



July 20, 2002

Boánn's Banks

Sustainable Agriculture Along the Broad River

This Week at Market

- Summer Squash "Yellow Crookneck"
- Zucchini "Cocozella di Napoli"
- Mixed Field Peas
- Mixed Heirloom Green Beans
- Mixed Heirloom Tomatoes
- Lambs' Quarters
- Carrots "Red Core Chantenay" and "Kuttiger"
- Rutabaga "Joan"
- Beets "Albina Verduna"
- Eggs from Free Range Hens

Calabacitas

This recipe is a favorite of Eric's from his eight years spent in New Mexico. It can be eaten as is for a side dish, but it also make a great filling for vegetable tacos or burritos.

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil**
- 1 medium onion, chopped**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 pound zucchini, cut into 1/2-inch-thick rounds**
- 3/4 cup chopped heirloom tomato**
- 1 diced hot pepper (optional)**
- 1 cup corn kernels**

In a large skillet, heat oil on medium heat until hot. Add onion and garlic and cook for three minutes, stirring. Add zucchini and cook three minutes, stirring. Add tomato, pepper, and corn and cook for four minutes, stirring. Serve. Makes four servings.

To make a wonderful breakfast, crumble and brown 1 pound sausage. Add sausage and calabacitas to a casserole dish. Sprinkle with 1 cup shredded cheese. Pour two or three beaten eggs over the top of everything. Top with 1/2 cup bread crumbs and salt & pepper and bake at 325 until bubbly, about 25 minutes.

Hello! The squash is coming in fast and furious now. Walking the beds, you can watch the fruit increase in size one hour to the next. The spaghetti squash and the Armenian cucumbers have started setting fruit as well, so they will be arriving soon. The tomato vines are full of green fruit, including several varieties that are shades of green when fully ripe. The corn is nearing six feet tall and the okra isn't far behind. And all of the beans, bushes and vines alike, are full of flowers and pods. As if the heat wasn't a dead giveaway, summer has definitely arrived!

The main farm task this upcoming week is getting the beds ready for fall planting. All of the spring beds will have their cover crop (mostly lambs' quarters) turned back into the soil and fresh compost will be added where needed. Finally, the seeds go in and the whole process will begin anew. We'll have many of the same types of things we had in early spring, including (hopefully) the beautiful Ruby Orach, this Fall. Thanks for coming to market this week. Eat well!

-- Chris and Eric Wagoner
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Featured Vegetable

There's no shortage of the family of vegetables this week's featured vegetable hails from. Our featured variety is known in Italy, where it originated well over 100 years ago, as "Cocazella di Napoli" and in England and parts of North America as "Italian Vegetable Marrow". It is a zucchini, *Curcubita pepo*, a member of the summer squash family.

All squash are native to the Western hemisphere. They were cultivated in parts of Mexico as far back as 9000 years ago. Together with maize and beans, squash is one of the "three sisters" of the traditional Native American diet. The longer green variety found its way to Italy, where it was embraced. They called it "zucchini" and bred many varieties. The French called it courgette, and the English called it marrow. Somehow, the original Italian name prevailed here, though you may find cookbooks that use any of the three names. This variety was used as the basis for many modern hybrid varieties, including the popular Fordhook variety. Unfortunately, as is the case with many other hybrids, the modern varieties lack the color and flavor of this old heirloom.

The zucchini we eat are the immature fruits of the plant. Grown to full size, they are enormous, woody, and inedible. Picked young, they are sweet, tender, and in the case of the Cocazella, slightly nutty. They have a high water content (nearly 95% by volume), so they are very low in calories, 13 per half cup raw. They offer plenty of antioxidants, beta-carotene, and potassium, and smaller amounts of B vitamins, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. You can count on 3-4 servings per pound.

Since zucchini have such a high water content, you usually want a hot, fast cooking method. Roasting 1/2 inch slices on the grill is tasty, as is sautéing small cubes. Stuffing halves cut long ways and baking is also nice. Just remember that however you cook them, overcooking will always result in mush. You cannot save it, but you can use that mush as the basis for some wonderful soups. Here are three simple ways to prepare them:

Steamed: With their high water content they can be cooked without water in a pot with a tight fitting lid. Otherwise, steam them in a small amount of water, about 1/4" in the bottom of the pot, for 3 to 5 minutes.

Baked: Slice zucchini, chop onions, shred carrots, chop peppers, chop tomatoes. Layer the vegetables in a casserole with seasonings and herbs. Cover bake at 350 for about 45 minutes.

Stuffed: Core out the centers of each squash (Middle Eastern delis have a special tool for this or use an apple corer). Chop onions, mushrooms, peppers, tofu, and tomatoes. Add seasonings and stuff. Bake covered in a casserole with tomato sauce at 350 for about 45 to 60 minutes.