

"Summer has a flavor like no other. Always fresh and simmered in sunshine."

~Oprah Winfrey~



Eggplant

Eggplants originated in China and India (and possibly North Africa and the Middle East too) and have been cultivated there for thousands of years. The Spanish Moors brought the eggplant to Europe, where it took a while to become very popular. Most of the nightshade plants indigenous to Europe are deadly and so it took Europeans some time to trust that the eggplant fruit was not poisonous. The explorers to the Americas then brought the eggplant over in the 1500s where it also took a few hundred years for people in the Americas to trust this nightshade.

The first documented cookbook to include eggplant in America was in 1904. President Andrew Johnson also really enjoyed stuffed eggplant!

Eggplant plants can either have spiny stems or not at all. They have 5 petals per flower and the flowers range in colors from purple to white. Flowers are largely self-pollinating, but sometimes bees do like to get into the mix of the cross-pollination. Eggplants are tropical plants and really do enjoy the hot and humid weather. We have to shade our eggplant here for part of the summer because the sun can be too intense and will burn the fruit.



This week's CSA share contains:

Heirloom Slicing Tomatoes
Bell Pepper
Cucumber
Onion
Italian Basil
Summer Squash
Kale
Celery
Asian Pears
Arugula
Eggplant



Eggplant, Squash, Tomato and Kale Bake

Time to Make: 35 minutes

Servings: 2-3



Ingredients

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|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2 summer squash, diced | 1-2 eggplant, diced |
| 1-2 tomatoes, diced | 1 Tbsp. olive oil |
| 4 cloves of garlic, minced | 1 onion, diced |
| 1/4 tsp. salt | 1/4 tsp. pepper |
| 2/3 cup Parmesan cheese | 1/2 cup chopped fresh basil |
| 1 bunch kale, cut in thin stripes | |

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly grease a deep 9x9 baking dish.
2. Place the diced squash, eggplant, tomato and garlic in a bowl. Drizzle them with olive oil, salt and pepper and 1/3 cup of the Parmesan cheese and basil. Toss gently to combine.
3. Add the kale and toss.
4. Transfer the vegetables to the prepared baking dish. Bake for 25 minutes, cover the pan with aluminum foil, then continue baking for 10-20 additional minutes until the vegetables are tender. Sprinkle with the remaining cheese.
5. You can serve this with a grain of choice! You can also mix in shredded chicken or ground beef to this dish!