



Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

August 6 - 7, 2021

What's In The Box?

AMARANTH: Read more about this gorgeous, burgundy colored "green" in this week's **vegetable feature** article. Use it to make this week's featured recipe, or check out our **recipe database** on our website for more delicious ideas!

PORCELAIN GARLIC: Head over to this week's **Cooking With the Box** article and check out the recipes for **Roasted Garlic Hummus** and **Garlic Butter Steak!**

YELLOW ONIONS: While we've been drying them for nearly a week, this week's onions are still in that awkward stage where they are too dry to wash and too wet to dry clean!! We've done the best we can to clean them, but ask that you do the same in your home.

GREEN AND/OR ITALIAN ZUCCHINI: Despite a cool week and overcast skies, the zucchini field continues to produce very well! Use this week's zucchini along with other vegetables to make this week's featured recipe for **Summer Rice & Cheese Gratin with Zucchini & Amaranth.**

BROCCOLI: Check out this week's **Cooking with the Box Article** where you'll find a recipe for **Spicy Roasted Broccoli with Almonds.**

SUN JEWEL MELON: This is an early Korean melon that is oblong in shape with yellow skin and white stripes. The melons slip off the vine when they are ready, so that's your assurance your melon is ready to eat! The flesh is crisp, white and slightly sweet. Enjoy this just as it is, or use it in savory dishes such as salads and fresh salsa. It pairs well with cucumbers, lime, cilantro, basil, mint, chili peppers, and onions.

GREEN AND/OR WHITE CUCUMBERS: Our second planting of cucumbers is pumping out some nice cucumbers this week! Try this recipe for **Cucumber and Melon Salad with Chile and Honey.**

GOLD POTATOES: While we just dug these potatoes earlier this week, they are no longer technically "new potatoes" as we chopped the vines last week to start setting the skins. This week's variety is called "Molli." It's an excellent choice for boiling, roasting or pan-frying.

LILAC BRIDE EGGPLANT: This variety is one of our favorite thin-skinned Asian varieties. They are best used in stir-fries and curry dishes such as our favorite **One Pot Vegetable Thai Red Curry.**

SWEET CORN: What do I do with just a few ears of corn? Oh, so many things such as corn salsa, mix it into scrambled eggs or add it to soup. If you cut the corn off the cob, you can also use the cob to add flavor to soup, stock or broth. And, you can use the silks to make tea!

SUN ORANGE, CHOCOLATE SPRINKLES OR RED GRAPE TOMATOES: Pop them in your mouth and wait for that burst of flavor, or cut in half and sauté along with onion and garlic to make a quick pasta dish. It's best to store tomatoes at room temperature, but make sure you eat them as soon as they are ripe and ready to go!

GREEN BELL PEPPERS: Chop them up and add them to scrambled eggs, burritos, or put them on top of a **pizza!** Store at room temperature as they may get cold injury in the refrigerator.

EDAMAME: Edamame is a fresh, edible soybean. The pods, however, are not edible. It's much easier to pop the beans out of the pod if you've blanched/cooked them first. If you are not familiar with this vegetable, read **last year's vegetable feature article** first.

MIXED LARGE TOMATOES—We are finally starting to see more color in the tomato field! Handle your bag with care as there is a bag of tomatoes nestled inside. We're picking a few varieties this week including Cherokee Carbon & Cuba Libre ("black" varieties), Gin-Fizz (yellow with a red blush) and Marsalato (ruffled red). Ripen tomatoes at room temperature and eat them as soon as they are ready! Do not refrigerate tomatoes as it can negatively impact the flavor.

VEGETABLE FEATURE: AMARANTH

By: Chef Andrea Yoder

Description: Red Amaranth is a stunning "green" with dark, burgundy colored leaves. Amaranth greens have become an important part of our seasonal diet because of their ability to grow in the heat of the summer when other greens, such as spinach and lettuce, do not thrive. Amaranth is adaptable to variable conditions with little impact from weather or disease. It can survive in extreme heat or drought conditions because it is able to convert twice the amount of solar energy using the same amount of water as most other plants.

Preparation & Use: Amaranth is similar in flavor to spinach, except better! You can prepare it as you would spinach or other similar greens. While amaranth may be eaten raw, the more mature leaves and stems are best when cooked. The stems and leaves are both edible, however the stems might need a little longer cooking time so it is best to separate the leaves from the stem. Amaranth greens may be steamed, sautéed, added to soups, stews, wilted and stir-fried. Amaranth pairs well with so many other summer crops including onions, fresh garlic, zucchini, peppers, corn, green beans, basil, oregano and tomatoes.

Amaranth is thought to have originated in Central and/or South America, but has made its way around the globe. It can be found in Europe, Asia, and the Americas, which means there are many options for finding ways to use this vegetable. Season it with cumin, coriander, oregano and serve it with black beans for more of a Mexican approach. Stir-fry it with garlic, onion, ginger and a drizzle of sesame oil for more of a Chinese influence. Mix it with pasta, tomatoes, oregano, basil and Parmesan for an Italian flair, or take it in more in the direction of Indian cuisine by choosing curry spices & lentils.

Storage: Store amaranth greens in the refrigerator in a plastic bag until you are ready to use them. Remove the twist tie and wash well in a sink of cold water before using. Shake or spin off excess water.

Health & Nutrition: Amaranth is a nutritional power house. The leaves are rich in calcium, phosphorus, protein, vitamin C, carotene, iron, B vitamins, and trace elements including zinc and manganese. Compared to spinach, amaranth leaves have three times more vitamin C, calcium and niacin! Of course, we know vegetables that have rich colors like the magenta leaves of amaranth are also packed with important phytonutrients and antioxidants.

Cultural & Historical Background: Amaranth is an ancient plant that was part of the diets of Aztec civilizations in Mexico up to 7,000 years ago. It was also an important staple food for the Incas of South America and the people of the Himalayan region of Asia. In these ancient cultures, amaranth was also used medicinally and in cultural rituals. It was held as a symbol of immortality and means “never-fading flower” in Greek. Like many other vegetables, amaranth was a multi-use vegetable. The seeds were used as a winter staple and the young leaves were eaten as a fresh vegetable. There are about 60 different varieties of amaranth, some grown to harvest seeds, others for the leaves, and several ornamental species.

Summer Rice and Cheese Gratin with Zucchini & Amaranth

Yield: 6 servings

Butter for dish	4 Tbsp olive oil, divided	6 oz Monterey Jack or Pepper Jack cheese, shredded
2 cups shredded zucchini (about 1 pound)	1 cup minced onion	1 ½ tsp salt
1 cup raw corn kernels	2 large cloves garlic, finely minced	Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
1 bunch amaranth greens	½ cup plain, uncooked white rice	2 Tbsp cold butter
	½ cup broth, milk or water	

1. Heat oven to 325°F. Oil or butter a 2-quart baking dish.
2. Wash zucchini and trim ends. Halve lengthwise, and if seeds are particularly large, core them out. Coarsely grate and place in a large bowl. Add the raw corn kernels to the bowl with the zucchini. Set aside.
3. Vigorously wash amaranth greens in a sink of cold water. Remove from the water and shake off some of the excess water. Remove the leaves from the stems. You will need 4 cups of moderately packed leaves. Once you've measured that quantity, roughly chop the leaves into bite sized pieces and set aside.
4. Heat 3 Tbsp oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onions and garlic and sauté for 5-8 minutes or until softened. Add the amaranth greens and season with 1 ½ tsp salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cover and allow the greens to cook just enough so they are wilted. Once the greens are wilted, stir to combine and then add to the bowl along with the zucchini and corn.
5. Return the sauté pan to the heat and add 1 Tbsp oil. Add the rice to the pan and saute for 1-2 minutes while stirring continuously. This is a quick process that will lightly toast the rice. Remove from heat and add the rice to the bowl of vegetables.
6. Turn your attention to the bowl of vegetables. Stir to combine the mixture, then add ½ cup liquid of your choice and ¾ of the grated cheese (reserve ¼ of the cheese for the very end of the recipe). Transfer to prepared baking dish.
7. Cover tightly with foil and bake for 50 to 60 minutes. The rice should be tender and fully cooked, but not mushy. If the rice is still a little undercooked after 50-60 minutes, you may need to add a few more tablespoons of liquid to the baking dish, cover tightly and return it to the oven for another 10-15 minutes or until the rice has absorbed the liquid and is tender.
8. Once the rice is cooked appropriately, remove the pan from the oven. Either increase oven temperature to 450 °F or turn on the broiler. Remove foil from the pan and dot with the 2 Tbsp of cold butter. Sprinkle on the remaining cheese and bake uncovered until the cheese is browned on top. Remove from the oven and serve hot.

Recipe by Chef Andrea Yoder