



Using That CSA Box

Your fellow CSA members have been sending me some great emails, sharing ways to utilize all the goodness of the box. There was one email, from Ginny, I wanted to share with you, because it gives a good strategy to taking on the CSA box. Here's what she wrote:

My general approach:

- Focus on items that don't last and eat them first.
- Recipes that use multiple veggies together are always winners (especially if they taste good left over).
- Don't be afraid to substitute.
- Over time I've found a few recipes that I've been able to adapt through the seasons and I tend to utilize those over and over. My gateway recipe was Mark Bittman's [More Veg less Egg Frittata](#). As I was learning to use veggies that were unfamiliar, this recipe opened up the possibilities of swapping ingredients and playing around with a basic concept as opposed to a specific recipe. It tastes different every time, but it always tastes good! And it uses a lot of veggies, travels well, and works for breakfast lunch or dinner.
- I also think it's helpful to have a couple of good books. I know that people tend to rely on the web, but having a copy of *Vegetarian Cooking For Everyone* by Deborah Madison (even for carnivores) is super helpful when you're faced with an unfamiliar vegetable! The internet cannot compare.

I'd like to expand on the points Ginny made; first, our website has suggestions for storage and how long an item should keep well. We update it weekly according to what is in the box and you can find that linked [here](#).

I love what Ginny said about having a few good cookbooks. Nowadays there are so many to choose from, I have loads of them, and definitely have my favorites. I have a few that I really love, funny enough almost all are chefs in England. I absolutely love *Veg* by Hugh Fearnley Whittingstall. He is not a vegetarian, but has such a great approach to making vegetable dishes and every recipe I have tried, I have loved. Jamie Oliver's *5 Ingredients, Quick and Easy*, is actually a pretty nice cookbook to find very approachable recipes, that are, as he says "quick and easy". Deborah Madison's *Vegetable Literacy* is another book that I often grab; not only are the recipes generally simple and straightforward, she gives a lot of information on the individual vegetables, how to use them, what parts to eat, how to store, handle and what pairs well. I know books can be pricey, but you can often find them used, and honestly, we keep books for a lifetime or more, so they are a good investment.

Clearly there are a ton of food blogs and I am sure we all have our favorites. Most often I turn to the New York Times Cooking for an easy search with a few ingredients listed and I find the writers know what they are talking about and they use fresh ingredients, ie, not a lot of frozen, packaged or canned ingredients.

Don't let your past experiences with veggies get in your way. There are so many veggies I love today that I never ate before I met my farmer, most greens like kale and collards, sweet potatoes or turnips, were all in my "yuck" category. The truth is most of what I bought at the store didn't taste very good. Farm fresh is just a lot better tasting, often the kids are the ones who know this best. Fear of unknown or unliked veggies is the biggest reason people won't join a CSA. Here is a great example of a member turning that around. Siobhann wrote me to let me know she is not an eggplant fan, until.... she recently made a simple Baba Ghanoush, using a fork to smash up the eggplant instead of using the food processor and getting it dirty. That was a big bonus! I often think of all these traditional dishes we love, and wonder how were they made 100 years ago without a beloved Cuisineart? They used forks, spoons, their hands, and if they did that, why can't we? Too often I am guilty of not making something because I am tired and I don't want to use the equipment which I will then have to clean. This is where thinking outside the box comes in handy. For a delicious Baba Ghanoush you only need a few ingredients, roasted/burnt eggplant, a little tahini, garlic, lemon juice, salt, olive oil. Yes, you can add more things, but the point is to make it simple, without making a mess. Another hack I use is grating garlic on a microplane to mince, it is much easier to clean than a press, and it is a tool I use for many other things, so I don't need a press.

A member recently asked me about the best way to deal with the grapes. Funny thing a few days earlier another member told me she plucks grapes during Zoom meetings!). So that's one way of doing it! I love all the tips from you, please keep them coming; email me at organic@eatwell.com. And please send me photos of dishes you are really happy with, they don't need to be pro. Let's share our successes and lessons with each other to help all of us do a better job of eating seasonally. And FYI we have the Slack page for Eatwell members, here is a [link](#) to join the group.

New to this week's lineup are the Tomatillos! Most people don't cook with tomatillos, and I would imagine for some of you this will be a new food to try. It is often more of an ingredient to make sauces/salsas to use in other dishes. Roasted tomatillos can be canned or frozen to enjoy later in the year, for dishes like Enchiladas with Green Sauce. Here is a [link](#) to a site with a lot of recipes and tips for using up tomatillos.

Poached Chicken Breasts With Tomatillos and Jalapeños

Recipe by Melissa Clark - NYT Cooking

This recipe calls for a bit more tomatillos than you will get in your box. When I run into that issue, I don't stress, I just use a little less. I liked this recipe because it shows you how to combine a few steps, cooking different things, in different ways, but all at the same time in the oven. Gets you thinking what else can we do this way?

1 QT Chicken Stock, plus more as needed (or use salted water)

1¼ lb boneless, skinless Chicken breasts (3 medium breasts)

1½ lb Tomatillos, cut into ½-inch chunks

2 to 3 Jalapeños, thinly sliced

6 TB Extra-Virgin Olive Oil, more as needed

¾ tsp Salt, plus more as needed

1 tsp Cumin Seeds

4 Garlic cloves, thinly sliced

¾ cup Cilantro leaves, roughly chopped

3 Scallions, thinly sliced

Finely grated zest of ½ Lime, + juice to taste

1 Avocado, sliced

Place racks in the top and bottom third of the oven and heat to 275 degrees. In the microwave or in a small pot on the stove, heat chicken stock until it comes to a simmer. Place chicken in a small baking dish and cover with hot chicken stock. On a rimmed baking sheet, toss together tomatillos, jalapeños, 2 tablespoons oil, ¾ teaspoon salt, and cumin seeds. Spread into a single layer on the sheet, then nudge the tomatillos aside to make room in 1 corner for a small ramekin. Fill ramekin with garlic and remaining 4 tablespoons oil or more as needed to cover the garlic. Place chicken on top oven rack until chicken is cooked through (a thermometer inserted in the center should read 155 degrees), 55 minutes to 1 hour and 10 minutes. At the same time, bake tomatillos on bottom rack, tossing occasionally, until they are tender, and garlic is light golden, 1 to 1½ hours. If chicken is ready before the tomatillos, remove it from the oven and leave it in the pan covered in stock to keep it warm until everything is done. Use a slotted spoon to remove garlic from oil and coarsely chop. Re-

move chicken from stock (save stock for another use; it can be frozen for up to 3 months), and slice the meat. To assemble, toss together tomatillos, chopped garlic, cilantro, scallions, lime zest and salt to taste. Drizzle fresh lime juice and garlic oil all over the chicken and avocado if you like, and season with salt. Serve with the tomatillo salsa.

Tomato Toast

Recipe *River Cottage, Every Day* by H. F. Whittingstall

The Brit's love toast, so it isn't surprising to find this really simple Spanish recipe in HFW's cookbook. We had a chef from SF make this for us many summers ago and it was so delicious and memorable, I hope you will try it. There are versions of this recipe that are a bit more work, but this is how it was made for us and that is good enough for me!

For 2 servings you need 2 thick slices of crusty bread

1 clove Garlic, cut in half

2 ripe, juicy Tomatoes, cut in half

2 TB fruity Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Good Salt

Toast or grill bread. Rub with the cut side of the garlic. Then rub the cut side of the tomato, grating and squishing messily against the rough surface of the toast, squirting out the pulp as you go. Discard the skins. Drizzle over the olive oil, sprinkle on a pinch of salt and eat immediately.

This Week's Box

*Grapes

*Potatoes

*Heirloom Tomatoes

*Bell Peppers

*San Marzanos

*Chard

*Tomatillos

Eggplant

Onions

Chives

Summer Squash

*Box for 2

* = Items in Box for 2

Stir-Fry Peppers and Onions

Recipe by Marion Burros NYT Cooking

I found this recipe and thought I would throw it in this week because it is a great way to use up those peppers. Simple enough to make with your protein of choice on the side or tossed into the pan if you like.

1 large Onion

1 clove Garlic

1 tsp minced fresh Ginger

2 TB Vegetable oil

2 large Green Peppers

2 tsp Soy Sauce

2 tsp Rice Vinegar

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

Slice onion thin; put garlic through press and mince ginger; stir fry in hot oil in large skillet for one minute. Cut peppers in strips; add to skillet and stir fry about 5 minutes, until crisp-tender. Add soy sauce, vinegar and pepper and cook another minute. Serve.