

QUICK AND EASY AIR FRYER OKRA

Adapted from cleanbitelist.com

1 lb fresh okra, washed, dried	½ tsp black pepper
1 Tbsp olive oil	½ tsp garlic powder
1 tsp salt	¼ tsp paprika

1. Preheat oven to 400F. Cut okra into 1/2" pieces.
2. In a bowl, toss okra with olive oil, salt, pepper, garlic powder, and paprika.
3. Place okra in air fryer basket in a single layer.
4. Air fry for 8-10 minutes, shaking halfway through, until crispy and golden brown. Serve immediately.

CAJUN CHICKEN WITH BELL PEPPERS

Adapted from savorfulmeals.com

<u>Chicken</u>	<u>Vegetables</u>
4 boneless chicken breasts	2 bell peppers, any color, sliced
2 Tbsp olive oil	1 medium onion, sliced
1 Tbsp Cajun seasoning blend	2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp garlic powder	1 Tbsp olive oil
1 tsp onion powder	<u>Garnish</u>
1 tsp paprika	Fresh parsley or cilantro, chopped
½ tsp dried thyme	
½ tsp salt	
½ tsp black pepper	

1. In a small bowl, mix together Cajun seasoning, garlic powder, onion powder, paprika, thyme, salt, and pepper. Coat chicken evenly with spice mix.
2. Heat 2 Tbsp olive oil in large skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, add chicken and cook 6-7 minutes per side, or until chicken is fully cooked through. Remove chicken from skillet and set aside.
3. In the same skillet, add 1 Tbsp olive oil. Add bell peppers and onions and saute over medium heat for 5-6 minutes or until they begin to soften. Add minced garlic and cook another 1-2 minutes until fragrant.
4. Slice chicken into thin strips and return to skillet with peppers and onions. Toss everything together and cook another 2-3 minutes.
5. Garnish with fresh parsley or cilantro and serve hot.



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Tomatoes: Store tomatoes stem side down on a plate or cutting board at room temperature. Try not to refrigerate tomatoes as cold temperatures deplete their flavor and texture.

Sweet Corn: Eat your corn soon after you receive it. As time elapses after harvest, the sugars turn to starches, and the corn loses sweetness. Refrigerate as soon as possible and keep husks on.

Fall Squash (honeynut and delicata): Store in a cool, dry, dark place, but ensure they do not freeze. Honeynut can keep up to 3-4 months, but delicata is more delicate and doesn't store as long. Once cut, you can wrap them in plastic and refrigerate 5-7 days.

Peppers: Wrap unwashed in a paper towel to absorb any moisture, and keep in the veggie drawer of your refrigerator. In order from mild to spicy, we expect to see red or yellow bell peppers, green bell peppers, jalapenos, serrano peppers, and cayenne peppers.

Leafy greens: Store unwashed in its plastic bag. Or chop, wash, and dry with a salad spinner, and return to plastic bag with a dry paper towel to absorb moisture. Always refrigerate.

Leading the Way

A USDA study awhile back showed that just two vegetables make up 50% of the vegetables offered to consumers in this country: potatoes and tomatoes. It is unclear whether the producers or the consumers are driving this phenomenon. Is this what consumers are asking for, or have we molded our diets around what the food industry offers us? Underlying the data, it appears a big portion of that 50% arrives on our plates in a very processed form, like tater tots or pizza sauce. Lettuce is third on the list, but that still leaves 41% for everything else!

The world started out seeing organic farmers as hippies and weirdoes, but in recent years, we've felt more like trendsetters, as science substantiates our ideas. Initially, it just makes sense to avoid using toxic synthetic pesticides on food we consume. It just makes sense that a healthy, well-balanced soil will produce wholesome, well-balanced nutritious foods. It just makes sense that if animals eat a diet consistent with their evolutionary predispositions, they will be healthier, and produce healthier products for us to consume. It also just makes sense that greater variety in your diet will better provide your body with the diversity of nutrients it needs to be healthy. All of the above have been borne out over time by science.

Years ago, here at Elmwood Stock Farm, we shifted vegetable production away from a high volume of a few crops or the wholesale market (yep, you guessed it, tomatoes, potatoes, and peppers) and instead, we began to grow smaller volumes of many crops for the farmers markets and local independent restaurants. We spent a lot of time on what mix of crops to grow. Did we let the customers decide what we offered by only growing what they wanted to buy, or should we introduce them to some different crops, like kale, that we knew they ought to eat and that other farm friends in other regions were growing? We did some experimenting, and market customers looked at us funny, as did many of the other vendors. Everyone was always asking "What's this?" and then "What do you do with it?" And this was still long before kohlrabi, hakurei turnips, and Asian greens mix. Back in those days, kale was a foreign food to most—used as a garnish to hide the ice beside the bowls on a salad bar. Through our relationships with chefs at local restaurants, we were encouraged to try different foods like purple potatoes, baby patty pan squash, and edible pod peas. Chefs wanted to offer something different than chain restaurants, and they adjusted their menus to the seasons. Ultimately, together we helped lead local consumers to new and different foods, well outside the norm of tomatoes, potatoes, green beans, and sweet corn.

Diversifying our production helped us secure a season-long labor force. We grew a mix of cold-weather crops as well as warm-weather crops, so we were doing more planting and harvesting all throughout the year, rather than relying on a crop that

is harvested just a few weeks a year like once a year like potatoes or sweet potatoes. Diversifying our vegetable offerings has also helped us develop a healthier crop rotation plan for our fields. Tomatoes, corn, and peppers are all "heavy feeders," meaning they take lots of nutrients from the soil in order to grow. Grow them in the same spot year after year, and you deplete your soil. With more vegetables produced, it's easier to rotate heavy feeders with beans, peas, lettuces, and other crops that are less taxing on the soil, or even improve it.

The CSA program has allowed us to take healthy, diversified eating to a whole new level. With your support and feedback, we certainly offer your familiar favorites, but we also give you some new ones to try out. In this newsletter, we try to educate and familiarize you with vegetables that may be new to you, setting you up for success as you figure out how to store them and how to eat them. The recipes help us all evolve our palates, and many of you have learned the joys of experimentation and playing with your food. We love that some of our "weird" foods like lacinato kale and hakurei turnips have found a cult following among some of you. Thanks for sharing your favorite recipes in the CSA Member Facebook group, and for swapping preparation tips with each other in the farm store when you are here.

While all this exploration into new and different foods has been happening, the nutritionists have been discovering the health benefits of consuming them. Because the link between diet and health is a complicated biochemical process, for years it was easy for industrial food processors to oversimplify what was going on, declaring all fats as bad, and highly processed oils as healthier than real butter. Anti-oxidants, flavonoids, and anti-inflammatory foods were not even part of the conversation way back when. Now, we know that there is more to the "Is it healthy?" question than fat or sugar or calories; there are all kinds of micronutrients and biochemical compounds that contribute to our body's healthy function. There is undeniable evidence that consuming whole foods, rather than processed versions of the same thing, will actually improve your health. A multivitamin can in no way replace the sophisticated nutrient density of a diverse diet of plants and proteins.

In the past, organic farmers led the way in guiding chefs and consumers to try new foods, and educating them about vegetables, how they were raised, and how to eat them. Organic farmers led the way in the CSA model of connecting consumers directly with their farmers. We see organic farmers leading the way in growing wholesome foods for the local markets—and defining the other 41%.

We are proud to offer you more of what the doctor ordered. In the thick of potato and tomato season (which we still grow lots of, don't worry) we hope you are excited to traverse beyond tater tots and pizza sauce.—Mac