

WELCOME TO SCHREIBER & SONS CSA!

WEEK 1

This is your first delivery of produce from *Schreiber & Sons Farm*. We hope it signals the beginning of a long, enjoyable season of eating fresh, local, seasonal and healthy!

On Sunday, May 25th, we plan to host our annual Memorial Day barbecue and potluck out at the farm. Mark your calendar and plan to come. You will then be able to get a close up look at where your produce is grown. In the meantime, enjoy, and check our website regularly for additional information about the growing season and what is in store. www.schreiberandsons.com

We attempt to provide educational information as well as recipes with each delivery. All recipes we distribute to you are tried (and in our opinion, true). If you have some favorites you would like to share—please email them to us to post on our website or relay to other CSA members. This week we have included a quick and easy marinade for grilling asparagus as well as a couple other seasonal favorites.

Asparagus and baby bok choy are the featured crops this week. We have also included some legumes to supplement the fresh crops. The chickpeas (a variety dubbed “Billy Bean” for the man who brought them to the US) are perfect for hummus; they cook quickly, have especially thin skins and a very full flavor). Both the chickpeas and lentils are from Genesee, Idaho, in the Palouse. Some information provided by the USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council is included with the dry goods. Lentil chili (in one of the enclosed folders) is a great alternative to bean dip if you are taking chips to a function. Just add some salsa or hot sauce to the recipe and you have a more nutritious and flavorful dip.

Welcome! We hope you enjoy the healthy adventure that awaits you and your family in the coming weeks.

If you plan to come to the Farm Party, please RSVP to shill@centurytel.net

ASPARAGUS

Botanical name: *Asparagus officinalis*

Group:

Asparagus has been prized by epicures since Roman times. The name asparagus comes from the Greek language meaning "sprout" or "shoot" and is a member of the Lily family. Widely cultivated for its tender, succulent, edible shoots, asparagus cultivation began more than 2,000 years ago in the eastern Mediterranean region. Greeks and Romans prized asparagus for its unique flavor, texture and alleged medicinal qualities. They ate it fresh when in season and dried the vegetable for use in winter. Asparagus is depicted in ancient Egyptian writings. Asparagus has also been grown in Syria and Spain since ancient times. In the 16th Century, asparagus gained popularity in France and England. From there, the early colonists brought it to America. Asparagus is often called the *Food of Kings*. King Louis XIV of France was so fond of this delicacy that he ordered special greenhouses built so he could enjoy asparagus all year-round.

Asparagus is available year-round, but the fresh, local season starts in mid-April and continues through mid-June (all things going well). You can get California asparagus about a month earlier and Mexican crop about a month before that. The greatest threat to the United States asparagus market these days is Peru. Asparagus in Peru not only has a longer season, but growers can pay their workers a fraction of what pickers are paid here, they can use chemicals outlawed in the United States AND they appreciate government support from their own country as well as free trade status from the United States. There is a handful of individuals (including Alan) working to preserve Washington asparagus against the odds, so don't panic yet, but when you have the choice, BUY AMERICAN (and more specifically Washington) asparagus.

Nutritional value: One serving of asparagus is low in calories and very low in sodium. Asparagus is an excellent source of folic acid and is a fairly significant source of Vitamin C, Thiamin, and Vitamin B6. Asparagus contains no fat or cholesterol of dietary significance. It is an important source of potassium and many micronutrients. According to the National Cancer Institute, Asparagus is the highest tested food containing Glutathione, one of the body's most potent cancer fighters. Additionally, Asparagus is high in Rutin, which is valuable in strengthening the blood vessels.

Selection: Select bright green asparagus with closed, compact, firm tips. If the tips are slightly wilted, freshen them up by soaking them in cold water.

Storage: Keep fresh asparagus moist and cool until you intend to use it.

Preparation: Break off stems (there is a natural break point), then rinse.

Use: Steam, stir-fry with ginger and garlic, boil for less than five minutes (drop in ice water if you wish to retain the color for a salad or cold serving); put it on a pizza or in a soup. Asparagus is as versatile as it is popular. (Please let us know if you need salad, main dish, appetizer, pickling or any other recipes.)

ASPARAGUS ETIQUETTE

From the Epicurious Etiquette Guide

If asparagus spears are served already in a sauce, eat them with a fork and knife by cutting them into manageable pieces. If they are to be dipped in a sauce and are large, cut off the tips and eat them separately to avoid any dripping and dropping. You may pick up the stalks by hand, and

then dip and eat the tougher part. Smaller asparagus spears can be entirely manageable by hand, in which case you can pick up the whole thing, dip, and eat.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND RECIPES

WWW.WASHINGTONASPARAGUS.COM

www.calasparagus.com

www.asparagus.com

BOK CHOY (ALSO HAKUSAI, BAI CAI, PAK CHOI, CHINESE WHITE CABBAGE)

Botanical name: *Brassica rapa*, primarily *Chinensis* Group

Bok choy, sometimes referred to as Chinese cabbage, and all the closely related leafy greens, are as difficult to identify by name, as they are easy to eat. Bok choy is thought to be the oldest of the Asian greens. It has been cultivated in China since at least the 5th century and in Europe since the 18th century. While we in the West are most familiar with one type of bok choy, the one with large green leaves and thick ivory stems that come to a bulbous base, Hong Kong farmers grow over 20 kinds of bok choy. Many more varieties can be found across the mainland and in Taiwan. The problem with differentiation and identification may have come about in translation from the Chinese language as the Cantonese character “choy” means vegetable and the character “bok” (or “pak”) means white. So directly—bok choy is a white vegetable.

The general term bok choy embraces several growth stages of the same plant: seeding, mature and flowering. Confusion arises because each stage may look like a distinctly different vegetable. The term also designates scores of varieties of bok choy, the bulk of which fall into these general groups: large white-stemmed, dwarf white-stemmed and green-stemmed. The bok choy you are receiving today is the mature stage.

Nutritional Information: As a member of the crucifer family, bok choy offers nutritional assets similar to those of other cabbages. It is rich in vitamins A and C and contains significant amounts of nitrogen compounds known as indoles, which appear to lower the risk of various forms of cancer. Bok choy is also a good source of folic acid. With its deep green leaves, bok choy has more beta-carotene than other cabbages, and supplies and depending on the soil it's grown in, it can have a fair to good amount of calcium, potassium, phosphorous, and iron.

Selection and Storage: Choose bok choy with firm crisp stalks and unblemished leaves. Reject plants with wilted, bruised, or slimy leaves and bottom stems that are dried out. Keep unwashed bok choy in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable crisper for no more than a few days; it wilts much more rapidly than head cabbage.

Preparation: Whatever the variety, the stalks are mild and crunchy and the leaves pleasantly tangy. If small, do no more than trim a little from the base. If large, cut bite-size pieces, slice stalks into 2- inch diagonals, halving the stem lengthwise. The stalks and leaves have quite different textures and cooking times, so in culinary terms, it's like getting two vegetables for the price of one. Be sure to give the stems a minute or two to cook before you put the leaves in so that each part cooks to perfection.

Use: blanch by boiling or steaming; then stir-fry or sauté (I just stir fry bok choy directly and it turns out just fine—however . . .) “The two-step method makes all the difference.” For baby bok choy, simply stir-fry or sauté briefly, or stir into broth.

CHICKPEA

Botanical name: *Cicer arietinum* L.

Chickpeas, or garbanzo beans, were originally cultivated on the lands bordering Mesopotamia and the eastern Mediterranean. From there they spread to India and some parts of East Asia. In ancient Rome, the chickpea was so highly valued that one leader (Cicero) was proud to claim his family name came from the Latin term for it, *Cicer arietinum*.

Although chickpeas can be reddish or black, the buff-colored variety is the one most widely used. Chickpeas have a unique spherical shape with the hint of a tail, purportedly resembling a ram's head. The two most common types of chickpea, are the white-seeded "Kabuli" and the "Desi". Chickpea is an important source of protein in the diets of the poor regions of the world and is particularly important in vegetarian diets. Chickpeas are being used increasingly as a substitute for animal protein and are gaining in popularity in the United States, thanks to increased interest in ethnic cuisine, and can often be found on salads to boost protein levels.

Chickpeas, peas and lentils are rotation crops to wheat and barley. Planted in alternate years, these rotation crops replenish nitrogen in the soil, reducing or eliminating the need for chemical fertilizers.

The chickpeas you are receiving today are known as Billy Beans in the United States. They are called Pedro Sillano in Spain, where Bill Newbry, Genesee, Idaho, found them during his travels. He was so impressed, he brought the "beans" home to the United States and gave them to his growers to propagate. These peas (actually more closely related to peas than beans as the "garbanzo bean" nickname suggests) are last year's crop brought to you from a grower in Genesee. (Our son may have been on the combine that harvested them.)

Billy Beans have become favored chickpeas for the processed market both for their flavor and because they have a minimal seed coat, which results in a smoother hummus. Their smaller size results in a quicker cooking time (about 2 hours, versus at least three for the conventional Dwelley or Sanford chickpea).

Most recipes call for canned chickpeas, however, dried can be cooked and used in place of canned in any recipe. I put chickpeas in lentil chili, bean soup and have even had a chickpea pizza that was great. The hummus recipe enclosed is the most common use in our household.

Nutrition: Chickpeas as well as other legumes are high in fiber and an excellent source of: Folate (160mcg), Vitamin B6 (1.13mg), Vitamin C (9mg), and Zinc (2.54mg). Chickpeas, lentils, and peas are among the select group of foods that provide protein as well as calcium and iron.

Selection and storage: Choose pale tan chickpeas with uniform color. Store dried chickpeas in an airtight container.

Preparation, uses, and tips: Cooked chickpeas are the main ingredient, along with sesame paste, in hummus, the popular Middle Eastern spread. Before cooking, soak chickpeas for 12 hours, then pressure-cook for 20 to 25 minutes, or boil them for 2 1/2 hours (soaking and cooking times are less with Billy Beans). Chickpeas nearly triple in size after soaking and cooking. They have a unique, pungent flavor when cooked, blending well with garlic and onions. Chickpeas can be roasted as a snack or ground into flour.

A few basics about cooking dry peas, lentils and chickpeas

(Taken directly from the USA Dry Pea and Lentil Cookbook)

The first step in your preparation process is ensuring that the peas, lentils and chickpeas you are using are of United States origin. Peas, lentils and chickpeas from other origins such as Canada, Turkey, and India are known to have higher levels of foreign matter and may take much longer to cook because of hard seed problems (a result of harvesting at higher moisture rates before the product is fully matured). Peas and lentils from the United States are dried naturally in the sun and harvested at low moisture rates resulting in a product that does not require soaking. In fact, soaking peas and lentils from the United States will likely result in overcooking the product (Note: chickpeas, regardless of origin, still need to be soaked prior to cooking.) Cooking times may vary slightly depending upon the variety. Times given are approximations, and you should adjust them to meet your needs. High altitude, hard water, and salt added to the cooking water will increase cooking time.

Preparation of Chickpeas

In a medium size pan, combine 1 cup of soaked chickpeas and 2 ½ cups of water. Add more water if you are cooking at high altitude or with hard water. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer until the chickpeas are tender.

Many people prefer to use canned chickpeas because of the convenience. However, some find a noticeable difference between canned chickpeas and those they prepare. The difference is typically noticeable in dishes that most bring out the taste of the chickpeas, such as hummus. Try both forms to find which you prefer. One 15-ounce can contains a scant 2 cups.

Chickpea cooking times:

All uses, from dried: 1 ½ to 2 hours

Chickpea yield:

1 cup dry: 2 cups cooked

LENTIL HISTORY

Botanical name: *Lens culinaris*; Family *Leguminosae*

The Pardina lentils you are receiving are also from Genesee, Idaho, and my description may be somewhat biased. I didn't eat more than a bowl or two of lentil soup prior to the time when I moved to the Palouse, ten years ago, to serve as the Director of Research and Information for the USA Dry Pea and Lentil Council. At that time, I started eating lentils almost every day—mostly with rice and vegetables—and because they are quick, easy and healthy. I learned you could substitute lentils just about anywhere you use beans, that they serve as beanbag fillers, microwavable hot pads, make good vegetarian burgers (even according to meat eaters) and are wonderful for indoor sandboxes. My mom adds them to her multi-grain cereal in the morning and swears they keep her young. In addition to all the advantages of eating lentils, I also met Alan while working for the Council, so wouldn't be writing this account today were it not for THE LENTIL.

There are hundreds of varieties of lentils grown around the world, but the star of the Palouse is the Pardina. Also known as Spanish Brown or Continental lentils, the Pardina is petite, has a nutty flavor and holds its shape when cooked. Most of the production in this area is exported to Spain.

Lentils were probably one of the first pulse crops to be domesticated and originated in the fertile crescent of the Near East. They date back to the beginnings of agriculture itself. The earliest carbonized remains (10,000 years old) were unearthed in Northern Syria. The cultivation of lentils spread with Neolithic agriculture to Greece and Southern Bulgaria and had reached Crete by 6000 B.C. By the Bronze Age they were known in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland, Germany and even France. Lentils were highly esteemed in Pharoanic Egypt; a paste of lentils was found in the 12th dynasty tombs at Thebes (2400-2200 B.C) and the preparation of lentil soup is shown in a fresco from the time of Ramses II (1200 B.C). A ship carrying an Egyptian obelisk to Rome in the reign of the Emperor Caligula is said to have carried lentils as packing.

Lentils were well known in ancient Greece as a poor man's food. A popular saying applied to the nouveau riche at the time was "he doesn't like lentils any more." Lentils are mentioned in the Bible. The most famous reference is in Genesis Chapter 25 when Esau sold his birthright for bread and a "mess of pottage" made of red lentils. This dish is popularly held to be the same as the famous Near Eastern 'mujaddarah'. The Assyrians cultivated lentils. There are references to them being grown in Merodach-Baladan's garden at Babylon in the 8th century B.C. The crop spread eastward into India and China at a very early stage. The earliest finds in India have recently been discovered at the Neolithic site at Chirand in Bihar State dated between 2500 and 1800 B.C.

The Spanish and Portuguese made the introduction of lentils into the New World, probably at the beginning of the 16th century but they were not introduced into the USA until the First World War. Lentils are currently one of the staple food products of the Near East and India (where it is an important source of protein for the many vegetarians). In America they are generally used in soups as in Europe and the Near East where they are also used in stews, salads and with other food. Lentil salad often forms part of the French hors d'oeuvre table and in Germany puréed lentils may replace potatoes as an accompaniment for pork and other meats. There are many other variations as the enclosed literature shows (and the Lentil Cookbook really IS outstanding).

GRILLED ASPARAGUS

1 lb fresh asparagus
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon soy sauce
1/8 tsp freshly ground pepper
Cooking spray

Prepare grill. Snap off tough ends of asparagus. Combine all ingredients except cooking spray in a large zip-top plastic bag; seal and marinate for 30 minutes. Remove asparagus from bag, and discard marinade. Place asparagus on grill rack coated with cooking spray; grill 5 minutes on each side or until asparagus is done.

GOAT CHEESE AND ASPARAGUS PIZZA

From Truestar Healthnotes

Ingredients

1 recipe Pizza Dough
1/2 pound fresh asparagus
8 ounces Coach Farm Goat Cheese
1/2 cup good quality extra-virgin olive oil

Directions

- Preheat the griddle to 300° F. Cook the 4 pizza rounds for 30 seconds on each side. Remove from the heat and set aside.
- Preheat the oven to 500° F. Wash the asparagus and place on a lightly oiled baking sheet. Roast the asparagus in the hot oven until charred, about 9 minutes. Remove from the oven. When the asparagus are cool enough to touch, cut each stalk into 3 pieces.

In a small bowl, mix the goat cheese and olive oil. Divide the goat cheese mixture between the 4 pizzas, making sure to leave a 3/4-inch rim around the pizza for the crust. Smooth the goat cheese so that the topping is only 1/8- to 1/4-inch thick. Scatter the asparagus over the pizzas and cook the pizzas on the griddle until the dough is done, but not brown, about 3 1/2 minutes. Serve

ASPARAGUS-APPLE SALAD
(*The ultimate Washington Salad*)

Prep time: 13 minutes Chill: 3 hours

3 cups (1-inch) diagonally slices asparagus (about 2 pounds)
4 cups cubed Red Delicious apples (about 1-1/4 pounds)
2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
¼ cup raisins
2 Tbsp. cider vinegar
1 Tbsp. olive oil
2 tsp. honey
¼ tsp. salt
¼ tsp. dried dill
1/8 tsp. black pepper
7 curly lettuce leaves

1. Bring water to a boil in a large saucepan; add asparagus. Cook 1 minute; drain and plunge into ice water. Drain well.
2. Combine apple and lemon juice in a large bowl, tossing well to coat. Add asparagus and raisins, tossing gently.
3. Combine cider vinegar and next 5 ingredients; stir well with a whisk. Pour vinaigrette over salad; toss gently to coat. Cover and chill 3 to 12 hours. Serve on lettuce leaves.

Serving size: 1 cup
Yields: 7 servings
From: Cooking Light

SPICY HUMMUS

From The Pea and Lentil Cookbook

Makes about 4 cups, approximately 16 servings.

Ingredients

2 cups boiled chickpeas (see chickpea write-up above)
6 tablespoons tahini
6 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
3 tablespoons plain yogurt
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 cloves garlic, crushed (about 2 teaspoons)
1 teaspoon ground cumin
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
¼ cup minced jalapeno pepper
¼ cup red bell pepper, seeded and diced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
Cayenne pepper, for garnish

Directions

- In a food processor or blender, puree chickpeas, tahini, lemon juice, yogurt, and oil until smooth, adding water as needed, a little at a time, to make a creamy mixture. Transfer the puree to a medium bowl.
- Add garlic, cumin, cayenne, jalapeno, and bell pepper and mix well. Season with salt and pepper.
- Cover and chill 2-4 hours to allow the flavors to blend. Garnish with cayenne pepper just before serving.