



Good Afternoon!

This week I had the privilege of learning more about some of our members, who happen to be doing some wonderful community support work. One of our members is [Angela House](#), where women who are transitioning back into society after an incarceration are able to live and learn the skills they need to be successful in society and reduce the chance of returning to prison. They use a program called “Healthy and Whole” to educate the women on nutritional cooking and eating, using Plant It Forward produce! We are very honored to be a part of this important program teaching so many to learn to care for themselves.

“Weekly, fresh vegetable delivery and the opportunity to experiment with tasty new recipes is the perfect complement to our *Healthy and Whole* approach to life here at Angela House. We are thrilled to be a part of this wonderful community.”

Another program that we are honored to have a relationship with is the [Prison Entrepreneurship Program](#) and their Re-entry Program. By providing a healthy, structured environment and accountability, this program prevents the opportunity to return to a life of crime. Our shares go towards providing the fuel these men need to be an asset to society.

“. . . .our men are very grateful. I also have the opportunity to pick them up because the vegetables are going to the house that I manage. I am blessed every time I get to see Guy, our farmer. Plant It Forward is a wonderful organization. It serves our community in such a mighty way. “

So, thank you all for letting us be a part of your community and provide the connectedness that allows so many to grow and thrive. I feel it every day, and I hope you all do to.

Cathy

Farm News

I’ve seen baby collards coming up and see argula in the warehouse. Christine, Elody, Guy, Albert, Adrien, Roy, Sarment, Alimasi, and Habi are all enjoying the new schedule and meeting new customers. The all say thank you for your patronage!

RECIPES

These are the most bountiful vegetables this week: Okra, Eggplant, Arugula, Sweet Potatoes, Radishes.

Some farmers are starting to harvest Bush Beans, Chinese Leeks, Green Onions, and Mustard Greens

Black Beans With Amaranth

1 pound black beans, washed, picked over and soaked for six hours or overnight in 2 quarts water
1 large onion, chopped
4 garlic cloves, minced
Salt to taste
2 to 4 tablespoons roughly chopped cilantro, or a few sprigs fresh epazote
 $\frac{3}{4}$ pound amaranth, stemmed (stems discarded)



Place the beans and their soaking water in a large, heavy soup pot or Dutch oven. If necessary, add water to cover by two inches. Bring to a boil and skim off foam. Add the onion and half the garlic, and reduce the heat to low. Add salt, cover and simmer one hour. Add the remaining garlic, the epazote (optional) and more salt if desired. Simmer for another 30 minutes. Add the cilantro, and simmer for another 30 minutes, until the beans are tender and the broth aromatic.

While the beans are simmering, wash the amaranth leaves in two changes of water. Bring a large pot of water to a boil, and fill a bowl with ice water. When the water comes to a boil, salt generously and add the amaranth. Blanch for two minutes, and transfer to the ice water. Drain, squeeze out excess water (it will be a beautiful plum color) and chop coarsely.

About five minutes before serving, taste the beans and adjust seasoning. Stir in the amaranth, simmer very gently for five to 10 minutes, and serve.

<http://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1012811-black-beans-with-amaranth>

Note: Martha Rose Shulman is one of my favorite NYT food writers. She has shown me a lot of different ways with vegetables that still were hearty and filling. Her website is martha-rose-shulman.com

Mark Bittman's Eggplant Parmesan

Olive oil as needed

2 pounds eggplant, preferably small ones but in any case, firm

Salt and pepper

1 medium onion, chopped

2 pounds plum tomatoes, preferably fresh, chopped

Parmesan cheese, grated

Chopped parsley for garnish, optional

Put 1/8 inch of oil in your largest skillet (the bigger the skillet, the faster you can get through sautéing the eggplant) and turn the heat to medium. Start trimming and slicing eggplant: 1/2-inch slices, or maybe 3/8-inch, but not as thin as 1/4 inch. When the oil shimmers, add the eggplant; you can crowd them as long as they don't overlap. Season with salt and pepper and cook, turning as necessary, until nicely tender and browned on both sides; drain on paper towels. Add more oil when necessary.

Cook the onion in the remaining oil; when it's tender, add the tomatoes and some salt and pepper and cook at a lively simmer until saucy, 10 or 15 minutes. Heat the oven to 400.

Eyeball your eggplant and your baking dishes and pick a nice dish that will work. I like a big oval gratin dish for this. Add a layer of eggplant, then tomato sauce, then cheese, then eggplant, tomato sauce, cheese. That will probably do, but you can make more layers if you like. Bake until the cheese is melted and the whole thing is bubbly, about 15 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley and serve hot or at room temperature.

<http://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/12671-mark-bittmans-eggplant-parmesan>

Note: I like Mark Bittman's recipes because he's going to keep it simple and allow you to vary the recipes for your taste. In this recipe, I add a lot of basil at the end. Also, if I want a meltier cheese, I use mozzarella or even a Mexican Oaxaca cheese. I have several of his cookbooks. His website is <http://markbittman.com/>

Amaranth (Callaloo)



Callaloo (sometimes calaloo or kallaloo) is a popular Caribbean dish originating in West Africa served in different variants across the Caribbean. The main ingredient is a leaf vegetable, traditionally either amaranth (known by many local names, including callaloo or bhaaji), taro or Xanthosoma. Both are known by many names, including callaloo, coco, tannia, bhaaji, or dasheen bush.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Callaloo>

Mexican Mint Marigold



Mexican mint **marigold** has a lot to offer. It thrives in the hot, humid South, where many herbs languish; its small, bright flowers blossom in fall when other herbs have played out for the season; its licorice-anise flavor is a successful stand-in for French tarragon; and it looks good in the garden.

Lemongrass



There are two main ways to cook with lemongrass, and each determines how you handle it. To **infuse teas, broths, soups, and braising liquids**, trim off the spiky tops and the bases, crush the stalks with the side of a knife to release their aromatic oils, and then cut them into 1- or 2-inch pieces. Remove the pieces before eating (they tend to be woody) or eat around them.

To use lemongrass **in marinades, stir-fries, salads, spice rubs, and curry pastes**, trim the top and base of the stalks—you want to use only the bottom 4 inches or so. Then peel off any dry or tough outer layers before finely chopping or mincing. Lemongrass holds up to long cooking and gains intensity the longer it's cooked. If you'd like a strong lemongrass flavor, add minced lemongrass at the start of cooking, browning it along with the other aromatics. For a lighter, fresher lemongrass flavor, add it near the end of cooking

To store, wrap in plastic and refrigerate for two to three weeks, or freeze for up to six months.

Roselle Pods (Hibiscus Pods)



This is a good site to learn about the health benefits, uses for and history of the Roselle pods.
<http://veganlogy.com/2012/08/02/roselle-health-benefits-recipes/>

Molokhia (Egyptian Spinach)



A new product for some of our members is this green, also called ‘bush okra’ even though only the greens are eaten. This Middle Eastern super-green, known as Egyptian spinach, has a high vitamin and mineral content. This “food of kings” dates back to the time of the pharaohs, when an Egyptian king drank it in soup to recover from an illness. Today, it’s one of the most widely eaten vegetables in Egypt.

Here is an article from Edible Milwaukee that includes some a wonderful story about the history of the plant and how to prepare it
<http://ediblemilwaukee.com/culture/ancient-green-from-an-antique-land/>

Tatume Squash



The fruits of the 'Tatume' squash are round or oblate in shape. Their skins is striped green and they resemble a small watermelon or pumpkin in their immature form. It is best to harvest 'Tatume' when it is about the size of baseball. If left to mature, the skin will become a mottled, deep green and they can grow to almost the size of a soccer ball.

'Tatume' is a staple in Mexican cooking. Its great fried, but better grilled, with some EVOO and salt.

<http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/newsletters/hortupdate/2010/jun/tatume.html>

BokChoy (Joy Choy)



Several members have asked about this vegetable and were not surprised to learn that it was bok choy. There are 33 varieties of bok choy (choi) and this one is called Joy Choy. It can be steamed, stir-fried, and braised. Use in soups, for ohitashi, and pickles.

Sylvetta Arugula



Also known as wild rocket. Compared to salad arugula, Sylvetta is slower growing, about half the height, and has yellow flowers. The leaves are also more deeply lobed with a more pungent flavor. Heavily sought after by chefs. Harvest the edible flowers as they appear. Sprinkle them over salads or add to vegetable stir-fries. Flavor is spicy and nutty. Popular choice for brightening up salad mix.