



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

July 31 - August 1, 2020

Vegetable Feature: Sweet Corn By Chef Andrea

Summer isn't summer without sweet corn and we work really hard to grow the sweetest, best tasting corn we can! Sweet corn is not always the easiest crop to grow. Variety selection is a big part of the picture and there's also the issue of pest control because, unfortunately, we are not the only creatures who like to eat sweet corn in the summer! If you're interested in learning more about what it takes to grow sweet corn, I'd encourage you to read the article we published on our blog last year entitled "*The Journey of Sweet Corn: From Seed to Table.*"

Sweet corn is a crop you can't rush, it's ready when it's ready and you just have to do your best to determine when it's at its optimal maturity. Sometimes you'll have a lot and sometimes there will only be a small amount to pick. Regardless of the quantity, I want to encourage you to think about ways you might enjoy and use corn that go beyond the classic Corn on the Cob. Before we jump into preparation, I need to mention one very important thing about sweet corn that you need to remember. Keep It Cold!!! When you get your sweet corn home, please put it directly into the refrigerator and keep it there until you're ready to cook it. If refrigerator space is an issue, remove the husk and put the ears of corn in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Keeping sweet corn cold is important for maintaining the sugar content. Time and warm temperatures will cause sugars to convert to starch which will negatively impact both flavor and texture.

As for using corn, you may choose to cook it in the husk or without the husk and you also have the option of cooking it on the cob or cutting it off the cob before cooking. Often people will choose to cook corn on the cob and in its husk if they're cooking it on a grill or open fire. If you do this, you should soak the ears of corn in their husks for a bit before putting them on the grill, otherwise the husks will dry out and burn more quickly. If you choose to remove the husks first, you have several options for cooking the corn if left on the cob. You can roast it in the oven or place it directly on the grill. You can also boil ears of corn in salted water. Once cooked, you can either eat it directly off the cob or cut the kernels off the cob using a paring knife. Whether cooked or raw, cutting kernels off the cob can sometimes get a little messy. I like to prop my ear of corn up on end in a shallow bowl when I cut the kernels off the cob. This way the kernels will fall into the bowl instead of all over the cutting board.

Once corn is cooked you have many options for how to use it. You can incorporate it into pasta dishes, risotto, vegetable salads,

What's In The Box?

SIERRA BLANCA ONIONS: This mild flavored white onion is an early season variety intended for eating fresh. I recommend cutting them in very thin slices for use in salads or sandwiches. Save the thick slices for making beer-battered onion rings!

MISSOURI GARLIC: We're almost finished topping and sorting this year's garlic crop and hopefully it will all be safely stored in the cooler by the end of this week! While this garlic isn't technically "fresh" garlic anymore, you'll notice the cloves are still very plump and juicy.

GREEN AND/OR ITALIAN ZUCCHINI: Do you know what a tsunami wave of zucchini looks like? For us it looks like 3,652 pounds harvested in one picking! Enjoy this week's pile of zucchini and if you're at a loss for what to do with it, refer to our blog post **featuring zucchini** from June which included a list of 20 different recipes!

GREEN AND/OR SILVER SLICER CUCUMBERS: Our first crop of cucumbers is tapering off, but it looks like we'll be picking the second one by next week. Pair this week's cucumbers together with thinly sliced Sierra Blanca onions in a tasty vegetable salad. Check out this week's **Cooking with the Box** article for a few suggestions!

GREEN BEANS: The green bean varieties we're picking this week were selected because they are able to set blossoms in the heat of summer. They also yield beautiful, dark, shiny, straight beans that are a bit more tender than the early season beans we have been picking.

GREEN CURLY KALE: Our second crop of kale is ready to start harvesting and our first field still looks beautiful and productive as well! Check out this week's featured recipe for **Grilled Corn & Kale Salad!**

GOLD POTATOES: We continue our progression through the potato field with Gold Carola and Molli potatoes which both have gold skin with gold flesh. Both varieties are considered "waxy" varieties meaning they have a more creamy texture and will hold together well in soups, roasted, etc. These are also still considered "new potatoes" and you'll notice they have very tender skins, handle carefully.

SWEET CORN: Check out this week's **vegetable feature** article and learn more about sweet corn and the many ways you can enjoy it beyond the typical Corn on the Cob!

SUNORANGE, CHOCOLATE SPRINKLES OR RED GRAPE TOMATOES: Their taking their own sweet time to ripen this year, but nonetheless they're starting to color up and wow are they sweet!

TOMATILLOS: This is the round, green vegetable with a lantern-like husk. If you aren't familiar with them, or just need some suggestions for how to use them, refer to **Last Week's Vegetable Feature** article which included a list of 12 tasty recipes!

CAULIFLOWER OR BROCCOLI: Both of these cruciferous vegetables are packed with sulfur-rich antioxidants that benefit our bodies by combatting cell damage and reducing inflammation. They also contribute to the strong aroma both of these vegetables can emit when overcooked or cooked with a lid on the pan. For the most pleasant eating experience, avoid overcooking and remove the lid from the pan for the second half of the cooking time to dissipate some of the sulfur compounds.

ORANGE CARROTS: These early season carrots are more tender than the storage varieties we plant later in the season. Check out this week's **Cooking with the Box** article for a link to a fun dipping snack option to use with raw carrots!

BONUS: EGGPLANT OR TOMATOES (MARSALATO OR ROMA): More of both selections coming next week!

soup, chowder, quesadillas, tacos and salsa! You can also use fresh corn kernels in cornbread, muffins, waffles, pancakes or even to make desserts such as ice cream or a blueberry sweet corn crumble! A little fresh corn can really brighten up any dish with its sweetness, color and tender texture. If you need a little help finding recipes or ideas, check out this article from *Epicurious* that includes 79 recipes using corn!

We always focus on the kernels of corn, but if you really want to maximize each ear of corn we really should look at how to use the entire ear! For starters, don't discard the cobs! Corn cobs have a lot of flavor and can be used to make a flavorful Corn Cob Broth or stock. Corn cob broth can be used when making risotto, poaching fish or chicken, or as the base for sauces and soups. There are many ways you can do this, but here are a couple versions to get you started.

Corn Stock by Martha Stewart (www.marthastewart.com/1062641/corn-stock?printview)

Corn Stock by *Saveur Magazine* (www.saveur.com/article/Recipes/Corn-Stock/)

I also learned that corn silk has health benefits and can be made into tea using either fresh or dried silks! If you're interested in learning more about these health benefits or how to make corn silk tea, here are a few articles to consult: www.stylecraze.com/articles/health-benefits-of-corn-silk-tea and www.healthline.com/nutrition/corn-silk#bottom-line.

Lastly, I want to mention that sweet corn is very easy to freeze so you can savor it during the winter. I recommend cooking it on the cob and then removing the kernels after cooking. Simply put it in a freezer bag and pop it into the freezer. It's that easy! Use the corn cobs to make corn stock and you can freeze that as well!

Grilled Corn & Kale Salad

Yield: 2-3 servings

4 cups green curly or
lacinato kale, torn into
bite-sized pieces (½
bunch)

1 Tbsp olive oil (for
massaging the kale)

1 Tbsp vegetable oil (for
grilled vegetables)

1 medium zucchini

½ of a medium white or red
onion, thinly sliced

2 ears fresh corn, husked

½ cup grape tomatoes,
halved or quartered

1 avocado, diced (optional)

½ cup pumpkin seeds,
toasted

Dressing:

3 Tbsp olive oil

¼ cup lime juice

2 cloves garlic

¼ to ½ of a jalapeño, seeds removed

1 tsp chili powder

½ tsp dried oregano

¼ tsp cumin

Salt and black pepper, to taste

1. First, preheat your grill or prepare a grill pan if you're using the stovetop.
2. While the grill is preheating, prepare the kale. Strip the leaves off the main stem and tear them into bite-sized pieces. Place kale in a large bowl and drizzle with 1 tbsp olive oil. Using your hands, massage the kale to ensure all pieces are thoroughly and lightly coated with oil. Set aside.
3. Make the dressing. Combine all dressing ingredients in a blender and pulse until everything is combined. Adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Pour about half the dressing over the kale and toss to combine.
4. Prepare the zucchini and corn for grilling. Slice zucchini into ¼ inch slices. Brush each side with a little vegetable oil and season with salt and pepper. Brush the ears of corn with vegetable oil as well, and season with salt and pepper. Lay both vegetables on the grill and grill for 5-7 minutes on each side, or as needed to get nice grill marks and cook the vegetables until tender. Remove from grill and set aside to cool slightly.
5. Once the vegetables are cooled enough to handle, cut the zucchini into small diced pieces. Using a paring knife, cut the corn kernels off the cob of corn. Add both zucchini and corn kernels to the kale along with the onion and tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper and toss to combine. Add more dressing as needed to nicely coat all the vegetables. You may choose not to use all the dressing.
6. Allow the salad to rest for at least 10-15 minutes before serving. This salad is durable enough to be made in advance and served the next day, in fact the flavors and texture are actually a bit improved! Top each portion with toasted pumpkin seeds and avocado if desired.

This recipe was adapted slightly from an original recipe published on www.thealmondeater.com. This is a great "make in advance" salad to take with you on a picnic or pack for a portable lunch!

Sweet Corn Pancakes

Yield: About 9-10 4-inch pancakes

2 Tbsp butter, plus additional
for the pan or griddle

1 cup fresh corn kernels (cut
from 1-2 ears of corn)

⅛ tsp salt

1 large egg

1 ¼ cups buttermilk

¼ tsp vanilla extract

1 Tbsp sugar

¾ cup all-purpose flour

¼ cup cornmeal (finely
ground)

1 tsp baking powder

½ tsp baking soda

1. Melt butter in a large skillet or on a griddle pan over medium heat. Add the corn and saute for 4-5 minutes, until it begins to brown ever-so-slightly. Season with salt and transfer to another bowl to cool slightly. Wipe out the skillet so you can use it to make the pancakes.
2. Lightly beat the egg in a large mixing bowl, then whisk in buttermilk, vanilla and sugar. In a smaller bowl, combine flour, cornmeal, baking powder, and baking soda. Stir dry ingredients into the egg and buttermilk mixture, mixing just until combined but still a little lumpy in appearance. Fold in the sweet corn.
3. Reheat your skillet or griddle pan over medium heat. Brush the pan with butter and ladle ¼ cup batter at a time, keeping pancakes spaced so they don't run together. When the pancakes have bubbles on top and are slightly dry around the edges, flip them over and cook them until golden brown on the other side. If they seem to be cooking too quickly (dark on the outside, but still raw in the center), turn the heat down slightly for the next batch. Brush the pan with butter in between each patch and continue until all the batter is gone. If you aren't serving and eating them right out of the pan, place the cooked pancakes on a baking rack on a sheet tray and hold them in the oven turned on to low (150-180°F) until you're ready to serve them.
4. Serve warm with butter, fresh fruit and warm maple syrup.

Recipe sourced from www.smittenkitchen.com, with slight adaptations made by Chef Andrea.