Community Gardens

“Gardens, scholars say, are the first sign of commitment to a community. When people plant corn they are saying, let’s stay here. And by their connection to the land, they are connected to one another” - Anne Raver. If you could see through my eyes you would realize how true this is. One of my many pleasures at the University is to prepare, organize, rent and then clean up our community gardens. With the close of the season I’m reminded of this. I received an e-mail from one of our tenants today asking about year end activities like: ‘how long will this last with the frost, will that still ripen, what should I preserve and how...’? And it is, believe it or not, a pleasure and a joy... here’s why.

These are our Community Gardens for graduate students and the few locals who keep the summer in Berrien. We prep a large section of land behind the University Apartments, we have run water to this chosen spot, and we divide it into 30x30 plots and then rent them out for a break-even price. Many of our apartments are full of small, young families who have traveled many miles into this strange country to gain an education. This, with hopes to better themselves and the people they touch when retreating back home. It’s a big scary move for them. Funds are extremely tight and the shock can be amazing. One man related a story of his kids, finely after being apart for 2 years, arriving only to fear the snow and not willing to go outside because they had never known it in Africa. The transition is immense. More then often it’s these same people we find out in our Community Gardens hard at work.

Yes, the original idea was to help put in the hands of the people the ability to grow their own food, giving them an opportunity for a financial break at home and a connection to nature. But, it’s become much more then that. All on it’s own it has taken the name of community to heart. They don’t just grow food. They grow their food. Food they attach to home. Food you may not find in the local Meijer. They band together at the beginning of the year clambering for plots next to friends anew and friends from summers past. Often these are persons from similar lands and they later chatter away in the filed (in native tongue), side-by-side rekindling a sense of home...a sense of place. This crosses over into the bordering gardens with the sharing of unique crops and different styles with others from different lands. They touch the earth, they laugh, sweat and conspire. But most of all they become a community. And it is only for them that we have in the truest sense a ‘Community Garden’.

-Garth Woodruff

Weekly Produce
Carrots
Sweet Corn
Green Cabbage
Tomatoes
Cherry Tomatoes
Yellow Cucumbers
Yellow Beans
Peppers
Fresh Onions
Oregano
Parsley
Peaches (fruit shares)
Mixed Bouquet (flower shares)
Free Range Eggs

Free Range Eggs are available for $3.00 from Redbarn Farm in Buchanan, MI.

To order eggs for your next delivery please email info@augardens.com

Recycle

As a reminder, egg-cartons maybe re-used for later use. Please have any available cartons for the driver.

Recipes

**GARDEN CORN CHOWDER WITH BASIL & CHIVES**

*Ingredients:*
- 1 tablespoon coconut oil
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 4 cup fresh corn (from 5 to 6 ears)
- 1/2 lb carrots, peeled and cut into 1/2 inch chunks
- 1 lb thin skinned potato (like yukon gold), cut into 1/2 inch chunks
- 4 cups vegetable broth, divided
- 1 tablespoon corn starch or arrowroot
- 3/4 cup coconut milk, regular or lite
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- Salt to taste
- Fresh black pepper to taste

*To Garnish:*
- Chopped fresh chives (1/2 cup should do it)
- Thinly sliced fresh basil (1/2 cup or so)
- Thinly sliced radish
- A few extra fresh corn kernels


Preheat a 4 quart soup pot over medium high heat. Saute onion in oil with a pinch of salt until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add garlic and red pepper flakes and saute for another minute. Add corn and carrots and cook for 3 more minutes or so.

Measure one cup of the broth into a measuring cup. Mix in the cornstarch with a fork until dissolved. Set aside.

Add remaining 3 cups of broth to the pot, along with the potatoes. Cover and bring to a boil. Once boiling, break the corn cobs in half and add them to the pot. Lower heat to a simmer and cook for about 15 minutes, or until vegetables are tender. Remove corn cobs. Add remaining vegetable broth and starch mixture, and cook to thicken, about 3 minutes. Add coconut milk, black pepper, salt to taste and lime juice.

Use an immersion blender to blend about half of the soup. Transfer about half of the soup to a blender or food processor and puree until smooth then add back to the pot. If the soup is still steaming hot, make sure to either keep the opening on top of your food processor open, or lift the lid often for steam to escape. If steam builds up in a close container it can explode the lid off.

Taste for salt and seasoning. Serve garnished with fresh corn kernels, fresh herbs and radishes.

For more recipes please visit our website at [http://augardens.com/recipes/](http://augardens.com/recipes/)

**Flowers**

Flower bouquets are available upon request. Please email for pricing and information.

**Bulk Order**

Green Beans, Cabbage, and peaches are available for bulk order. Please email for pricing at info@augardens.com

**Free Range Eggs**

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