

SUMMER CSA, WEEK 1



Apache Blackberries
Sakura/Sun Peach Cherry Tomatoes
Italian Large Leaf Basil
Sweet Sunrise Bell Peppers
Purple Majesty Potatoes
Early Jalapenos

And so it begins, the infamous Summer CSA. Congratulations for being a part of the first and limited summer program. Originally we never intended on providing a share during the course of these three months. If you are familiar with a Louisiana summer, you know that the heat can be quite taxing and oppressive, and nobody feels it like an organic farmer. Unlike conventional mono-crop style farming, the harvest crew at Inglewood does not have air-conditioned specialized equipment for harvesting tomatoes during the heat of the day. Nor do we spray synthetic herbicides to combat the ever growing threat of Nutsedge and Johnson grass. Nope, it is a day to day, hot or not, grind, farming organically in Louisiana. On top of that, CENLA is located right in the path of the Southern Gulf Stream which tends to carry multiple diseases from Central America and the Gulf, threatening crops planted amidst a climate that caters to such diseases. Needless to say, it is a challenge to produce quality food during the rough summer months. I digress, and I said all of that to say this, WE DID IT!! Due to the hard work and dedication of each farmer here, we have prevailed to provide this community with a great selection of veggies throughout July and August. They said, “You won’t be able to grow enough varieties of food,” and “It is going to be too hot for market this summer.” Well guess what, we moved market under the pecan trees for added cooling and we have several varieties of different vegetables to fill your kitchen. If you look up the word “Inglewood” in the dictionary, underneath you will see the word, “Super-farm”. Well, not really, but we strive for it day to day. We love our Community and love to grow food for you and your families, thank you for being a part of our family, the Inglewood Family.

On to the good part, the food:

Vegetable of the Week (is actually an herb)... ITALIAN LARGE LEAF BASIL

I know, you are probably shaking your head like, "Duh, Stephen, I know what Basil is," but here are a few things you may not know.

Nutrient Profile:

Basil is full of **vitamin K** and manganese, copper, vitamin A (in the form of carotenoids such as beta-carotene), and vitamin C; and a good source of calcium, iron, folate, **magnesium**, and omega-3 fatty acids. Basil has some pretty unique health benefits and anti-bacterial properties that come from basil's flavonoids and volatile oils. These allow basil to be a wonderful, natural anti-inflammatory herb as well as promote cardiovascular health.

Studies have shown the volatile oils to contain a eugenol component which can be used for the treatment of chronic pain. It acts on the same bodily enzyme that over the counter drugs like ibuprofen and acetaminophen are currently taken to treat.

There are lists of details about what each one of the nutrients found in basil are helpful with, but one in particular stands out to me. A great problem in this country is the prevalence of heart disease. Basil has a substantial amount of magnesium which is great for Cardiovascular health by relaxing the blood vessels lessening the chance of irregular heartbeats and muscle spasms.

Why organic?

Why Fresh?

Buy Fresh, Buy Local!! Trust me, you can tell the difference. Obviously you know this, considering that you are a CSA member. Conventionally grown herbs tend to be irradiated which strips the leaf of its' natural vitamin rich components, buying organic will ensure that the leaf is nutrient rich and soluble.

Not to mention dried, processed basil lacks flavor and nutritional value, while fresh basil is rich, luscious and fragrant.

Recipes:

Grilled Pork Chops with Cherry Tomato Salsa (Summer-time Special)

Ingredients

1-pint Inglewood Sun Peach/ Sakura cherry tomatoes (halved)

1/4 White onion (small, peeled and finely chopped)

1/8 tsp Sea salt

1/16 tsp ground black pepper (freshly, to taste)

1/2 Inglewood Early Jalapeno (small chopped seeded)

1/6 cup chopped cilantro fresh

1/2 tsp lime juice

4 Inglewood 3/4 Inch Pork Chops

Directions:

Fire up the grill

Season Chops with Salt and Pepper and your favorite Cajun Seasoning (optional)

Slice and Dice the ingredients of your Salsa, mix and chill
Grill the Chops to at least an internal temperature of 145 (medium rare)
Once finished grilling, serve chops directly on plate, top with a hefty spoon full of Salsa and enjoy.

Tips for Basil Storage:

Basil Oil:

2 cups of basil to 1 cup of olive/pecan oil
Add Basil to the oil in a pan, heating gently on med-low but not frying the basil.
Stir until the basil essence is incorporated into the oil
Strain basil, then funnel oil into oil dispenser or bottle
Use just like you would oil in any dish (just with an added kick)

Basil Ice Cubes:

Blanch Basil in water, then let cool
Gently pour water into freezer trays, then freeze.
Now you have frozen basil to incorporate into your dishes throughout the year
Possibly use small ice bucket to store your basil cubes rather than occupying your freezer trays

Refrigeration Storage:

Stemmed Basil: Fill a cup half way with water and set stem of basil into the cup. Cover with original plastic bag and rubber-band the bag around base of cup. This creates a suitable environment for the basil to keep fresh.
Leaf basil: simply wrap in dry paper towel and insert back into original bag then wrap tightly and store in refrigerator crisper.

So that is it in a nutshell. I hope you enjoy this week's box. Remember to send all emails to CSA@inglewoodfarm.com with any inquiries or feedback on each week's box.

Don't forget to Sign up for the Fall Session ASAP, so that we can get pre-existing members registered.
Also, save yourselves a few bucks on your weekly eggs. We are offering the "Egg-Share" add-on this summer. The share is only \$45, and you will provide your family with a dozen eggs weekly for only \$4.50. It is a great deal! Thank you so much for being a part of our Inglewood Family, we love you all!!!