



NEWS TO GROW ON



End of
Summer
Edition

A seasonal newsletter of the Connecticut Farm Fresh Cooperative Association

Vol. III, No. 3

CT Farm Fresh Board Members

President: Alexis Gazy

Gazy Brothers Farm

Vice-President: Dave Chicoine

Chicoine Family Farm

Treasurer: Terese Burns

Greenscapes

Secretary: Valencia Chicoine

Chicoine Family Farm

Director, Chairman Nominating

Committee: Guy Beardsley

Guy's Eco Garden

Director: John Plasko

Plasko's Farm

Director: John Kern

Freshwater Farm

Director: Don Taylor

Taylor Family Farm

Executive Director: Dawn Allen

Advisor: Carol McManus

Ywait4success.com

Advisors: Rick Macsuga, Mark Zotti

Newsletter Editor: Alice Ely

Heads Up Creative Marketing

Website Manager: Laura Genese

Summer's ending, but there are lots of ways to make the tastes of summer last!

Even if canning is too big a project for you to tackle, there is more than one way to "bottle sunshine" from the market. So, find some space in your freezer – chuck that mysterious foil-wrapped item, the frost-crusted ice cream, and last year's forgotten leftovers -- and make room for some delightful souvenirs of this season's farm market bounty, flavorful and ready to enjoy some cold night this fall.

The RITE
PACKAGE
Company

Jack Hurst
15 Camelot Circle
Dudley, MA 01571
Phone: 888-842-2183

HARRIS® SEEDS

355 Paul Road
Rochester, NY 14624-0966
8000-544-7938
www.harriseseeds.com



Fresh-laid eggs from your local farmer's market are a welcome alternative, especially when problems at massive egg-producing facilities spark nationwide salmonella fears and product recalls.

Inside this end of summer 2010 issue:

- Ideas for saving summer's flavor to enjoy later
- Seasonal "keeper" recipes
- In praise of tomatoes

Let us count the ways we love tomatoes. . .

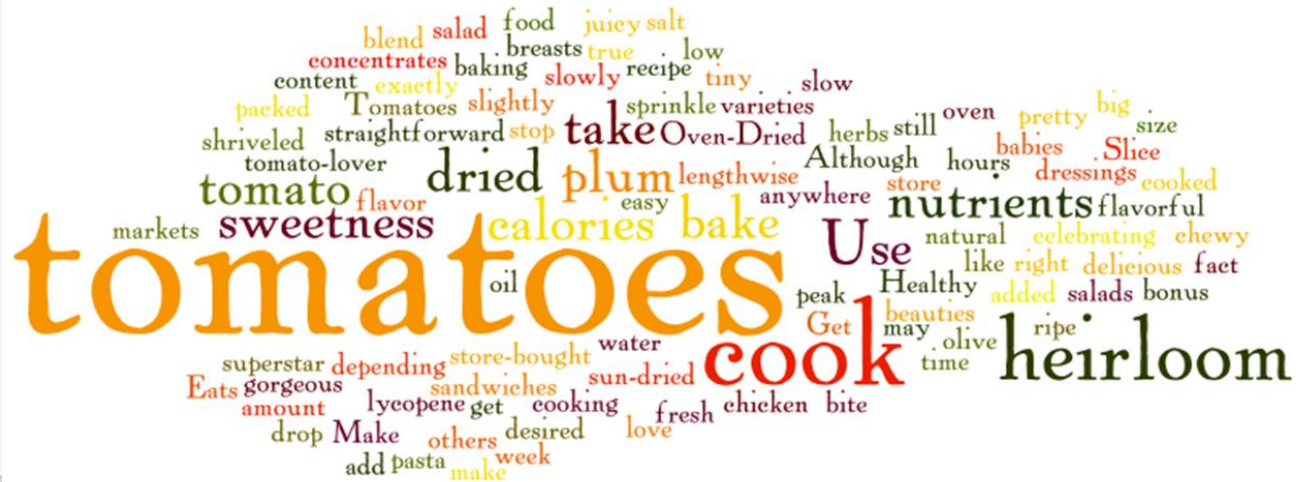
Perhaps no other vegetable has so many varieties, so many personalities, so many options in cooking, and demonstrates such a remarkable difference between the fresh, sunripened glory of a farmer's market option, and the dull watery flavor of a winter supermarket variety.

In this edition we are happy to present a host of ideas for enjoying tomatoes' juicy glory now AND later, to savor this summer's harvest long after you're back in sweaters and gloves.



Favorite tomato creations at our house:

- Bruschetta on toasted baguette slices
- Panzanella (Italian bread salad)
- Salade nicoise
- Guacamole & salsa
- Fresh tomato sauce on anything
- Oven dried tomatoes in homemade ravioli
- Eggplant lasagne
- Caprese salad (fresh mozz, tomatoes & pesto)
- Gazpacho



This piece of word art was created on the wordle.net site, using the words about tomatoes found in this newsletter.

Alice's Fresh Tomato Sauce

I make this sauce at least once a week, when tomatoes are in season, often making extra to freeze in dinner-sized portions. When the cold winds blow, it's welcome and ready, after a quick zap in the microwave, to brighten up pasta or practically anything else I'm making. Tastes just as good reheated as when it's freshly made. Quick, easy and flavorful; you don't even have to peel the tomatoes first.

Ingredients:

- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 8 garlic cloves, sliced
- 6 large tomatoes, chopped without peeling or seeding (about 5 cups)
- 1 cup fresh basil cut in ribbons (or use fresh or frozen pesto)
- Pinch pepper flakes or more to taste
- Generous sprinkling Italian herbs or herbes de provence
- Salt & pepper to taste

Heat oil in large wide pan over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic; sauté 5 minutes. Add tomatoes, basil and seasonings. Cook 20 minutes to blend flavors, stirring often. If the sauce needs moistening, add pasta water if you have some on hand, or else a little stock.

How To Make Oven-Dried Tomatoes

by Dana Angelo White

If you like store-bought sun-dried tomatoes, you'll love them dried from the oven. Although they take some time to cook or bake, it's pretty straightforward — cook those babies low and slow.

Slice plum tomatoes lengthwise, sprinkle with salt, and bake at 200 to 250 degrees F until shriveled, but still slightly tender. This can take anywhere from 4 to 8 hours, depending on the size of the tomatoes.

The natural sweetness of the tomatoes concentrates as the water is slowly cooked out. Each plum tomato averages 11 calories, so you'll get big flavor for a tiny amount of calories. An added bonus: cooking tomatoes ups the lycopene* content, baking in more antioxidants.

Use dried tomatoes right away, or store, packed in olive oil and herbs if desired. Use them to add a chewy bite of sweetness to salads, pasta, and sandwiches or blend into salad dressings or mayonnaise — they also make a gorgeous stuffing for chicken breasts.

**Research has linked the antioxidant lycopene to lowering your risk for cancer, heart disease and deteriorating eyesight.*

Homemade Fruit Leather

Makes: 16 pieces



Ingredients:

1 pound fresh strawberries, halved, or peaches, apricots, cherries or berries
¼ cup water
2 tablespoons granulated sugar
2 tablespoons honey
(Honey adds a little more natural sweetness, a hint of flavor, and a silky texture.)

Directions:

Preheat oven to 170 degrees and line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a Silpat sheet, set aside.
Place fruit and water in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil and cook for 3-4 minutes until fruit begins to soften. Puree fruit using an immersion blender or food processor. Return puree to saucepan, stir in sugar and honey. Cook for an additional 10 minutes or until thick and syrupy. Pour the hot fruit mixture on to prepared pan and spread out into an even layer. Place in the oven to dry for 3 hours. Turn off the oven and allow to sit overnight to dry completely. Cut into 1-inch strips with a pizza cutter and peel away from paper or Silpat sheet. Roll up strips and store in an airtight container for up to 4 weeks.

The labels on many packaged fruit leathers reveal multiple unwelcome ingredients, including corn syrup, partially hydrogenated oils (a.k.a. trans fats) preservatives, and artificial colors and flavors. This homemade version has only three, and fresh, satisfying flavor, with minimal added sugar. Fruit leather will stay fresh in an air-tight container for up to 4 weeks, so you can hold on to that seasonal goodness a little bit longer.

Nutrition Info (per serving)

Calories: 28 calories; Total Fat: 0; Saturated Fat: 0; Total Carbohydrate: 7 g; Protein: 0; Sodium: 0; Cholesterol: 0 milligrams; Fiber: 1 g.



Above: Dana Angelo White Photo courtesy of foodnetwork.com

Ways to enjoy your seasonal bounty longer

By Dana Angelo White, registered dietitian, culinary nutritionist, local food junkie, stalker of farmer's markets, all-around great cook, and new mom.

Blanching Before Freezing Maintains Freshness

Boil a large pot of water and give the produce a brief plunge (usually about 1 to 2 minutes). Then transfer it to a large bowl of ice water to stop the cooking, drain and you're done. Blanching before you freeze a food stops enzymes from breaking down the food's nutrients and brightens its color.

Freezing Vegetables – Most benefit from blanching

Blanch veggies like summer squash, peas, green beans, carrots, asparagus, broccoli, cauliflower and tomatoes. For even blanching and cooking, cut everything into equal-sized pieces. You can leave corn on the cob or cut the kernels off after you blanch. Don't forget about potatoes. I cut my potatoes and sweet potatoes into strips before blanching. After they're frozen, they can go straight to the oven with canola oil, salt and pepper for easy oven fries. As for onions and peppers, you can skip blanching them — just chop them up (remove stem and seeds for peppers) and they're good to go.

Freezing Fruits – Most are not for blanching

Blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, etc. should be washed, dried and placed in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Place the sheet in the freezer until the berries are hard and then transfer them to a bag — initially freezing in a single layer keeps them from sticking together. You can freeze cherries in a similar fashion but may want to remove the pit first. Unlike other fruits, you need to blanch, peel and slice peaches and nectarines first, because their skins get tough when frozen. What about apples? Sure, you can freeze those too. Just make sure you slice them up and dip them in an ascorbic acid solution first. Ascorbic acid (a.k.a. vitamin C) keeps the apples from browning. You can find the solution at garden stores, online or along with canning and jam-making goods at your grocery store.

Freezing Herbs – No blanching needed

Believe it or not, fresh herbs like basil, sage, mint, cilantro and parsley do freeze nicely. Wash and dry, chop them up or leave whole and wrap up tightly. Or make pesto, freezing it first in ice cube trays, then popping them out and storing frozen in a freezer bag for later use.



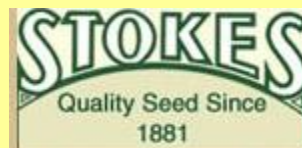
(See Dana's blog at healthyeats.com)

Is Freezing Just As Good As Fresh?

Not always, but the nutrients remain. Once frozen, fruits can be used for smoothies, baked goods, pancakes, jams and sauces. Frozen vegetables can go straight to the steamer, microwave, oven or just toss them into simmering soups, sauces and stews. Frozen herbs work best when you add them directly to a simmering pot.

Freezer Storage & Defrosting Tips

Always use freezer-safe containers and bags; they are properly insulated to protect your food. Label and date your foods so you know what you've got and how long you've had them. Whether you blanch or just wash foods before freezing, make sure they are completely dry before packing them up — otherwise, they'll get frosty and taste lousy. Store your frozen goodies in the back of your freezer; this is the coldest part. Bags of fruits and veggies that you keep in the freezer door are more susceptible to freezer burn, especially if you open and close your freezer often. When you place foods in freezer bags, seal and lay them flat in your freezer until the contents harden completely. This makes for easy stacking — it even works for soups and sauces.



P.O. Box 548 Buffalo, NY 14240-0548
Phone: 1-800-263-7233
Fax Toll-Free: 1-800-834-3334
jadam@stokeseeds.com



FARM CREDIT EAST

*Formerly First Pioneer Farm Credit and
Farm Credit of Western New York*

Keith Stechschuttle
175 South Road, Enfield, CT 06082
Phone: 1-860-741-4380 Fax: 1-860-741-4389
Enfield.ct@firstpioneer.com

Submissions welcome:

Please email your Farmers Market pictures to the editor, aliceely@optonline.net, and include your name, phone number and the market where you took the picture. We'll publish our favorites, with a credit if you like, in an upcoming issue.



 1st National Processing
The Future of Mobile Payment Processing

Accept Credit Cards... Anywhere

877.964.1622

www.1nbc.com



CT Farm Fresh Thanks its Loyal Sponsors and Invites You to Support Them for Your Agricultural and Gardening Needs



Sieggers Seed Company
Blake Myers, N.E. Regional Rep
Phone: 585-303-3252 (cell, office and pager)
Email vegetableseeds@aol.com

**Benedetti
Insurance Group
Michael J. Benedetti**



2969 Whitney Avenue, Suite 303, Hamden, CT
Toll Free: 1-866-640-0414
Michael_benedetti@farmfamily.com

scalesCT.com

Rich Malyszko, Action Scale Service
760 Whittemore Road, Middlebury, CT 06762
1-800-403-5919
203-641-6395
ActionScale@aol.com



Stanton Equipment, Inc

E. Windsor, CT 1-800-842-8968
Canaan, CT 1-800-348-4809
Plainfield, CT 1-800-954-0003
Stantoneq.com



Phil King, Rupp Seeds Inc.
17919 County Road B, Wauseon, OH 43567
Phone 419-337-1841 x7093
philk@ruppseeds.com



Andrew Rose, The Rose Agency
418 Roosevelt Drive, Derby, CT 06418
Phone: 203-735-9591
Fax: 203-735-1915
rosea6@nationwide.com

NEWS TO GROW ON

Save paper! Get your own color copy, free, online! Just send a request with your email address to aliceely@optonline.net