



Gathering Together Farm

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CSA Newsletter—Week 10

Home Canning—Preserving Summer with Bulk Deals

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- **Watermelon Surprise**—GTF is known for its multi-colored watermelon. We have crowds surrounding our sample table all summer long, all waiting to taste the difference between red, orange, and yellow watermelon. People at market often ask us what we did to the melons to make them different colors. The reality is that there are multiple varieties of watermelon, kales, tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, and all crops, that are different shapes, sizes, and colors, yet only a few make it into mainstream grocery stores. Red watermelon is simply the most common. This week our CSA members are getting an assortment of watermelon, so you'll have to wait to cut your melon open to see which color you got!
- **Green Beans**—As always, our Crockett green beans are incredibly tender, eaten both raw or cooked. And as always, my favorite way to enjoy them is to remove the stems, and stir fry the beans with onion, garlic, and tamari.
- **Sweet Bell Pepper**
- **Eggplant**
- **Broccoli**
- **Moss Parsley**
- **Red Beets with Greens**
- **Willamette Sweet Onions**
- **Purple Majesty Potatoes**—these are purple all the way throughout and will maintain their color best roasted rather than boiled.
- **Garlic**—this is the best garlic year the farm has had in years. We're loving those fat cloves!
- **Persian Cucumbers**
- **Slicer Tomatoes**
- **Lettuce Surprise**

Home food preservation, an activity that was once necessary to get through the winter, has gone from being a dead art to being revived once again. More and more people are trying their hand at food preservation, whether it be canning, freezing, drying, or fermenting. Although we don't need to preserve food to make it through the winter anymore, food preservation is one of the best ways to get high quality organic produce for the lowest price, and it can be super fun.

In addition to being incredibly cost effective, larger food projects can be a great activity with friends and family. Everyone gathers around in the kitchen to share in a simple task, such as coring tomatoes, snapping green beans, or chopping herbs, all the while just hanging out.

Also, food preservation doesn't have to mean canning. Canning can be intimidating even if you're experienced with it. It takes a lot of time and everything has to be sanitary. Most people are worried about getting botulism from their canning projects, but this is a concern that is often blown pretty far out of proportion. The vast majority of botulism cases in the US are related to a particular fish product common in Alaska, and potato salad that has sat out too long at picnics. Approved canning recipes have already gone above and beyond with regard to safety. So, while sanitation is still important, there's no need to feel like you're in a life or death situation as you make your sauce. Where's the fun in that? But even so, I often time make big batches of sauces or jams and simply split up the bounty with friends to enjoy fresh or freeze it in ziplock bags. The freezer is an especially attractive option when your sauce-making takes longer than intended and you don't feel like canning into the night.

For the next few couple weeks, we will be selling **20 lb. cases of Canning Tomatoes for \$30**, which comes out to \$2.00/lb., 33% lower than our lowest market rate. If you would like to make a special order for canning tomatoes and other ingredients at discounted rates, please call our office at 541-929-4270 or email us at gtf@gatheringtogetherfarm.com with *Special Order* in the subject line. For smaller food projects, simply visit us at one of our booths at the farmers' market.

Best, *Laura Bennett*

We'd love to see what you're doing with your CSA box! Tag us on social media @gatheringtogetherfarm!



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Ajvar—Roasted Pepper & Eggplant Spread

“There aren’t too many rules when it comes to ajvar recipes and uses, including the way it’s served. I’ve had it as a condiment with grilled fish and [meats](#), in a sandwich for some oomph, or slathered on a cracker with a drizzle of olive oil and a crumble or smear of whatever goat or feta cheese I can get my hands on. Then I daydream and forget about car troubles, sticky summer heat, and dream of the next time I can get back to those gorgeous seas and summers of Croatia.”—adapted from <http://saltandwind.com/recipes/370-ajvar-roasted-pepper-and-eggplant-dip-recipe>

Ingredients

- 2 lbs **colored bell peppers**
- 1 small **eggplant**
- 3 Tbsp olive oil
- 3 **garlic** cloves
- 1 small handful chives or parsley
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp cane sugar
- ¼ tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

- Heat oven to 450°F and arrange racks in the upper third. Halve each pepper, discarding stems and seeds. Place peppers, cut side down, on a baking sheet lined with foil. Cut eggplant in half lengthwise and drizzle it with about 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and a little salt and place it, cut-side down, on the baking sheet. Roast the peppers and eggplant until they are blackened, blistered, and the eggplant collapses when you press on it, about 30 minutes.
- Remove the eggplant and set it aside to cool slightly. Remove the peppers, place them in a bowl, and cover with plastic wrap until the peppers have slightly cooled, at least 5 minutes. Use a spoon to remove the pulp of the eggplant from the skin and discard the skin. Put eggplant in a food processor with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and the garlic. Pulse the eggplant a few times so that it’s roughly chopped.
- Once peppers are cool enough to handle, peel them (reserving any juices that collect), discard the peel, and add the peppers and 2 to 3 tablespoons of the pepper liquid to the food processor. Add the chives and pulse 5 to 8 times to chop coarsely. Stir in the lemon juice, vinegar, red pepper flakes, and sugar. Taste and add more sugar if it is a bit sour, then add salt and freshly ground black pepper, as desired.

Tip—Ajvar can be made up to 4 days ahead of time; store refrigerated in an airtight container and bring to room temperature before serving. Taste and stir in more vinegar, sugar, salt, or olive oil as desired. You can also grill the peppers and eggplant.

Broccoli & Pepper Jack Frittata

—Adapted from Brassicas—Cooking the world’s healthiest vegetables

Directions

- Preheat the oven to 400°F. Put the oil and garlic in a 10-12 inch non-stick frying pan and place over medium heat. When the garlic starts to sizzle, add the broccoli, stir to coat it with the oil, and cook for about 2 minutes. Stir in ¼ teaspoon of the salt and the water and cook, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes, until the broccoli is tender.
- Meanwhile, in a bowl, beat the eggs with the remaining ½ tsp salt and the pepper until blended. When the broccoli is ready, sprinkle the cheese evenly over it and then add the eggs to the pan. Cook for about 2 minutes, until the eggs are set around the edges.
- Transfer the pan to the oven and bake for 8-10 minutes, until the eggs are just set. A knife inserted into the frittata should come out clean. Remove from the oven and carefully slide the frittata out onto a serving plate.

Ingredients

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves **garlic**, minced
- 2 cups bite-size **broccoli** florets
- 2 Tbsp water
- 6 eggs
- Salt & pepper
- 1 cup shredded pepper jack cheese

Basil-Garlic Tomato Sauce

—adapted from <https://www.freshpreserving.com/basil-garlic-tomato-sauce-%7C-recipes-for-tomato-sauce-%7C-ball-preserving-br1045.html>

Directions

- PREPARE boiling water canner. Heat jars and lids in simmering water until ready for use. Do not boil. Set bands aside.
- WASH tomatoes; drain. Remove core and blossom ends. Cut into quarters. Set aside.
- SAUTE onion and garlic in olive oil until transparent. Add tomatoes. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- PUREE tomato mixture in a food processor or blender, working in batches. Strain puree to remove seeds and peel.
- COMBINE tomato puree and basil in large saucepot. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until volume is reduced by half, stirring to prevent sticking.
- ADD 1 Tbsp bottled lemon juice to each hot pint jar; Add 2 Tbsp bottled lemon juice to each hot quart jar. Ladle hot sauce into hot jars leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe rim. Center hot lid on jar. Apply band and adjust until fit is fingertip tight. Place jar in boiling water canner. Repeat until all jars are filled.
- PROCESS pint jars for 35 minutes and quart jars for 40 minutes. Remove canner lid. Wait 5 minutes, then remove jars and cool. Check lids for seal after 24 hours; they should not flex up and down when center is pressed.

Ingredients

- 20 lb tomatoes
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 8 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 cup minced basil
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice /hot jar
- 7 pint jars or 3 quarts