



## Cucumbers

### *Cucumis sativus*

- ☉ “Cool as a cucumber”: The inner temperature of a cucumber can be 20° cooler than the outside air. This is due to their high water content—96%.
- ☉ Probably originating in India, the cucumber has been cultivated for several thousand years and was brought to North America in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Today, China grows the most cucumbers.
- ☉ Cucumbers are fat free and low in calories. They contain vitamin C and phytochemicals as well as silica, which is vital for building connective tissue.
- ☉ Storage: Keep in the refrigerator wrapped in a paper towel in a plastic bag.
- ☉ Though they are usually eaten raw or pickled, they can also be sautéed and cooked in a soup. Use to perfume and brighten mixed drinks, lemonade, or water.
- ☉ Season with zaatar, dill, mint, salt, pepper, lemon thyme, borage, or basil.



[www.barthelfruitfarm.com](http://www.barthelfruitfarm.com)

## Israeli Salad

- 2 cucumbers
  - 2 tomatoes
  - 1 green or red pepper
  - 3 green onions
  - olive oil
  - lemon juice
  - salt
  - zaatar (hyssop spice); or oregano if zaatar unavailable
1. Chop the vegetables into small pieces. The secret to a really good Israeli salad is finely chopped vegetables.
  2. Immediately before serving, season lightly with olive oil, lemon juice, salt, and zaatar.

Have a question? E-mail us at [washsquarecsa@yahoo.com](mailto:washsquarecsa@yahoo.com).

## News from CSAs Around the Country

### By Lisa Davidson

As many of you know, Norwich Meadows Farms has been hit by some extreme weather conditions this year, making the crop yield a little more unreliable than we might have hoped. First there were cool and wet conditions in the spring, turning the fields into a mushy mess. Later, upstate New York experienced a flood, worsening the conditions. Now the deliveries are starting to be more diverse, but as CSA members, we are experiencing by proxy what it is like to be a farmer who must produce his own food.

A search of the internet reveals that other farms around the country have experienced similar ups and downs during this growing season. This even includes farms in northern California, which is supposed to have a year-round temperate climate. For example, Jen from the blog "Life Begins at 30" reports that her CSA at Eatwell Farm in Davis, CA has been experiencing a drought ([http://www.lifebeginsat30.com/jen/2006/07/spring\\_rains\\_co.html](http://www.lifebeginsat30.com/jen/2006/07/spring_rains_co.html)):

It has hardly rained here since April. The roads are dusty and the crops need lots of irrigation water. This spring was a different story: the rains stopped play on the farm for six weeks, making our tomato plantings very late. Not only did the plants have a late start, they also suffered while waiting. Now I look at them and see only green fruit -- and it is almost the middle of July!...If this were a normal year, in your box today there would be a mix of heirloom tomatoes and cherry tomatoes. There would be peaches and or nectarines and possibly plums and a melon. In fact we have a great box for you today but it is the very first box in over ten years into which we have not put a single piece of fruit. Even in the dead of winter we have fruit.

Julie at Many Hands Organic Farm in Barre, MA is thankful that now the conditions have greatly improved, but recognizes that it was a rough start this year, in her case, due to insects (<http://www.mhof.net/csaneews/newsletter.php?id=40>):

Yes, the weather has been hot, and that is how we like it in July, as it makes the crops grow. The not too violent thunderstorms are like the cherry on top of the ice cream Sunday to make growing conditions perfect. This week we ... now have renewed access to our chard, basil, parsley, celery, beans, and young squashes and cukes. We gave up on the melons (very weak germination) and the third planting of brassicas. They were mown down by fleas beetles. This often happens early in the season, but not usually in June and July....The tardy and hard hit by cucumber and squash beetle cucurbits are starting to slowly produce. Look for small amounts of cucumbers and summer squash this week.

Finally, Jeremy at East Farms CSA in Utah also complains about the difficult weather conditions ([http://www.slowfoodutah.org/newsletters/east\\_farm/072506\\_newsletter.pdf](http://www.slowfoodutah.org/newsletters/east_farm/072506_newsletter.pdf)):

The weather is really affecting the quality of the crops. I am still irrigating but the beans have suffered. I am hoping that we have some for your box this week. If we don't have any peaches this week, there should be some in your next box. I planted a variety of melons which are coming along nicely.

The reality of community supported agriculture is that the members get to truly understand not only the growing cycles of our food, but also how difficult is actually is to produce the food necessary to feed a city or a country. But in exchange for our support, we get local, organic, fresh food. We are committed to sustaining an important local resource and learning about our environment. Try getting all of that at Gristedes.

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