

Cucumbers are best raw. Use them in a salad, fruity salsas, or creamy raita. Though not common, cucumbers can be baked or sautéed for a mild side dish.

CUCUMBER SALSA

Toss diced cucumbers with diced avocado, finely diced onion, lime juice, cilantro, and a pinch each of cumin, salt, and pepper

COUSCOUS WITH CUCUMBER AND FETA

Toss cooked couscous or orzo with diced cucumber, diced feta, torn mint leaves, lemon juice, and olive oil.

******From FineCooking in Season Cookbook******

EGGPLANT

KEEPING IT FRESH

It's best to use eggplant when it's very fresh, but it will keep for 2 or 3 days in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator.

PRESERVING OPTIONS

Eggplant freezes well but should be frozen within a few days after harvesting in order to preserve its firm texture. Blanching is required to deactivate surface enzymes that contribute to a change in color and flavor. The eggplant should be sliced thinly, dropped in a boiling water-lemon juice mixture, and blanched for 4 minutes. Once cooled completely in an ice water bath then drained, the eggplant slices can be stored in zip-top freezer bags. Frozen eggplant will keep for up to a year.

FRESH MOZZARELLA AND EGGPLANT PASTA

Toss sautéed chunks of eggplant with diced tomato, fresh basil, and tiny mozzarella balls with pasta cooked al dente; add grated Parmigiano-Reggiano on top.

CREAMY GRILLED EGGPLANT BRUSCHETTA

Make a bruschetta topping by grilling eggplant and onion slices, then coarsely chopping them. Mix with a little reduced heavy cream, minced garlic, and fresh thyme. Spoon onto broiled baguette slices and serve warm.



Sisters Hill Farm

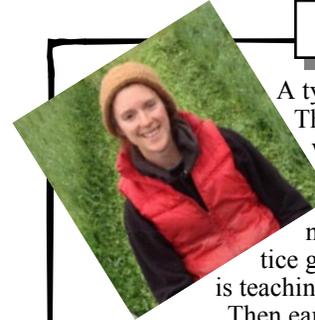
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A typical week at Sisters Hill Farm begins on Sunday evening. This is a great time to walk around the stillness of the farm with a notebook and pencil, writing a list of what needs to be accomplished for the week. Do the parsnips need to be weeded? Will the lettuce be ready for distribution? Is the next bed of beans coming on yet? It is the best way to practice getting the whole farm in my head—an essential task Dave is teaching us now that will be necessary when I run my own farm.

Then early to bed so by 6 AM Monday morning we're ready to sit down as a crew, compare lists, and decide what needs to be done for the week. Dave does a great job of giving us feedback on why his list may be different than ours and steps through the reasoning of why things are prioritized the way they are. For example we may set up irrigation first thing in the morning not only to water dry beds, but also to make finger weeding them in the afternoon easier because weeds will easily pull out leaving the vegetable intact. The weather can play a large role in deciding what day something gets done (is it going to be very hot or rain?), as well as if a large group of volunteers is coming one day and they need something to do together (garlic harvest or potato planting) or if a crop is mature and we need to pick it as soon as possible.

Some weeks, after writing our prioritized list of tasks, it feels overwhelming with a list that goes on and on with time running short. Today was a prime example of this. The reassessed a list from the beginning of the week and had more than two dozen items on it. Daunting to say the least! But after splitting duties up (which we do not always do) and jumping into the work, we got into a groove. It is so rewarding to cross completed things off the list and there is certainly a sense of accomplishment when we're finally caught up around the farm. Of course that joyous feeling is only temporary, it is only a matter of time before the next Sunday rolls around and we're back to another long list with purslane going to seed in the zucchini and tomatoes that need to be trellised (again!).

And that's how summer goes: lots of weeding, planting, and harvesting. There is definitely an excitement and competitive rush to it, but I think I can speak for everyone at the farm when I say that we're still remembering the calm of fall somewhere in the back of our minds. When things cool off and slow down, when we can wait a whole year to do the mad summer dance again.

***** *From Eat-*

*ingWell.com******

Summer Vegetable Crêpes - 4 servings

Crêpes aren't just for dessert—they make a quick and savory weeknight dinner. Here they're filled with ricotta cheese, green beans, zucchini and corn and topped with a chive-cream sauce. Don't skip the step of placing a piece of parchment or wax paper under each crêpe as you fill it—without it, the crêpes are tricky to roll. Serve with: A tossed salad.

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup reduced-fat sour cream
- ½ cup chopped fresh chives, divided, plus more for garnish
- 3 tablespoons low-fat milk
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- ¾ teaspoon salt, divided
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cups chopped zucchini
- 1 ¼ cups chopped green beans
- 1 cup fresh corn kernels, (from 1 large ear; see Tip)
- 1 cup part-skim ricotta cheese
- ½ cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 4 9-inch “ready-to-use” crêpes, (see Tip)

Directions

1. Stir sour cream, 1/4 cup chives, milk, lemon juice and 1/4 teaspoon salt in a small bowl until combined. Set aside.
2. Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add zucchini, green beans and corn and cook, stirring, until beginning to brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Reduce heat to low; stir in ricotta, Monterey Jack, the remaining 1/4 cup chives, the remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper. Cook, stirring gently, until the cheese is melted, 1 to 2 minutes. Remove from the heat.
3. To roll crêpes, place one on a piece of parchment or wax paper (or leave it on the piece of plastic separating the crêpes in the package). Spoon one-fourth of the vegetable-cheese mixture (about 3/4 cup) down the center of the crêpe. Use the paper (or plastic) to help you gently roll the crêpe around the filling. Place the crêpe seam-side down on a dinner plate. Repeat with the remaining crêpes and filling. Serve each crêpe topped with 2 tablespoons of the reserved sauce and more chives, if desired.

Nutrition

Per serving : 302 Calories; 17 g Fat; 8 g Sat; 6 g Mono; 46 mg Cholesterol; 25 g Carbohydrates; 15 g Protein; 3 g Fiber; 687 mg Sodium; 485 mg Potassium

Tips

- To remove kernels, stand a cob on its stem end in a bowl and slice them off with a sharp, thin-bladed knife.
- Ready-to-use” crêpes are fast and convenient. Look for them in the produce section of the market or near refrigerated tortillas.

*****From FineCooking.com*****

Classic Glazed Carrots - Serves four to six

You can use brown sugar instead of white, but in that case, omit the herbs..

Ingredients

- 1-1/2 lb. carrots (about 8), peeled and trimmed
- About 1 cup water
- 2 Tbs. unsalted butter
- 1 Tbs. granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. kosher salt; more as needed
- 1-1/2 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, chervil, or chives (optional)

Directions

1. Cut the carrots in half lengthwise. Holding your knife at a sharp angle, cut the carrot halves into 2-inch lengths to make diamond shapes; try to make all the pieces the same size so they cook evenly. Put the carrots in a 10- to 12-inch sauté pan (they should be almost in a single layer) and add enough water to come halfway up the sides of the carrots.
2. Add the butter, sugar, and salt, and bring to a boil over high heat. Cover the pan with the lid slightly askew, reduce the heat to medium high and cook at a steady boil, shaking the pan occasionally, until the carrots are tender but not soft (a paring knife should enter a carrot with just a little resistance), 12 to 14 min.
3. Uncover and continue to boil until the liquid evaporates and forms a syrup. Shake the pan and roll the pieces around to evenly glaze the carrots. Taste and add a pinch more salt if necessary. Toss with the fresh herbs, if you like, and serve.

nutrition (per serving):

Calories (kcal): 90; Fat (g): 4; Fat Calories (kcal): 40; Saturated Fat (g): 2.5; Protein (g): 1; Monounsaturated Fat (g): 1; Carbohydrates (g): 14; Polyunsaturated Fat (g): 0; Sodium (mg): 360; Cholesterol (mg): 10; Fiber (g): 3;

*****From FineCooking.com*****

Other Carrot Side Dishes

BRAISED SWEET-AND-SOUR CARROTS

Braise whole small carrots or long chunks in butter or olive oil, a little water or broth, and a bit of honey and Dijon mustard. Braise until tender and then let the liquid reduce to a syrupy, sweet-tangy glaze.

CREAMY CARROT PUREE

Make a mashed carrot puree by boiling carrots and perhaps parsnips and mashing as you would potatoes. Enrich the puree with butter or cream and season with a dash of nutmeg and ground ginger.

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CUCUMBERS