

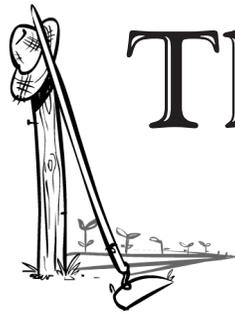
## This week's share:

Lettuce, carrots, fennel, beans, cucumbers, summer squash, onions, peppers, garlic, herbs



## Next week's guess...

Lettuce, chard, beets, carrots, onions, cucumbers, summer squash, potatoes, peppers, garlic, herbs



# The Cedar Post

Cedar Down Farm's Weekly Newsletter

Summer CSA, Week 8, August 3, 2010

## Roasted Fennel Over Couscous

2 large fresh fennel bulbs plus some of their greens  
1 tsp kosher salt  
3 tbsp olive oil  
1 tsp fresh orange zest  
1 c vegetable broth  
1 c dry couscous

Preheat your oven to 400F.  
Wash fennel thoroughly. Chop off the tops and set them aside.

Cut the bulbs into 10-12 pieces, so they are all roughly the same size and not too big. Put them in a large bowl and toss with the olive oil and kosher salt. Finely chop up some of greens of the fennel, removing any thick stems, and toss 3 tablespoons of it in with the fennel bulbs.

lay them out on a large baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for about 45 minutes, mixing and flipping with a spatula every 10 minutes or so.

While that's cooking, you can grate the orange zest and prepare the couscous: Bring the cup of vegetable broth to a boil and cut the heat, pour in the couscous, give a quick stir, and cover for at least 5 minutes. when you open it up, fluff it with a fork, add seasonings if you'd like, and it's ready to serve!

Serve roasted fennel over couscous or try mixing them up together!

yields 2-3 servings

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## On the farm...

This section of the newsletter is generally dedicated to news about what's happening here at the farm. But, since our farm is situated within a larger farming community and since, you as farm members and people who eat, are also affected by agricultural issues, we thought we should briefly touch on some current agricultural issues. Cedar Down Farm belongs to the National Farmers Union (NFU), a farm organization that advocates for farmers in Canada. We recently received our latest newsletter and I was really struck by the trend in research, government and corporate action towards reducing farmers' control over their crops and farms. We have seen this increasingly with the proliferation of GMO crops, the seeds of which are illegal for farmers to save and re-plant. GMOs, regardless of their possible health and environmental consequences truly exemplify an agriculture where corporations, not farmers, are reaping the profit and gaining power. Some related issues from our recent NFU newsletter are:

- Negotiations between Canada and the EU over a new "free trade" agreement called the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). According to the NFU, this agreement gives even more power to corporations to prosecute farmers who they assert have infringed the company's intellectual property rights (i.e. have saved seed, even by accident). This agreement will require Canada to implement a cersion of Plant Breeder's Right that will "virtually eliminate farmers' rights to save, reuse and sell seed."

- The Enviropig - the first genetically modified food animal! Alright! Need I say more? Okay, I will. This pig has been genetically modified with mouse and E-coli bacteria genetic material to digest plant phosphorus more efficiently. Phosphorous over-production in intensive animal production is an environmental problem that the University of Guelph is choosing to try and remedy with a GM pig as opposed to research into more ecological methods of animal production. The pig could be approved soon for human consumption in Canada.

- One last bit on the whole farmer autonomy thing: Monsanto recently donated almost 500 tons of hybrid crop seed to Haitian farmers following the earthquake. Of course, by beginning to use Monstanto's hybrid seed, Haitian farmers will be forced to make annual purchases of seed instead of saving their own. Good news though - farmers in Haiti rejected this with 10 000 farmers marching to protest the donation.



But to end on a happier note- here is a nice picture of the garden!

## Cucumbers with Cheese Sauce

I know what you're thinking - cooked cucumbers! Blech! We thought the same thing until we tried this amazing recipe from the one and only Julia Child.

2 medium- large cucumbers  
2 Tbsp wine vinegar  
1 1/2 tsp salt  
1/8 tsp sugar  
3 Tbsp melted butter  
1/2 tsp dill or basil  
3/4 Tbsp minced onions or green onion  
1/8 tsp pepper  
2-3 Tbsp grated Swiss cheese  
1 Tbsp butter



### *Cheese Sauce*

2 Tbsp butter  
3 Tbsp flour  
2 cups milk with 1/4 tsp salt brought to a boil or 2 cups boiling chicken or veggie stock  
1/2 cup grated Swiss or Parmesan cheese (or a mixture)

In a medium saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Blend in the flour and cook slowly, stirring, until the butter and flour froth together for 2 minutes without colouring (this is called a white roux). Remove from heat. Once the roux has stopped bubbling, pour in all the hot milk or stock and beat vigorously with a whisk to blend liquid and roux. Return to moderately high heat and stir until sauce comes to the boil. Boil for 1 minute then remove from heat and add grated cheese. Season to taste with salt, pepper and nutmeg.

Peel cucumbers. Cut in half lengthwise; scoop out seeds with a spoon. Cut into lengthwise strips about 3/8 inch wide. Cut the strips into 2 inch pieces. Toss cucumbers in a bowl with the vinegar, salt, and sugar - let stand for at least 30 minutes or for several hours. Drain, pat dry with a towel.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees, Toss the cucumbers in a 12 inch/11/2 inch baking dish with the butter, herbs, onions and pepper. Set uncovered in the middle rack of the oven for about 1 hour, stirring 2 or 3 times until cucumbers are tender but still have a suggestion of crispness and texture.

Fold cheese sauce into hot, baked cucumbers. Sprinkle with grated Swiss cheese, dot with the 1 tbsp of butter and run under a hot broiler for 2-3 minutes to delicately brown the top.

Enjoy!

**There are lots of great recipes online....check out these sites for some good ideas:**

[www.foodgawker.com](http://www.foodgawker.com) - lots of links to great food blogs!  
[www.epicurious.com](http://www.epicurious.com) - compilations of recipes from the best foodie magazines  
[www.cooksillustrated.com](http://www.cooksillustrated.com) - a great magazine with tons of food info

## A word on the excellent eggplant....

While it is possible that we say this about nearly every vegetable in the garden, it does not take away from the fact that eggplant is one of our most favourite vegetables here at the farm. It is rich and deeply flavourful and can be used in so many dishes to add complexity, texture and incredible flavour. The eggplants you are receiving this week are an Asian type and are very easy to use. The skin can be left on and the flesh should be quite soft (almost mushy!) to taste the best. We have been tossing them on the barbecue as in the recipe in last week's newsletter and they are delicious simply that way. They can be baked whole and turned into the classic spread, babaganoush. They can be cubed and sauteed (fabulous with parmesan cheese), grilled and thrown in anything from lasagna, sandwiches or a rich roasted potato salad. Just cut off the stem and use the whole thing!



## Eggplant and Summer Squash Beignets

Serves 2 or 3 as a side dish

1 small-medium eggplant and 1 medium summer squash  
All-purpose flour or chickpea flour, for coating  
2 large eggs, beaten  
Salt  
Virgin olive oil for frying

Slice the eggplant in approximately 1cm thick slices. Place them in layers on a colander. Salt the slices in a layer thoroughly before placing the next layer on top. Leave them to rest for one hour so that they release their bitter juices.

Pat them dry with a paper towel and rid them of all the juice (after an hour they'll be covered in little drops of juice).

Slice summer squash in 1 cm slices.

Pour olive oil in a large frying pan, at least 2 cm deep (believe it or not, the more oil you use, the less oily the beignets will be). Heat it to medium-high.

Coat the slices of eggplant and squash in flour and then bathe them in the beaten egg. Fry them in batches.

When golden, take them out to a large dish lined with paper towel, so that part of the oil is soaked. It's better to lay the slices in one layer till they're all done, because they get a bit soggy when left to cool one on top of the other. They should be crispy, more or less. Serve them immediately, while warm.