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Spinach

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USU Student Organic Farm

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Newsletter



Interns work on transplanting new crops brought from the greenhouse.

Veggie Feature: Spinach

Dark green vegetables, especially leafy greens, are really good for you, as Popeye has been teaching for years. But what makes them so incredibly good? Most greens, especially spinach, kale, chard, and collard greens, are packed full of vitamins, minerals, and fiber that protect against a variety of diseases. Spinach in particular has a healthy dose of vitamin C and iron, which happens to be quite a combination. The vitamin C actually makes it so our bodies can absorb more iron from the spinach.

Spinach is an incredibly versatile green. It can be added to soups and stews, sautéed lightly and served as a side dish, or even used in your favorite smoothie. Spinach is most commonly found in the ever-popular spinach salad. It's true, spinach makes for an ideal salad green. Its tender texture and mild taste pair beautifully with almost any topping or dressing. But you know about spinach salad, and I can almost bet that you know how to make one. So I'm going to go in a different direction. Spinach is also excellent on pizza, and since I am a college student, pizza is a staple in my kitchen (the thin-crust, make-your-own-dough kind, not the delivery kind). I especially love what happens to the spinach in this pizza. Because of the oil it's tossed in, the spinach turns into these crispy little leaves-of-deliciousness on top of a crispy thin crust with just enough cheese to hold it all together. It's a great way to showcase the sweet taste of the spinach without eating just another salad.

Article by: Jillian Cartwright

Conquering the Bounty: Make your greens last longer

You're getting a lot of greens at this early point in the season, and chances are, you may not be eating quite enough salads to get through it all. Follow these steps to keep those greens going.

1. As soon as you arrive home with your share, pluck off any parts of your veggies that are yellow or turning bad. It's best just to get the bad out of the bunch as soon as possible.
2. Plunge your greens into a sink or bowl filled with cool water. Swish the greens lightly to release any dirt or debris.
3. Dry your leaves with a salad spinner, or lay on a bed of paper towels until thoroughly dry, excess moisture decreases the life of your greens.
4. Wrap your greens loosely in clean, dry paper towels to continue to absorb excess moisture. Store in a plastic bag that is not tightly closed in the crisper drawer.

Article by: Amanda Spackman

Crisp Spinach Pizza

I would highly recommend using a homemade pizza crust with this recipe, but premade pizza dough will work in a pinch as well.

Dough for 1 pizza
½ c mozzarella cheese
½ c parmesan cheese, freshly grated
3 c fresh spinach
2 T olive oil
Salt and pepper

Preheat oven to 450°F. On a floured surface, roll out the dough as thin as possible. Transfer the dough to a cookie sheet and brush with a light layer of olive oil. Next, sprinkle the cheeses onto the dough. In a medium bowl, toss the spinach with the oil, salt, and pepper, and then layer it on top of the cheese. Bake for 15-18 minutes or until the crust is golden and the spinach is crispy.

On the Farm News

Where is the Asparagus?

Article by: Amanda Hawks

Some of you might have noticed the lack of asparagus in your shares. An inherent risk of local agriculture and CSA membership is the farm's subjectivity to the whims of nature. This winter and spring were so warm that the asparagus simply couldn't grow correctly. Unfortunately, this leads to their absence in the shares this year. The warm spring season has been a bit detrimental to the rest of our vegetables as well. It's so warm in the day and so cold at night that some of our crops have taken a beating for it; the extremes in temperature might limit the first few shares.

Article by: Amanda Hawks

Week one of CSA pickup was a success! Even with picking vegetables through a monsoon on Friday, we enjoyed harvesting the first week of CSA vegetables almost as much as you've no doubt enjoyed eating them. The past two weeks have seen us hard at work planting in the field, seeding more vegetables in the greenhouse, and performing overall farm cleanup. We are excited to begin a new season not only for another summer on the farm, but for the new exciting developments this year. Through the Utah Campus Compact program, we have been able to hire nine new interns who will help out on the farm for about 3-4 hours during the week, and spend the rest of their time focusing on projects benefitting community health, improving information in areas of local agriculture, and assisting the farm in outreach, advertising, and education. This year's farm interns include Alanna Nafziger and Amanda Hawks, returning from last year; as well as Erin Brennan, Katie Peterson, and Kohl Carter. We are so excited to begin a new year with you!

Dining on a Dime: Meatless Meals

Article by: Amanda Spackman

Contrary to popular belief, a vegetarian meal is not rabbit food, in fact, it need not contain lettuce at all. Also, tofu is not a necessary part of a meatless meal, and while I will attest that for me, crispy baked tofu hits the spot, you tofu haters can go meatless without offending your taste buds. Meat usually is a high ticket item at the grocery store, so going meatless can really do your pocketbook a favor.

So what can the meat-lover eat that will be both as appetizing and as satisfying as their typical steak and potatoes dinner? Beans are a great, inexpensive alternative and are great dressed up simply with salt, vinegar, and veggies. Many cheesy pasta dishes are just as good and hearty without the meat, same with a veggie pizza.

For a meatless meal you are sure to love, try these meatless spinach balls. They are so hearty, you almost won't believe there's no meat involved. They can be served in a variety of ways, my favorite is with a slowly simmered marinara sauce from fresh garden tomatoes and whole grain linguine. To substitute fresh spinach, use ten ounces in place of the box, cook first.

SPINACH BALLS

1/4 c. butter, melted
1 box frozen chopped spinach, cooked & drained well
1 c. Pepperidge Farm seasoned crumbs for stuffing
1 tbsp. onion, minced
1/2 c. Parmesan cheese
Pinch of salt, pepper and garlic
3 whole eggs, beaten

Mix together all ingredients and refrigerate until mixture "sets up". Form into balls and bake at 350 degrees 8 to 10 minutes or freeze. If frozen, bake 20 minutes at 350 degrees.

Recipe from *cooks.com*

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

www.usu.edu/organicfarms



Everything Organic: Crop Rotation

Article by: Amanda Whitlock

Crop rotation can be beneficial in conventional or organic farming systems, but it is especially crucial in an organic farming system. Crop rotation will help the crops grown be healthier and stronger to fight off diseases, along with a higher immunity to pests. Learning what crop rotation works well is a knowledge that can take years for a farmer to master, but once a farmer has the knowledge; it can help the yields and

grown within the rotation, it will help the crops even more by allowing the crops to get the nutrients needed. To have a successful crop rotation, it must be a detailed, thought out plan in order to maximize the outcome from the labor. Crop rotation can be hard work and expensive, but it can be worth it in the end and help the farm maximize yields.