



# Notes From the Pea Patch

Foxtail Community Farm

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## Farmer's Notebook

You've probably all heard the timeless country quip...if you live in [Maine, Wisconsin, New York, etc.] don't leave a pick up truck unattended in the summer or you'll come back to find the bed full of summer squash! If last week's harvest is any indication of things to come, you all may want to keep your trunks closed and your windows up this year.

Summer squash is renowned as a prolific garden crop. It is relatively easy to tend, grows fast and produces a lot of fruit over an extended season (late June to early September in a good year). We start transplanting summer squash in May when the soil has warmed, and direct seed a second planting in June. Because plants are large, they are spaced 2 feet apart in the field. Squash bugs and cucumber beetles are the main threat; our primary defense against these pests is cloth row cover. We did have some trouble with fruit production a few years back, alerting us to potential pollination issues in the field – the next year we added our first beehive and have experienced no pollination problems since.

In past years we've tried six or so different varieties of summer squash, but we've found that the taste and texture don't vary much and pest resistance is uneven. This year we're focusing on two reliable varieties: Raven, a traditional and versatile dark green zucchini and Pattypan, squat UFO-like gold green-tipped fruits that are a bit crispier and sweeter and well-suited for stuffing.

The best summer squash have taut skin and firm flesh. Light scratching and bruising are fine, but heavy pitting or spongy texture should be avoided. Refrigerate in plastic bags; ideally used within 3-4 days. Wonderful sauteed, roasted, baked, grilled, pickled or even raw. I'll need lots of recipes to fight the inevitable summer squash fatigue, so please share yours with us! ~ Rachel

## This Week's Harvest

*Our best guess for what will be in this week's share boxes – subject to change at harvest & packing time.*

**basil** – in the summer I throw fresh basil in almost everything. This is the classic basil for pesto. Store basil in a vase of water on the counter like a bouquet – do not refrigerate. Dry or freeze extra for winter use (though I prefer to freeze pesto rather than whole basil).

**cauliflower (*large shares only*)** - like its cousin broccoli, cauliflower is made of many clustered flowers that begin to form and then stop at the bud stage – this picking will be mainly small button shoots. Rich in vitamins and minerals, especially Vitamin C. Excellent raw, steamed, sauteed or roasted; its mild flavor is greatly enhanced with rich cream sauces and Indian or Middle Eastern spices. Refrigerate in plastic bag in crisper for up to a week.

**radicchio (*large shares only*)** - a cultivated form of wild chicory resembling a small wine-colored lettuce. Distinctive bitter flavor prominent in Italian cuisine – it adds color and flavor to a raw salad, while the flavor is elevated by grilling or roasting. Refrigerate in plastic bag in crisper. Trim bottom stem & remove core.

*Also...*

**broccoli ~ lettuce ~**

**napa cabbage ~ scallions ~ summer squash  
snow &/or sugar snap peas**

**Fruit Shares: sour cherries** from our friends at [Fix Bros Fruit Farm](#) in Hudson. These are the cherries to use for pies, cobblers and other baked goods. Some people do like to eat them out of hand, but they are quite tart and softer than sweet cherries, making them more suitable for baking or jam. Pitting is necessary but not difficult with any inexpensive hand-held pitter. Refrigerate unwashed, wash before eating. *Conventionally grown.*



## Recipes of the Week: A Tribute to Zucchini

Zucchini is a wonderfully versatile food in the kitchen, as highlighted by this trio of recipes.

### Chocolate Zucchini Bread

This beloved recipe came from a friend in Wisconsin. Substituting applesauce for the oil reduces the calories significantly.

#### Dry ingredients

- 2 cups sugar
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp. baking powder
- 2 1/3 cups flour
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ cup nuts (optional)

#### Wet ingredients

- 3 cups grated zucchini
- 3 chicken or 2 duck eggs
- 1 cup unsweetened applesauce *or* vegetable oil *or* combination of the two
- 2 tsp vanilla

#### To Prepare:

Mix dry ingredients. Combine wet ingredients, then blend with dry. Pour into 2 greased loaf pans or muffin tins. Bake at 350°F for 45 minutes (loaves) or 25-30 minutes (muffins). Loaves will appear moist when done. Let cool 10-15 minutes, remove from pan and cool completely.

Dish: \_\_\_\_\_ Serves: \_\_\_\_\_

**Recipe**

Calling all cooks! We are seeking new recipes to share with CSA members through our weekly newsletters. An ideal recipe is reasonably simple to describe and prepare, includes fresh farm-grown ingredients that are in season at the same time and has been tested favorably at least once in your own kitchen. Please email your recipes to us at [mail@foxtailcommunityfarm.com](mailto:mail@foxtailcommunityfarm.com)!



### From the archives

Need more recipe ideas? CSA newsletters back to 2010 are on our website:

[www.foxtailcommunityfarm.com/MemberNewsletters.html](http://www.foxtailcommunityfarm.com/MemberNewsletters.html)

Here are a few favorites to re-visit this week:

June 11, 2012: Braised Napa Cabbage & Shiitake Mushrooms

June 25, 2012: Grilled Radicchio

July 6, 2014: Radicchio & Lemon Pasta

### Curried Zucchini Soup

From the kitchen of CSA member Harriet Jaffe.

- 1 large onion or 1 bunch scallions, chopped
- 2 Tbs butter, olive oil or combination
- 2 cups chicken or vegetable broth
- 4 cups diced zucchini (skin on)
- 1 clove garlic or 2 garlic scapes, minced
- ½ tsp salt + ¼ tsp black pepper,
- 1/4 tsp curry powder or more, to taste
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley

Sauté onion in butter until softened. Add all ingredients except parsley and cook over medium heat 7-10 minutes until zucchini is tender. Puree until smooth in blender in batches along with the parsley. Adjust seasonings to taste and thin with additional broth if too thick. Serve hot or chilled, with an optional dollop of greek yogurt.

### Greek Zucchini Cakes

A tasty little recipe, adapted from Recipe's From America's Small Farms.

- ~ 1 pound zucchini, grated + 1 tsp kosher salt
- ¾ cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 small onion or 3-4 scallions, sliced
- 3 tbs flour
- ¼ cup chopped pine nuts or sunflower seeds
- 1 tbs fresh herbs, chopped
- 1 clove garlic or 2-3 garlic scapes, diced
- olive oil for frying

Combine zucchini & salt, set aside for 5 minutes. Rinse, then squeeze or press dry. Combine with remaining ingredients except oil in large bowl. Form into ~24 cakes (2 tbs per cake). Sauté cakes in olive oil until brown, ~3 minutes per side.