



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

www.harmonyvalleyfarm.com

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## VEGETABLE FEATURE: TOMATILLO

By: Chef Andrea Yoder

**Description:** Tomatillos are typically used as a vegetable, but technically they are a fruit. The fruit is hidden inside a husk that looks like a paper lantern. You know the tomatillo is ready to pick when it fills the husk nearly completely.

**Preparation & Use:** Tomatillos may be eaten raw or cooked and have a mild, tangy flavor that is slightly fruity. When raw, tomatillos are firm with a dense flesh. Once cooked, tomatillos soften and break apart becoming more like sauce. They contain pectin which is a natural thickener. The outer husk is not edible, so this needs to be removed before you use them. The fruit inside might feel a little sticky, which is normal. Just give them a quick rinse and you're ready to go.

One of the most familiar ways to use tomatillos is in making salsa! Tomatillo salsa may be prepared with all raw vegetables which will give you a fresh, chunky salsa. The alternative is to cook the tomatillos in a little water before blending the softened, cooked tomatillos with the other salsa ingredients. If you cook the tomatillos first, you'll get a more smooth salsa. Roasting tomatillos along with the other salsa ingredients such as onions, garlic, peppers and even limes cut in half will further develop the flavors of these ingredients giving you yet another version of tomatillo salsa. Tomatillo salsa is delicious when simply served as a snack or appetizer along with tortilla chips, but it can also be used to top off tacos, quesadillas, make enchiladas, or served alongside your morning eggs or stirred into a bowl of black beans and/or rice.

Salsa is not the only use for tomatillos. There are many other interesting ways to take advantage of their unique tang and natural pectin. The tanginess of tomatillos pairs very well with pork and can make a delicious stew which is thickened by the tomatillo. They can also be used to make sauces for chicken and bean dishes, blend them into guacamole, or incorporate them into soups, salads or even dessert!

**Storage:** Tomatillos are best stored at room temperature until ready for use. They are also very easy to preserve for use in the off-season. One option is to make salsa now and either can or freeze it.

## What's In The Box?

**PORCELAIN GARLIC:** Garlic is an essential ingredient in summer vegetable salsas! Make a traditional tomato salsa or mix it up with tomatillos, corn, cucumbers and peppers!

**YELLOW ONIONS:** Use these in this week's featured recipe which includes pickled onions!

**GREEN SLICERS AND/OR WHITE MARTINI CUCUMBERS:** Eat these fresh, or turn them into **Refrigerator Garlic Dill Pickles** to extend their shelf life.

**GREEN AND/OR ITALIAN ZUCCHINI:** Make a batch of **Chocolate Oatmeal Zucchini Cookies**. If it's a winner in your house, shred and freeze extra zucchini this week so you can make a batch next winter!

**ORANGE CARROTS:** While these are not technically storage carrots, they will keep for several weeks in your refrigerator. Use them in raw salads, roast them or just eat them as a snack!

**GREEN BEANS OR NAVAJO ROMANO BEANS:** This week we're picking two beautiful varieties of beans. The "regular" green beans are a dark, slender, shiny variety that we think is quite pretty! Romano beans are flat, wide beans. Cook both until they are tender and bright green, but don't overcook them or they'll lose their fresh bean flavor.

**EDAMAME:** Edamame is an edible soybean. While the bean inside the pod is edible, the pods are not! It's best to briefly cook the pods in boiling salted water, then cool immediately in cold water. Once cooked, it's easy to pop the soybeans out of the pod.

**SWEET CORN:** For the best flavor and optimal sweetness, store sweet corn in the refrigerator and keep it cold until you're ready to cook it.

**SUN ORANGE, CHOCOLATE SPRINKLES OR RED GRAPE TOMATOES:** Cut in half and serve on toast slathered with cream cheese or hummus. You can also toss halved tomatoes with oil, salt and pepper and roast them until they are soft, sweet and slightly roasted on the edges.

**GREEN BELL PEPPERS:** While this variety is on the small side, you can still cut them in half and stuff them with your favorite filling. You can also use them in this week's recipe for **Tomatillo-Melon Pickle Relish!**

**JALAPEÑO PEPPER:** There is one jalapeño in your box and this is a hot pepper! We're also picking a larger variety, so if a recipe calls for "one jalapeño," use your best judgement to decide if you want to use the whole pepper or just a portion. The heat on peppers can vary, so it's best to start small and add more if needed.

**TOMATILLOS:** There is about one pound of tomatillos in your box. Read more about tomatillos in this week's **vegetable feature** article.

**VARIETY OF TOMATOES:** We've had an overcast week so the tomatoes are ripening more slowly. Hopefully we'll have more sun and greater harvests next week! Store tomatoes at room temperature as they ripen for the best flavor.

**SUN JEWEL MELONS OR SWEET SARAH OR FRENCH ORANGE MELONS:** Sun Jewel Melons are yellow with white stripes and white, crisp flesh. Sweet Sarah is a cantaloupe with smooth to lightly netted rind. French Orange melons are a small variety with a coarsely netted rind that has ridges. It's similar to a cantaloupe, but does have some Charentais melon in its genetics which makes it sweet and aromatic!

**BONUS: BROCCOLI, CAULIFLOWER OR GOLD POTATOES:** As space allows, we've included one of these bonus items in your box this week.

Alternatively, you can freeze tomatillos whole and raw. Simply remove the outer husk, wash and dry the fruit. Put them in a freezer bag and pop them into the freezer. They don't retain their firm texture after freezing, so don't be surprised if they are soft when you thaw them.

### Grilled Hot Dogs with Tomatillo-Melon Pickle Relish and Pickled Onions

Yield: 3 cups Tomatillo-Melon Relish and 1 pint Pickled Onions (more than enough to top 8 hot dogs)

Chef Andrea Note: This recipe was adapted from one originally featured at [www.holajalapeno.com](http://www.holajalapeno.com) which used pineapple in place of the melon. The relish and pickled onions are an excellent topping for hot dogs, but could also be used with brats or sausage as well as a condiment to serve with grilled fish or chicken, on sandwiches, or with beans, etc. If you aren't into meat or hot dogs, skip that part of the recipe and just make the relish and/or pickled onions to serve however you wish.

#### Tomatillo-Melon Relish:

½ cup granulated sugar  
1 cup distilled white or apple cider vinegar  
1 cup water  
1 Tbsp kosher salt  
1 tsp mustard seeds  
1 pound tomatillos, husked and rinsed

Jalapeño (quantity to your liking), minced  
1 cup small diced Sun Jewel melon (rind removed)\*  
½ cup small diced bell pepper (green or colored)  
¼- ½ cup minced cilantro

#### For the Pickled Onions:

3 Tbsp granulated sugar  
½ cup distilled white or apple cider vinegar  
½ cup water  
1 tsp kosher salt  
1 small onion, thinly sliced

#### For the Hot Dogs:

8 hot dogs or your favorite smoked sausages  
8 hot dog buns  
Mayonnaise, for serving (optional)  
Sliced ripe avocado, for serving (optional)

1. First, make the Tomatillo-Melon Relish. Combine the sugar, vinegar, water, salt and mustard seeds in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, whisking to dissolve the sugar and salt.
2. Meanwhile, cut tomatillos into small dice. Put in a heat-proof bowl along with the jalapeño, Sun Jewel melon, and bell pepper. Pour the hot vinegar mixture over the vegetables and stir to combine. Cool to room temperature then cover and chill for at least 1 hour or overnight. Just before serving, stir in the cilantro.
3. Next, make the pickled onions. Combine sugar, vinegar, water and salt in the same saucepan you used to make the vinegar mixture for the relish. Bring to a boil, whisking to dissolve the sugar and salt.
4. Place thinly sliced onions in a heat-proof bowl or a pint jar. Pour the hot vinegar mixture over onions and cool to room temperature. Cover and refrigerate for at least one hour or overnight.
5. Grill hot dogs to your liking and warm the buns either on the grill or in the oven. Serve the hot dogs topped with the relish and pickled onions. A bit of mayonnaise on the bun and/or some sliced avocado are also delicious!

Note: Both the Tomatillo-Melon Relish and the Pickled Onions may be stored in the refrigerator and used for up to 3 weeks.

\*Note: If you don't have Sun Jewel melon, you can also substitute any variety that is similar such as honeydew or canary melon. The original recipe used fresh pineapple, so that's always an option as well!

### Tomatillo & Sweet Corn Salad with Chipotle and Cheese

Yield: 6-8 servings

1 pound tomatillos, husked and rinsed  
1 ½ cup cooked sweet corn kernels  
½ medium onion, minced  
¼ to ½ cup finely chopped cilantro  
Salt & Black pepper, to taste

#### Dressing:

1 or 2 chipotle chiles in adobo (canned), finely chopped\*  
2 tsp brown sugar  
½ tsp salt, plus more to taste

1 lime, juiced

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil  
4 oz crumbled cotija or feta cheese

1. Cut tomatillos into small dice. Place in a medium salad bowl along with corn, onions and cilantro. Season lightly with salt and black pepper. Stir to combine and set aside while you prepare the dressing.
2. In a separate small mixing bowl, combine the chopped chiles, brown sugar, ½ tsp salt and lime juice. Stir until all the salt and brown sugar have dissolved, then drizzle in the olive oil, whisking vigorously until well combined. Taste and add more chile or salt to taste. (Keep in mind that the dressing will be more mild once it is mixed with the tomatillos).
3. Pour some of the dressing over the tomatillo mixture and stir to combine. You want to use enough to lightly dress the salad, ensuring all components are coated. Stir to combine.
4. Crumble the cotija or feta cheese into the salad and stir gently. Taste and adjust seasoning to your liking with additional salt and pepper. Serve right away, or refrigerate for 1-2 hours or overnight before serving to allow the flavors to "marry."

\*Chipotle Peppers in Adobo: This recipe calls for chipotle peppers in adobo. Chipotle peppers are available in a variety of forms, but this recipe refers to canned peppers in adobo which is a red sauce. You can find these in the ethnic section of most grocery stores near other Mexican foods. After you use what you need for this recipe, you will still have more than half the can remaining. Transfer the remaining portion to a storage container and refrigerate. They'll store for several weeks in the refrigerator so you can use them in other recipes, such as enchilada sauce or taco meat!

This recipe was adapted by Chef Andrea with inspiration from a recipe entitled "*Summer Salad of Tomatillos*" that was originally published on the **Williams Sonoma Taste blog**.