



FARM NEWS

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Around The Farm

It's smoky up here. There's a fire burning about 15 miles away from the farm and it's been a bit stressful on all of us. Hopefully the winds will behave and the fire crews will get a handle on it soon. Despite the smoke we're still out there working on the farm- the veggies need to be picked and the fields need to be cared for but it's all feeling a bit too reminiscent of last year. Go away fire!

On a more positive note, the crops are doing really well and we're all enjoying the sweet flavors of summer. Melons have been a big part of our diet and hopefully you've been enjoying yours as well. We have a bit of corn coming in right now from a succession that didn't thrive but we have a huge succession close behind so we have lots more corn to look forward to.

The eggplants are really starting to become abundant now and so I thought I might write a bit about these Solanaceous fruits to inspire some culinary adventures into Eggplantlandia. Eggplants, like peppers, tomatoes and potatoes are in the Solanaceae or the nightshade family. They are beautiful fuzzy plants and have attractive pendulous purple flowers with a yellow center.

We grow many different varieties but our standard favorites include a Japanese type eggplant called Orient Express, a globe-type called Nadia, and a medium sized globe type called Mangan. The Japanese and the Mangans are most abundant right now. We also love to grow some of the more colorful varieties which come in shades of white and lavender and even streaked white and purple.

Besides being nice to look at, eggplants are also really yummy to eat if prepared properly. A few tricks to cooking it right are: cook it thoroughly and over high heat. Many recipes call for salting the cut up rounds before cooking which is really only necessary for slightly over-mature eggplant (the seeds get really dark when they're more mature). When cooking on the stovetop, don't overfill the pan, rather, fry them so they're not touching on med-high heat till their browning on the underside (don't be in a hurry) then flip them & thoroughly cook the other side.

After they're cooked, add flavorings other than salt and or marinate them for a salad. Grilling is another great way to enjoy eggplant. Oil the grill and marinate the eggplant with olive oil and salt and then grill over medium-high heat till you see grill marks on the underside (don't char) then flip. For great babaganoush, place the whole eggplant on the grill (pierce them with a knife first) and cover. Flip them when they start getting charred and soft in middle. The rest of the recipe follows. Bon Appetit!

Cooking the Harvest

Angie's Babaganoush

2 medium sized eggplants
4 cloves of garlic, pressed
2-3 tablespoons raw sesame tahini
½ cup olive oil
Juice of 1 lemon
Salt to taste

Cook the eggplants whole on the grill or in a fire till their soft on inside and charred slightly on the outside. Let them rest for 10 minutes to cool. When cool enough to handle, scrape out the insides without getting much charred skin in the bowl. Whip the cooked eggplant for 30 seconds to mix thoroughly. Add the lemon juice, tahini and olive oil and continue whipping till it's smooth. Add the pressed garlic and salt to taste. Yum!

Princess Eggplant from Julia who lived in China

2 pounds smallish white or purple eggplants
3 tablespoons peanut or safflower oil
2-4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 bunch chard, washed and roughly chopped (it's ok to leave water on the leaves)
1 bunch cilantro, chopped

Sauce: Mix together with a bit of water: 2 cloves garlic, chopped

2 Tablespoons rice vinegar
2 teaspoons sugar
1 Tablespoon soy sauce
Tablespoon dark sesame oil
1 Tablespoon black bean sauce.

Cut the eggplants into large-ish bite-sized pieces. Cook them over high heat in the oil, after 2 minutes, add the garlic and stir often, until the eggplants are mostly cooked through. Add the chard and mix in until it's wilted some, about 1 or 2 minutes. Add the sauce to the still-hot eggplant mixture. STIR in the parsley or cilantro just after removing from the heat, serve with rice.

Reminders

Find our newsletters and recipes online at <http://mountainbountyfarm.com/news.cfm>! Produce is donated promptly at the close of pickup hours. If you can't make it in time, have a friend pick up your box(es).