



# Summer Crops by Hazel Foster

I love this time of year. It brings such a choice of fruits and vegetables. I keep buying all these punnets of fruit but with my other half not eating it, it's up to me to eat it all before it goes too soft.

Also, your veg plots may be heaving with excess tomatoes and courgettes by now. The first year I had my veg patch I decided 12 courgette plants was a good idea! Needless to say we had courgettes coming out of our ears for weeks and I even resorted to courgette jam, which wasn't great.

So, this month, recipes for that excess fruit and veg we have around. Enjoy!



## French Fruity Chutney – Makes about 2 litres.

I love chutney, well, it's just such a good accompaniment for cheese, it's a great way to use up fruit (there are only so many plums you can eat!), and I also find it's something different to give as a pressie to the neighbours.

- 900g plums
- 550g granny smith apples (2-3 apples)
- 450g pears (2-3 pears)
- 300g apricots (about 10) or nectarines/peaches (3)
- 900g dark brown sugar
- 500ml cider vinegar
- 2 medium white onions, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp mustard seed
- 1 rounded tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp crushed dried chillies
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cinnamon stick

Halve, stone and chop the plums and apricots/nectarines/peaches and put into a large saucepan. Core, peel and chop the apples and pears and add to the other fruit.

Stir in sugar, vinegar, onions, garlic, mustard seeds, coriander, crushed chillies and salt into the pan, then drop the cinnamon stick on top. Heat slowly for about 20 mins, giving an occasional stir, until the sugar has dissolved. Now leave the chutney to simmer at a steady pace, without a lid, stirring occasionally until reduced and thickened, but still with some syrupy juice. This will take about 1½ hrs. It will thicken once it cools. Discard the cinnamon stick.

While still hot pour the chutney into sterilised jars. It will keep for about a year in a cool, dry place.

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## Tomato and Feta Bake (Serves 4)

This recipe was given to me by a friend ages ago (thanks Dee!). It makes a lovely lunch or supper dish and is ideal if you're catering for veggies. Serve it with hunks of crusty bread to mop up the juices.

- 3 red onions, sliced
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1-2 packs of feta cheese, cubed
- 8-10 tomatoes, cut into chunky pieces
- 1 tbsp pesto
- Fresh basil leaves
- 1-2 tbsp capers (optional)
- 1-2 tbsp olives (optional)
- Salt, black pepper and sugar
- Extra virgin olive oil

Heat oven to 180°C. In an oven-proof dish with lid put sliced onions, garlic and 3-4 tablespoons of extra virgin olive oil. Put in the oven for about 20 mins until onions are soft, not crispy or browned. Add half the tomatoes, dot half the pesto about, half the basil leaves, half the capers and/or olives if using, and half the feta, and season with salt, pepper and a pinch of sugar.

Repeat using the rest of the ingredients and finishing with a drizzle of olive oil over the cheesy top. Put in oven for about 30 mins then take the lid off and leave in oven for another 10 mins.

## Courgette and Mushroom Frittata

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 courgettes, sliced
- 8 mushrooms
- A handful of cooked potatoes, sliced
- 2 cloves of garlic, crushed (optional)
- 6 eggs
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley or 2 tbsp pesto
- Olive oil for frying



Preheat your oven to 190C.

In a large frying pan, fry the onions, mushrooms and courgettes together until the onion is translucent and the courgettes are softening. Add the garlic and cook for one minute.

In a large bowl, beat the eggs with the herbs or pesto, then stir in the vegetables and mix.

Pour the mixture into a greased, lined baking dish and bake for 20-25 minutes until puffy and golden.