

# Hogtown HomeGrown

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## August is Farm-to-Restaurant Month

Not too long ago, Hogtown's restaurants were not the purveyors of local food that they are striving for today. Only a few chefs were willing to spend the time and money to source and serve local food—Bert Gill, Clif Nelson, Rick Griffin and Mark Newman come to mind. Of course Momma Lo's, Mom's Kitchen and Primrose Inn served some local produce in season, but fresh and local were not their mission.

Fast forward to 2006—the year Hogtown HomeGrown was created was also the year The Jones Eastside opened. The Jones' ideas that food should be local and seasonal, and that workers should be fairly compensated, may not have been the most profitable of business plans, but a wonderful mission. Since then, more than three dozen restaurants' chefs and owners have jumped on the local food bandwagon, most in small ways, but it's a start!

One reason the local food bandwagon is getting crowded is the annual Farm-to-Restaurant Workshop and Culinary Fair (F2R), sponsored by Blue Oven Kitchens and Forage. Begun in 2010 as a way to get farmers and chefs to talk to each other, F2R has created farmer and chef partnerships, resulting in more local food in our locally-owned restaurants. This year's F2R for chefs, farmers and food producers is on August 13th.

August 2012 is Farm-to-Restaurant Month as declared by both the City of Gainesville and Alachua County, and F2R is just one event. Blue Oven Kitchens will also host a series of fundraisers at sponsoring Gainesville restaurants. *Tickets required for dinners at The Smokehouse and The Top. Contact Val Leitner, Blue Oven Kitchen's President, val@blueovenkitchens.org, to purchase tickets or a sponsorship package.*

- **Saturday, August 4th: 10% of all sales at The Bagel Bakery**, 4113 NW 16<sup>th</sup> Blvd, www.bagelbakerygainesville.com. Stop by between 9am and 1pm for live music and featured local ingredients or visit anytime Saturday from 7am-4pm.
- **Monday, August 6th: Local Fare Prix Fixe Dinner at The Smokehouse**, 103 S. Main St, www.smokehousedowntown.com. Tickets required, \$30 per person or included in sponsorship package. Arrive between 6 and 8:30pm. Includes 2-course dinner (vegan options) and 1 non-alcoholic or alcoholic beverage from menu. Live music! Try one of Gainesville's newest restaurants—did you know they have a garden on their roof?
- **Monday, August 20th: 20% of all sales on select items at Sweet Dreams Homemade Ice Cream**, 3437 W. University Ave, www.gainesvilleicecream.com. Come taste their local flavors from 5-9pm!
- **Monday, August 27th: Local Fare Buffet Dinner at The Top**, 30 N. Main St. www.facebook.com/pages/the-TOP/138661476441. Tickets required, \$30 per person, or included in sponsorship package. Arrive between 6 and 8:30pm. Includes locally sourced buffet dinner (vegan options) and 1 non-alcoholic beverage from menu. Live music! Come enjoy a rare chance to eat at The Top on a Monday evening!
- **Entire Month of August: 25% of all coffee sales at The Jones Eastside**, 401 NE 23<sup>rd</sup> Ave, www.thejoneseastside.com. Stop by The Jones anytime in August for breakfast, dessert, coffee break, meeting, or just that morning cup of locally-roasted coffee.



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## What's Fresh Right Now?

Beans—yard long beans  
Cabbage—green  
Carrots  
Citrus—juices  
Corn  
Cucumbers—mini seedless, kirby,  
japanese/armenian slicers  
Eggplant—white/purple/green, thai  
Garlic—chives  
Grapes—golden muscadines  
Greens—collards, callaloo, kale  
Herbs—tarragon, chives, basil  
Honey—orange blossom, gallberry,  
tupelo, palmetto  
Melons—watermelon  
Microgreens  
Mushrooms—oyster  
Okra  
Onions—green, yellow  
Peas—pink eye, white acre, zipper  
Peppers—green/red/yellow sweet bell,  
banana, jalapeno, poblano,  
hot/sweet banana, black beauty,  
cherry bomb, chocolate  
Potatoes—red, sweet  
Radish—daikon  
Shoots—pea, sunflower, corn, spring mix  
Sprouts—alfalfa, clover, quinoa, wheat,  
sunflower, garbanzo, mung bean,  
french lentil, green lentil, radish  
Squash—pumpkin, yellow, spaghetti,  
acorn, butternut, zucchini  
Tomatoes—red beefsteak, grape, plum,  
gold medal, green  
Wheatgrass

Hot weather and the drought/flood situation really limit the number of veggies available at your local farmers markets. Don't despair! Your meals don't have to be monotonous—vary your menu with recipes from different countries and cultures. Curry one night and ratatouille another makes dinner a travel adventure.

## Local and Fresh—

### Tarragon

My favorite herb farmer (also know as my “Basil Guy”) has been selling beautiful fresh tarragon lately and I have renewed my friendship with this underused herb.

A member of the wormwood family, tarragon has small aromatic leaves and a woody stem. With a flavor that is reminiscent of anise, tarragon is widely used in savory French dishes and is best known as a component of Béarnaise Sauce. Used to make vinegar in Europe and the United States, and a sweetened, green soft drink in Russia, tarragon has a unique and versatile flavor. There is even a cake in Slovenia, potica, that is sometimes made with a tarragon filling.

The leaves of fresh tarragon can be easily stripped off the stems and used whole or chopped. Dried tarragon should smell “green” not musty. Crumble in your palms to release its oils before adding to your recipe.

Whether fresh or dried, a little tarragon goes a long way. Try it in scrambled eggs, white sauces or salads. And yes, Publix does sell a ready-to-eat chicken salad with tarragon in it.

## Tarragon Lemon Dressing

### INGREDIENTS

2 hard cooked egg yolks  
juice and zest of one lemon  
1 Tablespoon fresh tarragon leaves, minced  
pinch each of salt and pepper  
1/2 cup olive oil

### DIRECTIONS

Mash together egg yolk, lemon zest, juice and tarragon until a paste forms. Add salt, pepper and oil. Stir until combined. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate until serving.

**Note:** The egg yolk makes the dressing thick and creamy, plus it adds protein.

# Summer Squash Spoonbread

## INGREDIENTS

8 cups grated summer squash (try a mix of yellow squash and zucchini)  
1/4 cup grated onion  
8 ounces grated cheese (try Cypress Point Creamery's Farmer's Cheese)  
1 cup fine yellow cornmeal  
1 cup all purpose flour  
1/4 teaspoon each salt and freshly ground black pepper  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda  
1 cup milk  
2 Tablespoons olive oil  
1 teaspoon butter

## DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees—put an 8 inch cast iron pan in oven to heat as well.

In a large bowl, mix together squash, onion and cheese. In a separate bowl, mix together dry ingredients. Toss dry ingredients with squash mixture and mix until completely combined. Add milk and stir well until batter forms—no need to beat, just keep stirring.

Add oil to preheated pan and return to oven for 5 minutes. Remove pan from oven and add butter, swirling pan to coat well. Stir batter one more time and pour into prepared pan. Quickly and gently smooth the batter into an even layer. Bake 40-45 minutes until puffed, golden brown and firm to the touch in the center. Let cool 5 minutes before serving. Use a spoon to serve or cut into wedges. Cover and refrigerate leftovers.

# Squash Ribbon Salad

## INGREDIENTS

1 large zucchini or yellow summer squash per person, peeled if needed (see Note )  
Tarragon Lemon Dressing or your choice of dressing, to taste

## DIRECTIONS

Thoroughly wash squash, dry well and trim ends.

Using a sharp vegetable peeler, cut long, thin strips or ribbons from prepared squash. Rotate squash to get ribbons of similar size. Stop slicing once the seeds have been revealed.

## Tricks and Tips

Spoonbread usually starts with a cornmeal mush base made with water or milk, enhanced by the addition of eggs, butter and cheese, and baked until golden. In this recipe the water content of the raw squash provides more than enough liquid to create the "bread" and keep it moist and almost soufflé-like. As you add the milk, it will almost feel like there won't be enough liquid to moisten all the dry ingredients—keep stirring lightly, it will form a batter!

## Note

Summer squash do not need to be peeled if cooked, but sometimes I peel squash to be served raw, if there are nicks or bruises on the skin that could harbor bacteria.

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# Hogtown HomeGrown

Local and Seasonal Recipes, Menus and More

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## Tricks and Tips

Use this or any unfrosted cake as a base for fresh or preserved fruit. Top cake with sliced peaches or nectarines juiced up with a touch of sugar and a hint of citrus zest. Or try adding a squeeze of lime juice and a little zest to your favorite fruit jam—warm in the microwave and drizzle over cake. Add ice cream or whipped cream for a decadent touch.

## Lime Cake

### INGREDIENTS

- zest of 2 limes
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 stick unsalted butter, melted
- 3 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 Tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter and flour an 8 x 8 or 9 x 13 baking pan.

Zest limes into sugar and combine well. Add butter and then beat in eggs one at a time.

In a separate bowl, combine all dry ingredients. Add to butter mixture and stir gently until almost completely combined. Add lime juice and vanilla, stir until completely combined.

Scrape batter into prepared pan and bake 25-35 minutes. Cake will be firm to touch. Allow to cool before serving. Store covered at room temperature.