp neutral oil, like canola, vegetable, or corn
- 1 tsp minced fresh chile (like jalapeno or Thai) or to taste, or hot red pepper flakes or cayenne to taste
- 1 tsp minced garlic or 1 Tbsp minced shallot or white or red onion
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Chopped fresh cilantro leaves for garnish
- Lime wedges (optional)

Use a knife to strip the kernels from the corn.

Put the oil in a large skillet over high heat. When hot, add the corn, chile, and garlic; let sit for a moment. As the corn browns, shake the pan to distribute it so each kernel is deeply browned on at least one surface. Remove from the heat, then add S&P to taste. If you're serving immediately, stir in the cilantro and squeeze a little lime juice over the top.

Recipe from: How to Cook Everything Vegetarian by Mark Bittman

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Find the newsletters online at:
http://digitalcommons.usu.edu/student_organicfarm/

Pumpkin Day October 8th at 9am until the pumpkins are gone! CSA members get one pumpkin FREE!

Elderberries are ripe! They are good for jams and pies (not so good fresh).

We will be selling extra corn every afternoon this week! Tell your friends and come get some more yourself if you would like! 1 dozen for \$3

NEW Volunteer hours:

Tuesday and Friday: 4:30-6:30pm
Thursdays: 9:30am-12:30pm
Saturdays 7:30-1:00pm (harvest)



On the Farm News

With our final corn harvest this last week, it's really hitting home how close the end of CSA is! Next week will be the final week! As such, we will finally be giving out winter squash, but some of it isn't ready yet, so we'll probably have to be in touch and perhaps have many of you pick up squash in the future. With the end so close in sight, we interns and volunteers have begun to take down the farm, pulling plants out and cleaning up various things. It's sad and yet exciting to be preparing for winter along with the season as it starts to change. With fall coming on, don't forget Pumpkin Day! It will be a fun carnival-esque event and CSA members each get one free pumpkin per 1/2 share upon coming that day!

Vegetables to expect our final week: kale, chard, winter squash, tomatoes, potatoes, carrots, peppers, broccoli, cabbage greens, tatsoi, pak choi... And if there is extra produce, we will welcome you to take it!

**I just need to put a plug in for Mark Bittman's "How to Cook Everything Vegetarian" cookbook. You may have noticed that I use a lot of his recipes. That's because there are a lot of real keepers in the book. I highly recommend it to anyone wanting to learn more about cooking. ☺

Article by: Amanda Hawks and Brienne Sherwood

Organic Techniques: Hoophouses

Two structures we have at the farm that we really depend on are our hoophouses. They allow us to extend our season by about three or four weeks, harvest tomatoes earlier in the year, and continue to grow our cool-loving plants in the intense heat of the summer. In the spring, we started planting in our hoophouse as early as March! In the summer, we take off the plastic and replace it with shade cloth. This allows us to continue planting cool-loving plants even when it's over 90 degrees outside. The awesome thing is, you can build one too in your own backyard.

An amazing gardening book that I am always looking through is "Four-Season Harvest" by Eliot Coleman. He says that, "Low-cost [hoophouses] work so well that if the public were more familiar with them, I think every gardening family would have one." He then goes on to explain how to construct a high tunnel. You can also get a FREE resource at:

https://extension.usu.edu/files/publications/publication/GH_High_Tunnels_2008-01pr.pdf. It goes through, step-by-step, how to construct your own hoophouse. Even I look through the instructions and think I could do it and I've never built anything like it before! You can too!

Article by: Brienne Sherwood

For more information about the USU Student Organic Farm or CSA shares visit:

www.usu.edu/organicfarms

Fabulous Flavors: Tips & Techniques

Flavor Boosts

I like the idea of having a list of different types of flavorings and sauces for stir-fries, different grains, and even simple cooked vegetables. So I made one for us. ☺ Having a list of all these flavorings means that you can cook a vegetable or grain, whip up a flavoring, and VOILA, you've got a delicious meal (or at least side dish) that you didn't need a recipe for. Plus you can put the sauce on different veggies and/or grains, making many meals from just a simple list.

Chinese: garlic, ginger, soy sauce, dark sesame oil, cooking sherry, chicken broth, crushed red pepper (1 Tbsp cornstarch per cup can thicken any sauce)

Works great for: green beans, soba noodles, any stir-fry, rice with vegetables, firm or extra-firm tofu

Thai: green curry paste (or red curry paste), coconut milk, fish sauce, ginger, garlic, basil, lime

Works great for: meat seasonings, grains, cooked bell peppers, cooked veggie mixtures

Italian: olive oil, oregano, parsley, basil, garlic, lemon juice (fresh is better but I have a bottle for emergencies), Parmesan cheese and/or mozzarella cheese

Works great for: cooked greens, pasta, grains (cooked couscous or quinoa), squash, potatoes, green beans, asparagus, broccoli, cauliflower- the list is really endless with this one

Mexican: dried red hot pepper flakes, red onion, chili powder, cumin, cayenne pepper, black pepper, cilantro, lime juice (LOVE lime juice with this flavoring). Also, La Victoria green chile sauce is really delicious

Works great for: enchilada fillers, taco fillers, fresh corn kernels, couscous, cooked beans or a bean salad