



July 27, 2002

This Week at Market

- Summer Squash “Yellow Crookneck”
- Zucchini “Cocozella di Napoli”
- Edamame
- Green Beans “Prolific”
- Mixed Heirloom Tomatoes
- Lambs’ Quarters
- Carrots “Red Core Chantenay” and “Kuttiger”
- Rutabaga “Joan”
- Beets “Albina Verduna”
- Eggs from Free Range Hens

Golden Squash Baba Ganouj

A twist on the traditional Mediterranean eggplant dip. Serves 8.

- 1 pound any yellow summer squash**
- 1 medium eggplant**
- 2 Tablespoons tahini (sesame butter)**
- 2 Tablespoons sesame seeds**
- 1 large garlic clove, minced**
- Juice of 1 lime or lemon**
- Salt to taste**
- 1 teaspoon olive oil**
- 1/4 cup freshly chopped parsley**

Scrub (don't peel) squash and cut into olive-size cubes. Steam squash, drain, cool, and lightly mash to a coarse consistency. Pour into a serving dish.

Meanwhile, pierce eggplant skin in at least twenty places with a fork. Broil eggplant in a fireproof pan set about six inches from flame. Turn eggplant until uniformly browned. (This takes at least 30 minutes.) Cool eggplant, slit lengthwise, and spoon out interior pulp into bowl containing mashed squash. Combine well and slowly add tahini, sesame seeds, garlic, lemon or lime juice, and salt. Chill dip. Drizzle cooled dip with oil and garnish with parsley before serving.

This dip keeps well if refrigerated. Serve with pita bread or crackers.

Boánn's Banks

Sustainable Agriculture Along the Broad River

Hello! We've deep in the heart of summer harvesting at the farm, bringing in squash, zucchini, tomatoes, and beans pretty much every day of the week. Ears are forming of the corn stalks, the winter squash are slowly setting fruit, and the shell beans are filling out. Still, even with all this to keep us busy, we have to look ahead to the fall garden. The seeds are arriving, and many of them will go into the ground during the next two weeks.

This is the time of year that pushes many backyard growers who have tried to be organic over to using pesticides. It seems like on every leaf, every stem, and every fruit there is something crawling and

gnawing. The tomato horned worm can strip a tomato vine bare in a few hours. Squash borers (a huge pest in the South) ruin individual fruit and try to kill the entire plant by sucking sap right at the base. Stink bugs hide under the vines by day and by night eat whatever leaves they can find. And on and on – they're everywhere! We may have composted as much as we've brought to market, but we realize this is the natural way. We plant some for you and some for the critters, and gently let them know when they've had their share. Thanks for coming to market this week. Eat well!

-- Chris and Eric Wagoner
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Featured Vegetable

This week's featured vegetable is a common sight in home gardens and farmers' markets both. The Yellow Crookneck Squash, *Cucurbita pepo*, is one of the oldest documents varieties of squash. All squash are native to the Americas and were unknown in Europe before 1492. The English word “squash” comes from the Algonquin word “askutasquash”, meaning “eaten while unripe” and shortened by the early Massachusetts colonists. The Cooper family of Camden, New Jersey are credited with collecting the seed of the yellow crookneck squash from the Lanape people of the Delaware Valley and growing it in their garden throughout the 1700's, making this heirloom one of the oldest to be traced through a single family. It's also the only squash that can be directly traced to a single Native American people.

From the Coopers, the squash spread throughout the colonies. Thomas Jefferson received the seeds and history from prominent Philadelphia Quaker Timothy Matlack, and they became a regular feature in the Monticello gardens. This original variety of the yellow crookneck is what we grow at Boánn's Banks. The flesh is white throughout. The skin ranges from a very pale yellow to a vibrant yellow, depending on the amount of sun each fruit gets. The surface is covered with warts. The size ranges from four inches to nearly a foot, and even the larger sized fruit remain tender and flavorful.

Since the 1940's, science has tried hard to improve this squash. There are now a multitude of varieties with names like Goldie, Sundance, Supersett, Cracker, Tara, Early Golden, Sunrise, and Dixie Hybrid. Each of these have been bred for certain traits like resistance to squash viruses and insect pests, thicker skins for better packing and shipping, fewer warts for a more pleasing appearance, sun scald resistance, and so forth. All of these improvements have come at a cost of flavor and texture. Several varieties, including Freedom, Patriot, and Destiny (don't you love those names?) have been genetically modified to include plant viruses in their DNA. They were approved by the USDA in 1994, but are not yet widely grown. The yellow squash found in regular stores could be any of these varieties, including the genetically modified types.

Yellow squash can be cooked the same ways you would zucchini (the two are actually members of the same species). Last week's newsletter discussed general cooking methods, and we'll be happy to give you a copy. It can also be downloaded from our website.