

# Hogtown HomeGrown

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## How We Eat Local—Our Choices

Signing people up for the 2008 Eat Local Challenge has been fun and question-filled! People want rules and guidelines, but there really aren't any. Here are our personal choices for the month of May—Start with a basic pantry including spices, oils, vinegars, seasonings. Eat local food for every meal, accented with pantry items. We are following Barbara Kingsolver's lead by choosing "luxury items"—we know coffee isn't grown here, but it is roasted in Gainesville, so we will still drink coffee. And there will be bananas!

As for some other commonly used items, here are some of our other choices. *Milk*—there are several local dairies and we can make our own yogurt and yogurt cheese. *Cheese*—when we just can't live without it, we'll get Sweetwater Dairy's cheese (Thomasville, Georgia—145 miles away) or regional cheeses from a local store. *Eggs*—there are several local choices. *Seafood*—Atlantic or Gulf Coast local choices from a local seafood store. *Soy Products*—there's no local soymilk or tofu, but there are two tempeh makers. *Bread*—we're not going to eat the same amount as usual since wheat isn't grown here, but there are several local bakeries. *Produce*—within a one hundred mile circle, there is a tremendous amount of produce available, especially during May.

We aren't eating pasta or rice, but there is an almost local gristmill (Shepherd's Mill, Greensboro, Florida—174 miles away) in our circle, so there will be grits, polenta and cornbread. Potatoes and sweet potatoes are abundant, so we really won't miss the pasta or rice.

Our menus will take a bit more planning and we will be eating a lot more produce. Grumblings have been heard from the seventeen year old, but we are looking forward to the challenge of being aware of all our food choices—do you think we'll all save money and lose weight too?

## Cream of Green Soup

### INGREDIENTS

2 leeks, white and part of green, chopped	2 cups water, divided
4 cups zucchini, chopped	1/3 cup cashew butter
1/4 lemon, juiced	salt and pepper to taste

### DIRECTIONS

Bring 1 cup water and chopped leeks to a boil in a lidded saucepan. Add zucchini, return to boil, cover and cook over medium heat for 15 minutes.

Place 1 cup water in blender or food processor, add cashew butter, cooked zucchini and leeks with cooking water. Blend until smooth—there will still be flecks of green. Stir in lemon juice and taste for seasoning. Can be served hot, warm or cold.

Variation—replace 1 cup water and cashew butter with 1 cup of milk—proceed as directed. Store in refrigerator and serve either hot or cold.

## Zucchini and Tomatoes

Slice zucchini in half lengthwise and then chop into 1/2 inch pieces. Halve 1 pint cherry tomatoes. Toss with olive oil, salt, pepper and oregano. Roast at 350 degrees until tender, about 45 minutes.

### Are you ready?

High bush blueberries are just starting to trickle in and the farmers report that they have had to water this year. But that water has been put to good use—I have never seen blueberries as large as the organic ones I picked up last week at the farmers market—some were the diameter of a quarter—very sweet and juicy! I couldn't bear to freeze or cook them—we ate them right out of the bag!

# Local and Fresh—Zucchini

You've got a recipe calling for zucchini, but if you are looking for the typical long green squash—take another look. There are bright and sunny golden zucchini and small round ball shaped zucchini in addition to the typical green courgettes—the squash known as zucchini to us are known as courgettes almost everywhere else around the world.

Brought to North American by the wave of Italian immigrants in the 1920s, zucchini are now a staple in gardens and kitchens. Did you know it is cooked and eaten as a veggie, but it is botanically a fruit? These prolific squash are the butt of many jokes about surplus crop at the end of the growing season—watch out for neighbors bearing bags of produce! Too many zucchini? You can pickle, freeze or stew them, but I'll just make another batch of cupcakes!

## What's Fresh Right Now?

Beans—roma, green  
Berries—blueberries, strawberries  
Broccoli  
Cabbage—green, savoy, chinese  
Carrot—bunches  
Chard—swiss, rainbow, red  
Citrus—orange, grapefruit, tangerine  
Cucumbers—mini seedless, traditional  
Fennel  
Garlic—chives, elephant, gar-leeks  
Greens—curly tuscan/red/white russian kale, escarole, mustard  
Herbs—basil, sage, rosemary, cilantro, parsley, dill, savory, lemongrass  
Lettuce—red leaf, green leaf, salad mix, arugula, spicy mix, romaine, bibb, oak leaf, mesclun, buttercrunch  
Onions—sweet, red, green and red scallions, leeks  
Peas—snow, sugar snap  
Peppers—green/red sweet bell, cubanelles  
Potatoes—sweet, red skin  
Radishes—globe, daikon  
Roots and Greens—beets, turnips, kohlrabi, rutabaga  
Squash—summer, crookneck, zucchini, golden zucchini, patty pan  
Tomatoes—cluster, beefsteak, cherry, grape

## Baby Zukes and Onions

### INGREDIENTS

15-20 very small zucchini, about 4 inches long  
3 Tablespoons olive oil  
3 large garlic cloves, smashed and chopped  
2 onions, sliced into rings  
2 Tablespoons sesame seeds (optional)

### DIRECTIONS

Trim stem end of zucchini and steam until just tender—a knife should enter the skin easily, but the interior should still be a little firm. Set aside to cool.  
Heat a large skillet, then add the oil and the onions. Stir until onions are coated with oil, turn the heat to medium-low, and cook slowly until the onions are limp and translucent, but not brown. Add the garlic and cook until soft. Place the zucchini in a large casserole—it looks great if they are all facing the same direction in a single layer. Cover with the onion-garlic mixture, including the oil. Stir gently until the zucchini are coated with the mixture. If using sesame seeds, sprinkle over the top now. Place in a preheated 350 degree oven for 15 minutes until hot or until sesame seeds are lightly browned.  
This is great with any pasta casserole, especially lasagna. Also perfect for potlucks.

## Tempeh Stuffed Zucchini

### INGREDIENTS

4 large zucchini  
1/2 pound tempeh, cut into small cubes  
1/2 red pepper, chopped finely  
1 small jalapeno, seeded, diced finely  
1 Tablespoon lemon juice  
3 Tablespoons oil, divided  
1/2 green pepper, chopped finely  
1/2 onion, chopped finely  
1 Tablespoon tamari or soy sauce  
1 cup smoked gouda, shredded (optional)

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Cut each zucchini in half lengthwise and scoop out the interior flesh, leaving a shell about 1/4 inch thick. A grapefruit spoon with a serrated tip or a melon baller makes this really easy. Place shells on lined baking sheet and brush with olive oil. Bake 20-30 minutes or until they can just be pierced with a fork. Set aside.

Chop zucchini flesh into small pieces. Heat remaining olive oil in large skillet. Add zucchini flesh, tempeh, peppers, and onion. Stir until onions are soft and peppers and zucchini are tender. Stir in tamari and lemon juice. Take off the heat. If using cheese, add half of it now and stir to distribute evenly. Divide stuffing mixture among the zucchini shells. If using cheese, sprinkle the reserved cheese on each stuffed zucchini.

They can be covered at this point and refrigerated for one day before baking and serving.

Bake until mixture is sizzling or cheese is bubbly. The vegan version can be served at room temperature, but the cheese-topped variation should be served hot.

## Green Hash Browns

### INGREDIENTS

2 Tablespoons olive oil  
1 bunch green onions, green part only, sliced lengthwise, then chopped into 2 inch pieces  
4 baked or boiled potatoes, cooled and cubed  
2 zucchini, quartered lengthwise, then chopped the same size as the potatoes  
1/2 cup chopped herbs—flat-leaf parsley OR dill OR cilantro  
salt and pepper to taste

### DIRECTIONS

Over medium-high heat, heat a large skillet (we prefer a cast iron pan) and add olive oil. Add green onions and stir until limp. Stir in potatoes and zucchini, making sure everything is coated with oil and green onions. Let it sauté for 5 minutes, then stir and let sit on the heat for another 5 minutes. Stir in the herbs and continue to stir for 2 minutes or until zucchini is tender and potatoes are a little browned. Taste for seasoning. Serve hot.

Variation—stir in 2 cups of finely chopped greens with the potatoes and zucchini. A splash of vinegar or lemon juice will set off the flavor of the greens and you'll need less salt.

### **Tricks and Tips**

The Earth Day inspirations for this recipe were the Stuffed Poblano Peppers which won the Local Food Cook-off sponsored by UF's Gator Dining at the Fresh Food Company. The chefs stuffed grilled poblano peppers with a tempeh-pepper-cheese mixture, sautéed them stuffing side down and served them with a cilantro drizzle.

### **Tricks and Tips**

Remember Skeeter's "Asher Special" or 43rd Street Deli's "Belly Buster"? Just top Green Hash Browns with cheese and either a poached or fried egg. It makes a complete meal which is much healthier than the higher fat versions.

# Hogtown HomeGrown

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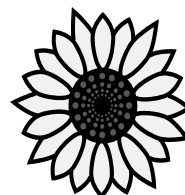
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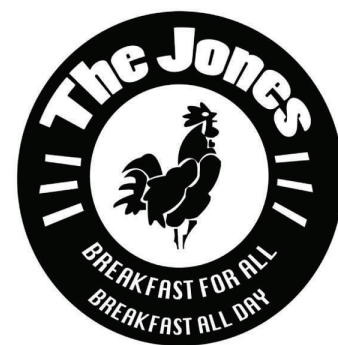
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## Tricks and Tips

Our 17 year old hates zucchini, so the “surprise” in these muffins was a well-kept secret. He ate one, declared they were great and still didn't know they contained zucchini. By the way, he taste-tested the “Cream of Green Soup”, liked both versions, but preferred the vegan soup!

## Chocolate Orange Surprise Cupcakes

### INGREDIENTS

1 cup unbleached flour	1 1/2 cups whole wheat flour
1/4 cup cocoa	1 Tablespoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup oil	1/2 cup honey
2 eggs	1/2 cup milk
1 1/2 cups shredded zucchini	1 orange, zest and juice

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Prepare a 12 cup standard size muffin pan. Mix together dry ingredients in a large bowl. Stir in oil and honey—mixture will be very stiff. Beat in eggs one at a time, until thoroughly combined. Add milk and stir vigorously until a smooth batter is formed—make sure to scrape sides and bottom of bowl. Stir in shredded zucchini, orange zest and juice and mix until smooth. Scoop into prepared pan—fill each muffin cup about 3/4 full. Bake in preheated oven for about 20 minutes—a toothpick will test clean. Tilt in pan to cool, then place on platter and dust with powdered sugar if desired. Store in air-tight container at room temperature.