



Look for Non-GMOs

Non-GMO Project label on U.S. food products assures consumers they have no genetically modified ingredients. Now a few seed companies are starting to display the butterfly label, as well.

“As demand for non-GMO choices continues to rise, farmers are seeking more non-GMO seed,” says Megan Westgate, executive director of the Non-GMO Project. “Similarly, smaller farms and home gardeners are choosing to plant more organic and non-GMO varieties.”

High Mowing Organic Seeds, in Wolcott, Vermont, is the current leader, with 700 Non-GMO Project-verified seeds. Company President Tom Stearns explains, “We continue to hear about GMO concerns from our customers and while we are certified organic, that doesn’t say anything about GMO contamination.” His team helped develop a verification program for seeds because they wanted third-party verification of their claims. “We’d spent a huge amount of time implementing preventative measures and did GMO testing, but felt this wasn’t enough,” he notes.

Stearns reports that there are many more genetically engineered plants than most people realize. “Some 40 GMO plant species include petunia and endive,” he says. Plus, “Contamination risks exist even when a GMO crop isn’t commercially approved, like when GMO wheat escapes field trials.”

Source: EcoWatch.com

Homegrown Heirloom Cookery



Vegan Tuscan Kale Soup

Yields: 4 servings

1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 cup finely chopped celery
1/2 cup finely chopped onion
1/2 cup finely chopped carrot
1/4 cup finely chopped fresh purple basil leaf
1 lb ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and finely chopped
1 Tbsp fresh thyme leaf
1 lb waxy boiling potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1 lb lacinato kale, washed and cut into 1/4-inch-wide strips
1/2 cup dry cannellini beans, cooked until tender
2 qt vegetable stock
Sea salt to taste

Heat olive oil in a heavy soup pot over medium-high heat and sauté the celery, onion, carrot and basil until they're almost soft, about 8 to 10 minutes.

Add tomatoes and continue cooking until their liquid has almost cooked out, about 20 minutes more.

Add in the thyme and boiling potatoes, sautéing them for another 5 minutes.

Add kale and reduce heat to low, cooking until wilted, about 10 minutes.

Add the stock and cooked beans, return heat to high and bring to a boil.

Reduce heat to low and simmer for at least an hour.

Serve with toasted slices of bread.

Source: Adapted from Mediterranean Vegetables by Clifford Wright.

Salsa Morada

Yields: Five cups (five 8-oz jars)

1 1/2 lb sweet green peppers, seeded and chopped
8 oz Violet Buena Mulata hot peppers, seeded and chopped
1 cup organic sugar
1 1/2 Tbsp pickling salt
2 Tbsp powdered fair trade unsweetened chocolate
1 1/2 cup vinegar (preferred variety)
2 tsp ground coriander
1 Tbsp ground hot chile pepper (optional)

Place the green pepper, Buena Mulata, sugar, salt, chocolate, vinegar and coriander in a heavy preserving pan.

Cover and boil gently for 20 minutes.

Remove from heat and let stand for 2 to 3 hours or until the peppers are completely soft.

Purée to a smooth creamy consistency using a blender.

Reheat in a clean preserving pan and bring to a boil. Cook for 3 minutes, and then adjust the heat factor with additional pepper to taste.

Pour into sterilized jars and seal.

Source: Adapted from a recipe courtesy of William Woys Weaver.



Vegan Eggplant, Chickpea and Spinach Curry

Yields: 4 to 6 servings

1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil, in all; 2 Tbsp reserved
1 1/2 lb eggplant, cut into 1-inch cubes
2 Tbsp fresh ginger paste
2 hot green chiles, deseeded and minced
2 tsp whole cumin seed
1/4 tsp asafoetida resin
2 cup tomatoes, seeded and chopped
1 Tbsp coriander seed, ground
1 tsp paprika
1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper
1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
1 tsp turmeric
1/2 cup filtered water
2 cup cooked chickpeas
1 lb fresh spinach, coarsely chopped
2 tsp sea salt
1/4 cup chopped cilantro leaf
1 tsp garam masala

Heat 6 tablespoons of the oil in a large, heavy pan. Add in the eggplant cubes and sauté until browned and cooked through. Remove from pan and set aside.

Add the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil to the pan and increase the heat to medium-high.

Add the ginger, chiles and cumin, and fry until the cumin seeds have turned brown.

Add the asafoetida and stir fry for another 15 seconds.

Add in the tomatoes, coriander, paprika, black pepper, cayenne and turmeric.

Natural Awakenings recommends using organic and non-GMO (genetically modified) ingredients whenever possible.

Reduce heat to medium and cook until the oil separates from the tomato sauce, about 10 minutes.

Add water and bring the sauce to a boil.

Reduce heat to low and add in the cooked eggplant cubes, chickpeas, chopped spinach and salt. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes.

Before serving remove from heat and stir in the chopped cilantro and garam masala.

Serve warm with brown rice or naan flatbread.

Source: Adapted from Lord Krishna's Cuisine by Yamuna Devi.