



BROWN BAG LUNCH IN THE GARDEN

July 22, 2011—Cucumbers

This Week's Recipe:

Feta and Cucumber Dip

4 medium cucumbers, peeled

Salt

2 c. plain, whole milk yogurt, preferably Greek

6 oz. feta cheese, crumbled

1/2 c. finely chopped fresh mint

1/2 c. heavy cream

5 Tbl. Lemon juice

Pepper

Halve cucumbers and scoop out seeds. Grate cucumbers and transfer to a colander. Stir in 2 tsp. salt, and let stand 15 minutes to drain.

Rinse cucumbers; shake out excess liquid. Wrap in a clean towel and squeeze out as much liquid as possible.

Stir together cucumbers, yogurt, feta, chopped mint, cream, and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve with fresh vegetables or chips for dipping.

Harvesting & Storing

- Harvest at the size right for the variety you are growing—keep a record or research it.
- Once they turn yellow, they are past their prime.
- There are many types available—pickling, slicing, seedless, burpless, bitter-free, English, Persian, heirloom, etc.
- Refrigerate in a plastic bag until ready to use.

Other Points of Interest in the Garden:

- How many more weeks can I say that the heat is obnoxious?
- The melons have been growing like crazy!
- Some of the tomato plants have more than you might think set on, while others are still tomato free.

Coming Next Week—Tomatoes

<http://thedemogarden.org>

July 22, 2011—Cucumbers

Cucumber Noodles

3 seedless cucumbers (usually plastic-wrapped; 2 1/2 to 2 3/4 pounds total), peeled
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh mint
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon finely grated fresh lemon zest
1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

Special equipment: an adjustable-blade slicer with 1/4-inch julienne blade

Adjust blade of slicer to 1/8-inch-thick setting. Using slicer, cut each cucumber lengthwise into long 1/8-inch-thick julienne strips, slicing until you reach core, then rotate cucumber a quarter turn and continue slicing and rotating until left with nothing but core. Blanch cucumber "noodles" in a 4-quart pot of boiling salted water 1 minute, then drain in a colander. Immerse colander with cucumbers in a large bowl of ice and cold water to stop cooking, about 2 minutes. Drain cucumbers, then transfer to a clean kitchen towel and pat cucumbers dry.

Heat butter in a 10-inch heavy skillet over moderate heat until foam subsides, then cook cucumbers, mint, salt, pepper, zest, and lemon juice, tossing to coat, until just heated through, about 1 minute.

Cucumber Limeade

1 English cucumber, (about 1 pound)
1 1/2 cups water
1/4 cup sugar
Juice of 1 lime
1/4 teaspoon coarse salt
1 cup ice cubes

Peel English cucumber; remove any seeds. Coarsely chop and combine in a blender with water, sugar, lime juice, coarse salt, and ice cubes; blend until smooth. Serve over ice, garnished with cucumber spears, if desired.

Chilled Cucumber, Basil, and Mint Soup

1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup fresh basil
1/2 cup fresh mint
1/4 cup sliced scallion
1 cup water
1 English cucumber, peeled, seeds removed, and chopped
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon hot sauce, such as Tabasco
Salt
Optional: Thin cucumber slices

Puree sour cream, basil, mint, scallion, and water in a blender. Add cucumber. Pulse until just combined but still slightly chunky.

Stir in lemon juice and hot sauce, and season with salt. Chill soup at least 3 hours (soup is best served the same day). Top each serving with thin cucumber slices if desired.

Cucumber Apple Pickles

1/2 pound Japanese or Kirby cucumbers
1 1/4 teaspoons fine sea salt
1/2 Fuji or Granny Smith apple
2 cups water
1/3 cup rice vinegar (not seasoned) or cider vinegar
1 tablespoon very thin matchsticks of peeled ginger
1/4 cup sugar
Pinch of Korean hot red-pepper threads (optional)

Slice cucumbers crosswise 1/8 inch thick and toss with sea salt. Let stand 30 minutes, then rinse well and squeeze out excess liquid with your hands.

Halve apple half lengthwise and cut out core. Slice crosswise 1/8 inch thick.

Toss apple with cucumbers and remaining ingredients and marinate, chilled, turning occasionally, at least 1 day.