



Good Food News

Vol.10 No. 6
March 14 & 21 2006

SOS: SAVE OUR SEEDS

This week's spell of warm weather has me thinking of spring, planting my garden and, quite naturally, of Seedy Saturday which is coming up on March 18th. For those of you who haven't heard of this event before, it is a day devoted to seeds and gardening. But seeds are the primary thing.

Seedy Saturday is held in communities throughout Canada in support of Seeds of Diversity Canada, a non-profit organization that is devoted to preserving the heritage and diversity of seeds of all kinds, but especially of food plants.

This may sound strange, since a trip to the grocery store or, more appropriately a peek into your Good Food Box will tell you that we have no shortage of variety of food plants. But that's not entirely true. Did you know that we presently rely upon just 20 varieties of plants for 90 percent of our food? In just the last 15 years, more than half of the vegetable varieties once available have disappeared from seed catalogs.

When Europeans first arrived on this continent, there were over 300 different varieties of corn being grown. Now only 16 account for over 70% of the corn grown here. This lack of biodiversity—putting all of our eggs in too few baskets—could lead to an agricultural calamity. The Irish potato famine, which led to the death or displacement of two and a half million people in the 1840's, is an example of what can happen when farmers rely on only a few plant species as the cornerstone of their crops.

It is through diversity that we ensure continuation. If one variety is in difficulty, there are others with different traits that can take its place. But when there aren't any other varieties that can substitute, then we're all in the same basket.

Patented seeds have become common in catalogues. That transnational corporations are actually patenting life is an unbelievable concept. Seeds—the very basis of life—should not be in the control of a powerful few. By patenting seeds they are able to control how and with what farming methods their seeds are grown. They have also created seeds that do not have the ability to reproduce themselves—the Terminator gene. And because they represent power in so many other areas, both political and economic, they can insist that their seeds are the only ones that will be grown and bought



Seeds of all varieties must be freely available to the many so that the health and biodiversity of the plants we grow can be assured. Farmers and gardeners throughout the world have always saved seeds from their best plants, improving upon the traits and adaptability of varieties, improving and enlarging the range of what is grown. By restricting this, or by bioengineering them with a suicide gene, we are in danger of heading down a very dangerous road.

But you can help to reverse this alarming trend. Learn more about seeds, attend Seedy Saturday and find out the simple steps to saving your own garden seeds. And of course, continue to buy the Good Food Box, knowing that we take these issues seriously and make sure that the farmers that we buy from do too.

Food Share

Seedy Saturday

March 18th from 10am to 3pm
Scadding Court Comm. Centre
corner of Dundas & Bathurst
www.foodshare.net

Field to Table Centre
200 Eastern Avenue
Toronto, ON M5A 1J1

t. 416. 363. 6441 xt 221
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www.foodshare.net

working with communities to improve access to affordable healthy food - from field to table





recipes

Mexican Salad Bowl With Avocado Dressing

6 Servings

- 4 c mixed salad greens
- 2 - medium tomatoes cut into wedges
- 1/4 c green onion chopped
- 1/4 c olives sliced, pitted
- 1/4 c shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 c coarsely crushed corn chips

AVOCADO SALAD DRESSING

- 1 large ripe avocado peeled/ cubed
- 1/2 cup plain yogurt
- 1/4 cup salad oil
- 2 tbs lemon juice
- salt to taste
- 1/2 tsp chili powder (optional)
- 1/2 tsp sugar or to taste

Combine salad greens, tomatoes, green onion, olives, and cheese in a large salad bowl. Toss lightly, and sprinkle with corn chips. Serve with Avocado Salad Dressing.

AVOCADO SALAD DRESSING

Mash avocado by hand and combine with other ingredients until smooth. Or combine all ingredients in electric blender & process until smooth. Cover and refrigerate until chilled.

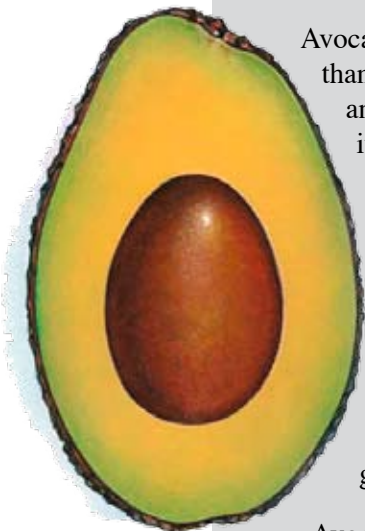
Spinach, Cantaloupe & Avocado Salad

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups fresh spinach leaves
- 1 cup sliced cantaloupe
- 1 cup sliced avocado
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint or coriander leaves
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 1/2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced

DIRECTIONS:

Divide spinach between 2 serving plates. Arrange half of the cantaloupe and half of the avocado in a circular pattern over the spinach on each plate. Sprinkle with diced red pepper and fresh mint. Mix together the honey, white wine vinegar, oil and garlic. Drizzle over the salads.



featured this week: AVOCADO

The avocado probably originated in southern Mexico but was cultivated from the Rio Grande to central Peru before the arrival of Europeans.

Avocados are a healthy food with 60% more potassium than bananas. They are sodium- and cholesterol-free and have only five grams of fat per serving, most of it the good-for-you monounsaturated kind.

95% of United States avocado production is located in California. A single California avocado tree can produce about 120 avocados (or 60 pounds of fruit) a year.

Brazilians add avocados to ice cream. Filipinos puree avocados with sugar and milk for a dessert drink. Latin Americans wrap avocados up and give them as wedding gifts.

Avocado can be grown as a houseplant from the seed though they will not yield fruit indoors. Just take the papery covering off the seed, stick 3 toothpicks in the sides about 1/2 of the way up from the base and suspend in a glass of water (don't submerge the seed--just dip it's base in the water). Change water regularly until roots develop then plant in packaged potting soil in a medium sized pot and keep in a bright, sunny window.

by any other name...

- "Avocado" is a corruption of the Spanish word "aguacate, which
- is in turn a corruption of the Aztec word "ahuacatl". "Avocado"
- became obsolete in Spanish because it sounds too much like
- 'abogado' (lawyer). In some countries of South America (Ar-
- gentina, Bolivia, Chile and Uruguay) the avocado fruit is known
- by its Quechua name, 'palta'. In other Spanish speaking coun-
- tries it is called "aguacate". In English it is also called avocado
- pear or alligator pear. The plural of avocado is avocados or
- avocados. In Chinese, the avocado is evocatively called the
- "butter fruit".

DELIVERIES

for the week of: **March 21st**
orders are due 5 pm Tues.
March 14th

for the week of **March 28th**
orders are due 5pm Tues.
March 21st



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