

Hello! We hope you enjoy your share this week. We have more items from the Southeast region, including those long awaited Florida citrus -**Satsumas!** The eggplant, watercress, green peppers, tricolor radishes, spaghetti squash, zucchini all come from right here in Florida. The collards are from North Carolina and the tomatoes come from South Carolina. **Today's newsletter features a very interesting and pertinent article about farmworkers here in Florida. Please read on!**

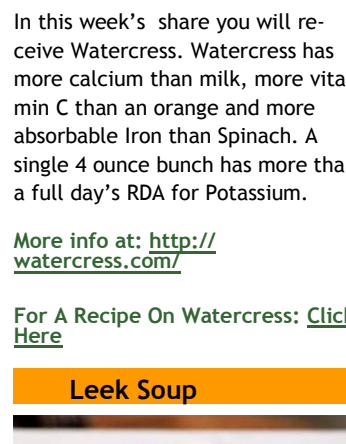
Check Out What's in Your Share Today!

Large Share

- Broccoli
- Carrots w/ tops
- Eggplant
- Collards
- Watercress
- Leeks
- Green Peppers
- Tricolor Radishes
- Spaghetti Squash
- Zucchini
- Tomato
- Apple Cameo
- Raspberries
- Bananas
- Mandarin Satsuma

Medium Share

- Broccoli
- Eggplant
- Collards
- Leeks
- Green Peppers
- Tricolor Radishes
- Zucchini
- Tomato
- Raspberries
- Bananas
- Mandarin Satsuma



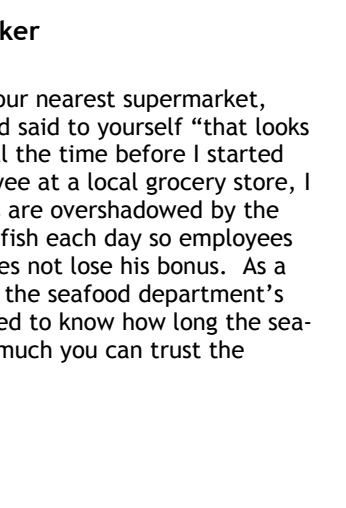
In this week's share you will receive watercress. Watercress has more calcium than milk, more vitamin C than an orange and is perfect for those cold Winter nights. A single 4 ounce bunch has more than a full day's RDA for Potassium.

More info at: <http://watercress.com/>

Please keep in mind that from time to time our numbers won't be exact. For instance you might receive an extra item this week and next time be short an item. Feel free to trade with other CROPS members.

Tomato Workers Need Your Support

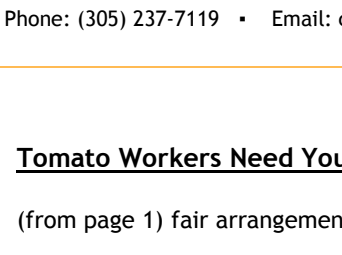
The situation between the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) and Publix has become a fierce battle for social responsibility. Publix, the largest privately owned company in Florida, is not supporting the Fair Food program that benefits the working conditions of tomato pickers; it still buys produce from suppliers accused of using slave labor. The CIW is trying to take its Campaign for Fair Food to the companies that affect the price of tomatoes by buying enormous amounts of them, but it has found an adversary in the FTGE (Florida Tomato Growers Exchange). By achieving its goals, the CIW will ensure fair salaries for farmworkers and fundamental human rights for tomato pickers; if the farmers, suppliers and buyers are able to reach a



The recipe for this week is easy and fast to make and is perfect for those cold Winter nights. Hopefully we'll get a few!

[Click here for recipe](#)

[Continued](#)



Confession of a Seafood Worker

In this week share you will receive Satsuma Mandarin. The Mandarin orange is a small citrus tree with fruit resembling the orange. The fruit is oblate, rather than spherical, and roughly resembles a pumpkin in shape.

Have you ever gone to your nearest supermarket, looked at the seafood section, and said to yourself "that looks really fresh"? I used to say that all the time before I started working in seafood. As an employee at a local grocery store, I learned that food safety concerns are overshadowed by the need to sell a certain quantity of fish each day so employees do not lose hours and the boss does not lose his bonus. As a customer, you do not think about the seafood department's productivity; however, you do need to know how long the seafood has been sitting there, how much you can trust the

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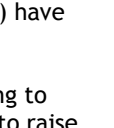
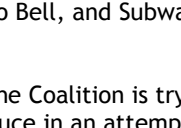
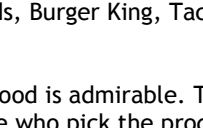
My Mother's Special Soup

I grew up in a small, loving family; we laughed, shared, and we did practically everything together. We loved eating all kinds of foods, like *nacatamales*, *baleadas*, *carne asada*, and many other dishes from Nicaragua, but nothing was more pleasing than when mother cooked a special dish called *sopa de cola*. On every important occasion, Easter, Christmas, New Year's Eve, or anyone's birthday, we all expected mother to make the delicious soup that we believed one sip of would take away all stress. It was a fact that anyone who ate mother's soup felt happy and relaxed.

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For more information about CROPS please contact us!

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Tomato Workers Need Your Support (cont.)

(from page 1) fair arrangement, everybody will benefit.

It's hard to understand why Publix, a company founded in Florida that has become successful with the help of local farms, doesn't want the best for those farmworkers. The simple request of the Fair Food program is that buyers pass along to harvesters an extra penny-per-pound to improve the working and living conditions of the tomato workers. Publix has taken a position opposing this request, siding with the FTGE, which is against implementing the Fair Food program. Publix, a company that wants to be known for pleasing the customers and guaranteeing never to knowingly disappoint them, is overlooking its social responsibility to farmworkers and their families. Even as the city of Ft. Myers is giving Publix financial backing by not collecting the \$50,000 monthly rent it owes, the company is not willing to make changes that would be beneficial to the farmworkers of that community. Even more upsetting is Publix's decision to continue buying produce from companies like Six L's and Pacific, even though those companies have been accused of enslaving pickers until recently.

The CIW is ardously working to attain positive results from Publix. They have organized peaceful protests at various stores, posting on their website the schedules for protests around the state, with daily updates. In addition, they have sent letters of support for the Campaign for Fair Food to the company's headquarters and given them to store managers across the state. Finally, they will lead a protest in the streets of Lakeland, the hometown of Publix, on December 6th, to end the "harvest of shame." The "Walk for Farmworker Justice" will ask Publix to improve wages and human rights for farmworkers in the state's tomato fields.

Publix is an important company to add to the list of supermarkets and fast food restaurants that support the Campaign for Fair Food. Major corporate buyers demand lower rates for bigger volumes of produce, forcing suppliers to charge lower prices and cut wages for the pickers. The Florida Tomato Growers Exchange (FTGE) represents 90 percent of the tomato growers in the state and employs numerous lobbyists to represent the Exchange's interests. Its influence in the tomato industry has made it easy for supermarkets and other food-related industries to side with the FTGE and bargain with the suppliers instead of the pickers. Neither the customer buying at the store nor the farmworkers benefit from this situation. On its website, FTGE states that "Florida's tomato growers abhor and condemn slavery. . . On numerous occasions, the Florida Tomato Growers Exchange has asked for evidence that would substantiate allegations of slavery and has received none." These statements are intentionally misleading, as the unformed public isn't aware that there are several slavery convictions in Florida. The FTGE also threatened to fine any of its members wanting to participate in the Fair Food program \$100,000. Two of the largest tomato companies backed out of the Fair Food program because of the Exchange's tactics, but recently there have been changes as the four largest restaurant chains in the world (McDonalds, Burger King, Taco Bell, and Subway) have joined the Alliance for Fair Food.

The purpose of the Campaign for Fair Food is admirable. The Coalition is trying to guarantee fair payment from the buyers to those who pick the produce in an attempt to raise their low wages. The Coalition is also trying to implement the first enforceable Code of Conduct to investigate workers' complaints. Another one of its goals is to make sure growers respect the human rights of the pickers; they want to organize on a national level so they can better persuade the grocery and food industry to meet the collective needs of the farmworkers.

The work of CIW is important to the workforce in the fields. If its efforts succeed, they will set the standard to be followed by the tomato industry. You can help make this a reality. The "Walk for Farmworker Justice" will kick off at the Publix store located at 2515 S. Florida Ave., in Lakeland (Southgate Plaza) at 2:30pm. The march will begin at 3:30pm, covering 2.2 miles through downtown Lakeland; it will culminate in a rally and vigil at Kryger Park (100-198 S. Massachusetts Ave.,) with music and speakers as the sun sets. A free bus from South Florida to Lakeland will be making stops at locations in Miami, South Broward, North Broward, and Palm Beach County, leaving early in the morning and returning late on December 6th. To sign up for the bus, call Ray Del Papa at 753-423-0051 or email him at mrtratpp@aol.com.

Confession of a Seafood Worker (cont.)

(from page 1) store's employee, and the degree of the risks you are willing to take when you purchase "fresh" fish. The greatest risk you take is the health of your family.

Once I was hired, I had to attend an introductory seminar where we were told that the way to get more hours was simply to sell more items; on the other hand, we learned that the way to lose hours was to let items go to waste. We were encouraged to get the customer's trust by smiling at him and acting as if he were our best friend; after that, we could sell him fish even if it were old. When I started working in the seafood department, I was told to change the dates on the inside of the glass case every three days. Recently I discovered that the dates were meant to trick an inspector into thinking that we changed the seafood every three days. Out of all the inspectors, whether they came from the district office of the supermarket chain or the City of Miami, not one ever picked up a fish and looked at its quality. Instead, the inspectors focused on the way the display case looked and how clean the area was.

Rather than removing the old seafood every morning, we actually new ice in the case and rinse the seafood under the faucet so that it looks fresh. If we truly cleaned out the case and threw the seafood away every three days, the department would lose money and cause us to lose hours or even our jobs. Instead, therefore, we have actually had fish remain in the case over two weeks. When a customer asks for fish, we give him the oldest fish in the case. Even though I have sometimes had customers return fish, the manager has not gotten upset because he knows that many other people will just eat the fish or dispose of it without complaining to the store.

As a customer, keep in mind that the person selling you the product is there to make the sale, and whether the fish is good or bad does not matter, so long as it gets sold. Every shift, I put on my apron, plaster a smile onto my face, and sell. That's my job, and I need to keep my hours. Even though there are laws that require every seafood department to post information about the fish and where it comes from (farm raised or wild caught), research has shown that fish is frequently mislabeled. Customers usually assume that price is an indicator of where fish is from, as wild-caught is usually more expensive. However, in 2005 *the New York Times* found that six out of eight salmon in New York City labeled wild-caught were actually farm-raised. Retailers were mislabeling fish in order to charge a higher price. Most canned salmon is wild, but if the fish is "Atlantic," it is farm-raised, as wild salmon is usually Alaskan. The issue of mislabeling fish can be seen here in Miami now. At our store, we have sold salmon from Cambodia, and been told to switch the labels to "USA." On November 15, 2009, I found out that we were changing the labels of Chilean trout to Alaskan wild caught salmon. We are only one of many stores in South Florida putting false information on labels, as the managers count on the fact that most people don't know the difference between trout and salmon.

What can you do to protect yourself? You can vary the hours you go to the seafood department and try to make a point of going early in the morning to see how the employees are arranging the fish in the display case. When you purchase fish, look at the fish closely and watch the employee as he wraps it to make sure he is giving you the piece that you selected. If you have any doubts about the quality of the fish, ask questions and carefully watch the expressions of the employee. When you get a gut response about his honesty, trust your feelings, not necessarily his words. When you get the fish home, examine it closely for color and smell. If anything seems unusual, return the fish to the store or dispose of it. You may waste a few dollars, but that's minor compared to risking the health of your family. It is up to you to be an alert consumer.

My Mother's Special Soup (cont.)

(from page 1) As a child, I used to love helping mother in the kitchen; that's how I started to love cooking. Mother inspired me in many ways, but none more than just by my watching her cook. No one made that dish like my mother. I tasted the recipes used by Aunt Jane, Uncle Joe, and cousin Rita, but none of their soups reached the potential of my mother's. Just the smell of it can take me back to the great times we had around the table eating that soup. There was never a dull moment, as the soup seemed to make all the conversations, jokes, and stories so amusing.

It was a tradition that after we ate we would sit on the patio and talk to one another about how our lives were going and how we felt about what was happening. I was always amazed at how much we had to say to one another; every time we got together was a new adventure. This was sparked by all the love and energy my mother would put into her meals, and *sopa da cola* was her masterpiece. That dish represented how much mother cared for our family, and her understanding that even something seemingly insignificant could bring us all so closely together. I will never forget how my mother made me feel with her little soup; even though a great part of the family has passed, those memories we shared will linger forever in my mind, along with mother's *sopa da cola*.

Radish and Watercress Salad Recipe (Cont.)

(from page 1)

Ingredients:

- 8 oz. watercress
- 3 T. olive oil or vegetable oil
- 1 T. white wine vinegar
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- Freshly-ground pepper
- 12 radishes, sliced

Preparation:

Remove tough stems from watercress; break sprigs into bite-size pieces. Arrange watercress on plates. Mix oil, vinegar, salt and pepper. Pour over radishes; toss. Spoon radish mixture over watercress.

Yield: 6 servings

Leek Soup Recipe (cont.)

Ingredients :

- 1 leek
- 1 sweet apple
- 2-3 potatoes
- 3 celery stalk
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- cooking oil
- pepper
- salted crackers (optional)
- cilantro (optional)

Directions:

Part 1 (15 min)

Chop the top of the leek off . Slice the leek and celery. Peel and slice the potatoes and apple. Measure out the milk and the chicken broth and make sure you have all the ingredients.

Part 2 (45 min)

Add about 2 teaspoons of oil in a pot. Turn the stove to high heat. Add the sliced leek and cook for about 3 min. Add the chicken broth and the rest of the vegetables. Add 1/2 teaspoon of salt and mix. Cover and let it simmer on low to medium heat for 20 min until the potatoes are soft. Turn off the heat, open the cover, and let the soup cool down to room temperature (takes about 15 min).

Part 3 (15 min)

With a soup ladle, transfer the contents of the soup into a blender. Cover and blend for 20 seconds. You may have to do this multiple times depending on the size of your blender. If that's the case, just transfer the blended mix into a different bowl and keep adding the soup content to blend. Add the blended soup back into the pot. Add the milk. Warm up the soup by turning the stove on medium heat and stir the soup for about 5 min.

Serve with pepper, salted crackers, and diced up cilantro (optional).