

Hogtown HomeGrown

Volume 5 Issue 4

April 2010

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The year's worst-kept secret

Everybody's talking about it. Carlo Petrini preaches it. Michael Pollan answered questions from Oprah about it. Oprah couldn't keep the secret and let the whole world know. It has been on the cover of Time Magazine, sold lots of books and even provided subject matter for newsletters—especially this one.

Regularly practiced, it is the easiest way to save the environment. Doing it every day reduces our carbon footprint and the amount of petrochemicals used for shipping.

Properly practiced, it is the easiest way to save our economy. Doing it with people who live near us strengthens our area's businesses and infrastructure by increasing individual and family incomes.

Creatively practiced, it is the easiest way to save the earth's biodiversity. Doing it with many species and varieties ensures the survival and health of our planet's plants and animals.

Enthusiastically practiced, it is the easiest way to save the human species. Doing it reduces the intake of processed food and empty calories, improving the health of everyone who eats this way.

Have you guessed the secret yet? It is eating locally grown, seasonal, fresh food! Eating local can clean up the environment, bolster the economy, preserve many plant and animal species and improve overall health.

Aware of the idea, but not sure if you are ready? Since the 2010 Eat Local Challenge begins May 1st, there is no time like now to familiarize yourself with the basics of eating local. Here are three easy steps to get you started—

Shop at the farmers market before you make your menu. Figure out your meals after you have purchased all the fresh produce the farmers have to offer. Then go to a locally owned grocer to finish shopping for your completed menu.

Try something new every week. Consult cookbooks and websites to learn new ways of eating old favorites and to find yummy ways to serve items you've never tried before.

Serve local food at potlucks, parties, benefits and fundraisers. Serving and talking about local foods not only makes more people aware, but retailers and restaurants follow trends, so talking about it will make local food even more available.

Are you ready for a challenge? Register online for this year's Eat Local Challenge. Eat something local at every meal. Eat locally grown food at locally owned restaurants. Keep track of your efforts. Come to Swallowtail Farm on May 1st and the Community Celebration on May 30th. Check out www.hogtownhomegrown.com for more information and to register for the 2010 Eat Local Challenge.

Spread the word—eating local isn't a secret anymore!



Tioga

Monday Market

Mondays 4-7pm
Tioga Town Center
West Newberry Road



Union Street

Farmers Market

Wednesdays 4-7pm
Community Plaza
Downtown Gainesville



High Springs

Farmers Market

Thursday 2-7pm
Downtown High Springs
Corner Main St and 1st Ave
farmersmarket.highsprings.com



Haile Village

Farmers Market

Saturdays 830-12pm
Haile Plantation
off Tower Road



Alachua County

Farmers Market

Saturdays 830-1pm
5920 NW 13th Street
www.441market.com

What's Fresh Right Now?

- Beets—red, golden, striped
 - Broccoli
 - Bok Choy
 - Cabbage—head, savoy, chinese/napa
 - Carrots—various colors, large traditional
 - Cauliflower
 - Citrus
 - Cucumbers—mini seedless, slicers, kirby
 - Garlic—gar-leeks, chives, elephant
 - Greens—curly endive, collards, mustard, baby mustard, sorrel, rutabaga, turnip, swiss chard, dandelion
 - Herbs—italian basil, cilantro, marjoram, dill, sage, lime leaf, parsley, chives, chervil, peppermint, oregano, rosemary, lemongrass, spearmint
 - Honey—tupelo, gallberry, orange blossom
 - Kale—too many varieties to list
 - Kohlrabi
 - Lettuce—bibb, red leaf, green leaf, boston, spring mix, romaine, red romaine, radicchio, arugula
 - Mushrooms—shitake
 - Onions—yellow, green/red scallions, large sweet onion scallions
 - Pecans
 - Peppers—green/red sweet bell
 - Potatoes—sweet, red creamers
 - Radish—globe, daikon
 - Rutabaga
 - Shoots—pea, corn, sunflower
 - Spinach—green, red stem, tatsoi
 - Squash—pumpkin (calabasa)
 - Sprouts—sunflower, mung, lentil, alfalfa
 - Sweet Potatoes
 - Tomatoes—beefsteak, grape, cluster, green, cherokee purple
 - Turnips
- Shop the markets for lots of garden essentials—flowers, veggies and herbs—to make your food truly “homegrown”.

Local and Fresh— Spinach

Need to add greens to your diet, but not a fan of the stronger taste of collards, mustards or turnips? Have you tried spinach? Good raw or cooked, it can add color to dips, flavor to soups and bulk to your salad.

Full of vitamins K and A, plus manganese and folate, spinach was at one time rumored to have ten times the amount of iron in other vegetables. Decades later the rumor was dismissed—the victim of an error with a decimal point. Despite the error, Popeye must have been right about spinach – after all, he’s over 80!

In season during Florida’s cooler months, spinach has the reputation for being gritty if not cleaned thoroughly. Washing spinach is easy in a big bowl of water – submerge the leaves, swish, lift out leaves to remove, change the water and repeat until all the leaves are clean.

However you enjoy it, spinach is a great way to go green - a balanced package of nutrition containing very few calories.

Sweet Spinach Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 8 cups spinach leaves, washed and stemmed
- 4 ounces fresh chevre (creamy goat cheese)
- 1/2 cup pecans, toasted and chopped
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- bottled dressing, raspberry or poppy seed
- freshly ground black pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Dry spinach very well. Arrange leaves on individual plates or a large platter.

Top with chevre, pecans, strawberries and cranberries.

Drizzle with dressing before serving or pass the dressing.

Top with freshly ground black pepper to accentuate the sweetness of the strawberries.

Save the World—One Dinner at a Time!

Spinach Soufflé

INGREDIENTS

1 Tablespoon olive oil	1 large green onion, sliced
2 garlic cloves, smashed and chopped	16 cups spinach leaves
2 Tablespoons butter	1/4 cup flour
1 cup milk	1/4 cup cheese, grated
1/4 cup dry sherry or milk	1/4 teaspoon salt
freshly ground black pepper	1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
3 egg yolks, lightly beaten	3 egg whites, room temperature

DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly butter a 1 1/2 quart ovenproof dish and set aside.

Heat a large pot to medium-high and add oil. Add onion and stir for one minute, then add garlic and sauté for 3 minutes. Add the spinach by handfuls, stirring after each addition to coat leaves with oil. Cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

When spinach is completely wilted, make a well in the center of the pot by moving the spinach to the sides. Add the butter and when it has melted completely, stir in the flour until a roux is formed. Cook one minute. Stirring constantly, pour in the milk and cook until a creamy sauce is formed. Completely combine the sauce and spinach, then add the sherry and seasonings.

Let creamed spinach mixture cool for 5 minutes, then puree in a food processor or blender. Add the egg yolks to the mixture and combine thoroughly. Return to pot and set aside.

In a separate bowl, whisk the egg whites to stiff peaks. Add 1/3 of the egg whites to the spinach mixture and whisk well. Fold in the remaining egg whites gently, maintaining as much volume as possible. Pour into prepared dish. Bake 25-35 minutes or until soufflé is lightly browned and the center is set. Serve immediately—the soufflé will fall after a few minutes, but it will still taste great. Store covered leftovers in refrigerator.

Tricks and Tips

Yes, it is called Spinach Soufflé, but don't let that hold you back from experimenting with other greens.

One version I made had regular spinach, red stem spinach and baby rainbow swiss chard. The combination had a lovely flavor and all three cooked in the same amount of time. It's a great way to get fussy eaters to try greens.

Orange Compote

INGREDIENTS

2 oranges per serving, zested, peeled and cut into sections
1 Tablespoon orange marmalade per serving
2 teaspoons orange liqueur or lemon juice per serving

DIRECTIONS

Combine orange sections with orange zest, marmalade and liqueur. Stir well so that the marmalade breaks down and is incorporated with other ingredients. Let stand at room temperature up to an hour before serving.

Serve over ice cream or pound cake for a fancy dessert or on it's own as a accompaniment to a rich entrée or grilled fish.

Tricks or Tips

A compote is usually cooked, but I use citrus for a lighter compote.

Try this one—

Grapefruit Pomegranate Compote

Section grapefruit, seed pomegranate, and combine.

Whisk honey with an equal amount of grapefruit juice.

Pour over fruit. Let stand at room temperature before serving.



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Hogtown HomeGrown

Local and Seasonal Recipes, Menus and More
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Tricks and Tips

I did it again—
I bought three flats of
strawberries—
you would think I
would learn!
I've made adult jam,
pancake topping,
regular jam, straw-
berry margarita jam
and lemon strawberry
marmalade. We've
eaten them raw, with
honey-sweetened
crème fraiche, in
shortcakes and on ice
cream. I also froze a
few bags of whole
berries for smoothies.
Hard work now—
sweet rewards
all year long!

Adult Strawberry Jam

INGREDIENTS

3 quarts strawberries
1 1/2 cups demerara sugar, divided
1/2 cup sweet marsala wine
1 package low-sugar pectin powder

DIRECTIONS

Prepare 8 one cup canning jars.
Wash, stem and slice strawberries. Place in a large deep pot and cook over medium heat until juices flow and berries soften.
Stir in 1 cup of sugar and cook until thickened—about 45 minutes.
Mix in marsala and cook an additional 15 minutes.
Stir together remaining 1/2 cup sugar and entire package of pectin.
Raise heat to high and stirring constantly, bring strawberries to a boil. Whisk in pectin-sugar mixture, stirring until sugar is dissolved and pectin incorporated. Boil hard for one minute, then remove from heat.
Stir well and ladle into hot jars. Seal jars with lids and bands.
Process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes.
Remove jars from water and allow to cool. The lids will pop as the vacuum creates the seal. Any jars that remain unsealed should be refrigerated and eaten first.
Mark jars with contents and date. Jams should be eaten within a year.
NOTE: Raw sugar or white, granulated sugar may be substituted for demerara, but the jam will not have the same deep flavor.