



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

August 9 - 10, 2019

What's In The Box?

SIERRA BLANCA ONIONS: This is a mild onion that is excellent raw in salads and on sandwiches. It's also pretty tasty on the grill!

GREEN AND/OR ITALIAN ZUCCHINI: Check out this week's **Cooking with the Box** article for links to recipes for **Zucchini & Onion Gratin & Zucchini Banana Bread**.

GREEN AND/OR SILVER SLICER CUCUMBERS: Use cucumbers to make the **Yogurt Cucumber Sauce** to accompany this week's featured eggplant dish.

ITALIAN GARLIC: If you missed **last week's featured article** about garlic, take a moment to catch up and learn more about the different kinds of garlic and their characteristics.

ORANGE CARROTS: Wash and trim these tender, sweet carrots and put them in a clear jar. Put them in a prominent place in the refrigerator so they're available and visible for a quick and easy snack.

BROCCOLI: This vegetable is a powerhouse of nutrients, which is why it's a good one to eat frequently! Visit this week's **Cooking with the Box** article on the blog to find a recipe for **Broccoli Slaw with Miso Ginger Dressing!**

GREEN BEANS: Ever try roasted beans? Season with oil, salt, pepper and a touch of garlic powder then roast until slightly golden and wrinkled. They make a tasty snack or serve with a sandwich in place of French fries.

GOLD POTATOES: This week's potato variety is Carola, an early season gold skin, gold flesh potato that has a moist waxy flesh. Use for roasting, boiling, soups and chowders as well as potato salad.

GREEN BELL PEPPERS: Stuffed peppers are always an option, but sautéed peppers are also a flavorful addition to sandwiches, fajitas, scrambled eggs, etc.

JALAPEÑO PEPPERS: They are hot this year! Make sure you find the pepper in your box. If you don't need it this week, put it in a bag in the freezer and use it later.

SUNORANGE, RED GRAPE, OR CHOCOLATE SPRINKLES TOMATOES: Skewer tomatoes along with chunks of onion and zucchini, brush with oil, season with salt and pepper and cook them on the grill!

TOMATILLOS: First remove the husk from the tomatillo, then wash the tomatillo before using. It will feel a little sticky after you take off the husk, this is normal. Tomatillos are great for salsa verde, but can also be used for other things as well. Refer to this week's **Cooking with the Box** article on our blog for more suggestions.

EGGPLANT: You will receive one of four varieties including the traditional Black eggplant, the striped Listada, long and slender Lilac Bride or our all-purpose Purple Dancer eggplant. Refer to this week's **vegetable feature** article for more information.

COLLARD GREENS: Collards are this week's cooking green characterized by broad, flat, rounded leaves. They are traditionally cooked until tender or blanched and used as a wrapper for the filling of your choice.

CILANTRO: This is a versatile herb that is great in fresh salsa or as a garnish to other dishes such as this week's featured recipe for **Roasted Eggplant with Spiced Chickpeas & Tomatoes**.

SUN JEWEL MELONS OR SWEET SARAH MELONS: Sun Jewel melons are the small bright yellow melons that are oblong shaped. They have sweet, crisp white flesh. Sweet Sarah melons are a cantaloupe with finely netted and sometimes smooth rind. They have a sweet, flavorful flesh that isn't as musky as some other cantaloupe varieties.

CHOICE: BASIL—Our basil continues to produce very well. We've sent enough for about a handful per vegetable share.

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS! Do you know we now have TWO newsletters?

This newsletter is our weekly "**What's In the Box**" newsletter. You will find paper copies of this newsletter at your site in a **GREEN** folder and we provide links to this newsletter in your "What's In the Box" email that accompanies each delivery. This is the newsletter that will always contain the weekly **VEGETABLE FEATURE** article as well as the list of **BOX CONTENTS** and **RECIPES**.

Our second newsletter is called **WEED 'EM and REAP –LIFE AT THE FARM!** This newsletter is published bi-weekly. You will find paper copies of this newsletter at your site in a **RED** folder labeled "**Main Article Newsletter.**" We also provide a link to this newsletter each week in your "What's In the Box" email. This newsletter features articles covering a variety of farm-related topics including Crew Profiles, Crop & Field Updates, News Reports, Culinary Articles and more!

We also publish all of our weekly content from both newsletters on our blog! Our blog always contains additional pictures to accompany each article and has clickable links to help you readily find and use resources to help you "eat through the box" each week.

VEGETABLE FEATURE: Eggplant: Flashy, yet humble

By Andrea Yoder

Eggplant is one of the most beautiful crops we grow. The plants grow several feet tall and, in their peak, are loaded with beautiful glossy fruit hanging heavy on the plant. In the world, there are many varieties of eggplant ranging in size from small round eggplant the size of a golf ball to large globe eggplant weighing over a pound. They come in a variety of colors ranging from various shades of purple to black, green, lavender, white and orange. We have narrowed our lineup to our four favorite varieties including Lilac Bride, Purple Dancer, Listada and the traditional Black eggplant. Refer to our previous blog post which includes pictures and profiles of each eggplant and highlights the characteristics of each in further detail. (<http://harmonyvalleyfarm.blogspot.com/2016/08/vegetable-feature-eggplant.html>). Each variety is best for different uses, so it's helpful to visualize which variety you have before you decide how you want to use it.

Eggplant is a member of the nightshade family and must be cooked. Many resources will tell you to salt eggplant before cooking it to remove bitterness. While some older varieties were bitter, the new varieties we grow have been selected because they are not bitter, thus you can skip the salting step for that reason. You may still choose to salt eggplant to soften the flesh so it doesn't absorb too much oil. Most of our varieties of eggplant have skin that is tender enough to eat, thus you do not always need to peel them either.

While eggplant is thought to have originated in the area around India and Pakistan, it has now been spread around the world. Since eggplant is part of so many cultures, there are a lot of ways you can use eggplant in your cooking. It is often incorporated into curry and stir-fry dishes in Indian, Thai, and Chinese cuisine. Sicilians are famous for eggplant caponata while Middle Eastern dishes include baba ganoush. The French put their mark on eggplant with the traditional Provencal dish, ratatouille. Eggplant has a mild flavor and soft texture when cooked, which is what makes it unique. While it isn't a predominant flavor, it has a texture such that it is able to absorb other flavors and pairs well with other vegetables including tomatoes, onions, garlic, peppers, potatoes and chickpeas. It also goes well with flavorful olive oil, tahini, herbs such as basil and parsley and spices including cumin, coriander, sumac, and cinnamon. It also goes well with dairy products including yogurt, cheese (feta, Parmesan and mozzarella), cream and fruits including lemons and pomegranate.

Eggplant does not store terribly well, so it is best to use it soon after getting it. It is best stored at a temperature of about 45-50°F, but your home refrigerator should be colder than this. Thus, we recommend storing your eggplant on the kitchen counter and use it within 2-4 days.

This week's recipes come from Yasmin Khan's beautiful book entitled, **Zaitoun** (which means "olive" in Arabic). This book is a collection of Palestinian recipes and stories about Yasmin's experiences gathered while sharing meals with Palestinian people as she traveled through the area once known as Palestine. In this book she shares what she learned about the food and culture that shapes their lives. This week's featured recipes build a full, simple meal.

Roasted Eggplant with Spiced Chickpeas and Tomatoes is best served at room temperature. Serve it with the creamy **Yogurt and Cucumber Sauce** on the side and **Arabic flatbread** (recipe found on our blog). You do need to allow time for the dough to rise, etc, so if you don't have time to make homemade flatbread, you can also serve this meal with purchased pita bread.

Roasted Eggplant with Spiced Chickpeas and Tomatoes

Yield: 4 servings

1 ½ pound eggplant (about 2 large ones)	1 onion, finely chopped	¼ tsp ground cinnamon
2 Tbsp olive oil or any neutral oil, plus more for the eggplant	3 garlic cloves, crushed	¼ tsp ground allspice
Sea salt, to taste	14 ounce can of plum tomatoes	½ tsp ground cumin
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste	14 ounce can of chickpeas, drained and rinsed	Extra virgin olive oil, to serve
	2 tsp sugar	Chopped cilantro, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Cut the eggplants in half, then into quarters and finally slice them into ¾ inch chunks. Place in a baking pan, drizzle with some cooking oil, sprinkle over a pinch of salt and then toss the eggplant to coat. Place in the oven and bake for 20 minutes, or until soft.
3. Meanwhile, fry the onion in a large sauce pan in 2 Tbsp cooking oil until soft and golden (this will take about 15 minutes). Add the garlic and fry for a few minutes before adding the tomatoes, chickpeas, sugar, spices and some salt and pepper. Fill the tomato can up with just boiling water and add that to the pot, too. Cover and cook for 30 minutes, until the chick peas are very soft.
4. Add the eggplant and cook for a final 10 minutes, splashing in more hot water if the dish looks dry.
5. Leave to cool to room temperature before drizzling over plenty of extra virgin olive oil and scattering with cilantro.

Yogurt and Cucumber Sauce

7 ounces cucumber (any type)	Small handful of fresh mint leaves, finely chopped
2 cups unflavored, plain yogurt	1 tsp dried mint
½ garlic clove, crushed	¼ tsp salt

1. Cut the cucumber in half and, using a teaspoon, scoop out and discard all its seeds. Chop the flesh into small cubes and mix them into the yogurt with garlic, fresh and dried mint and ¼ tsp salt.