



FOOD & FUN HOUR: TASTES OF SUMMER

Meeting #11

July 16th, 2026

4-5 pm

INTRODUCTIONS

First name & pronouns



What is your favorite ice cream flavor?



Ingredients Primer

Today's recipes highlight:



Cucumber

- Native to South Asia
- Grows in MN; harvested from mid-July to mid-September
- Became more widely grown in MN in the 1880s when Matthias Gedney, founder of the Gedney pickle brand, moved to Minneapolis and needed local suppliers for the state's first pickling factory (opened in 1881 on Lowry Avenue in North MPLS). [Learn more.](#)

Cantaloupe Melon

- Native to Persia and Western Asia
- Grows in MN; harvested between mid-August and early September
- Specifically adapted for MN's short summers in 1948, when the U of MN released a specific, compact breed for northern gardeners. This breed yields super-sweet, softball-sized melons. [Learn more.](#)

Blueberry

- Native to North America
- The velvet-leaf blueberry and the common lowbush blueberry are native to MN and harvested from mid-July through mid-August.
- Besides being a native fruit here, Minnesota also has a blueberry breeding program. This program was launched in 1967 by the U of MN to develop cold-hardy but large-fruited breeds. [Learn more.](#)

Basil

- Native to the tropical regions from Central Africa to Southeast Asia
- Grows in MN; harvested from mid-summer until the first fall frost
- Culinary basil came to MN with European settlers in the late 1700s and early 1800s and exploded in popularity with the rise of Italian, Hmong, and Thai cuisine in the state. [Learn more.](#)

Our two recipe demos today!

Blueberry Basil Bruschetta



Cucumber Melon Agua Fresca



Blueberry Basil Bruschetta

Source: <https://www.kudoskitchenbyrenee.com/blueberry-basil-bruschetta/#recipe>

Ingredients:

- Baguette, sliced into ½" thickness
- Goat cheese
- Fresh blueberries
- Fresh basil
- Honey
- Salt and pepper

Blueberry Basil Bruschetta

Source: <https://www.kudoskitchenbyrenee.com/blueberry-basil-bruschetta/#recipe>

Instructions:

1. Toast the sliced baguette in a skillet until browned and toasted on both sides.
2. Spread the goat cheese liberally and evenly onto one side of each toasted baguette slice.
3. Sprinkle evenly with black pepper.
4. Top the goat cheese with fresh blueberries, pressing them gently in place.
5. Drizzle each bruschetta liberally with honey.
6. Sprinkle lightly with salt and top with ribbons of fresh basil leaves.

Cucumber Melon Agua Fresca

Source: <https://spoonfulofplants.com/cucumber-melon-agua-fresca/#recipe>

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cantaloupe (seeds and skin removed then fruit chopped or scooped with melon baller)
- ½ cup cucumber (peeled and chopped)
- 3 Tablespoon lime juice (from about 1 fresh lime + more if desired)
- 1 cup water (or more depending on desired amount of sweetness)
- Generous serving of ice
- Mint leaves (optional)

Cucumber Melon Agua Fresca

Source: <https://spoonfulofplants.com/cucumber-melon-agua-fresca/#recipe>

Instructions

1. Add the water, cantaloupe and lime juice to a blender.
2. Pulse until fully blended, about 1 minute.
3. Pour liquid through a fine mesh sieve or strainer to remove unwanted froth/foam or scoop off with a spoon.
4. Pour over a generous amount of ice or allow to chill in refrigerator 1-2 hours before serving.
5. Add mint leaves and additional slices of melon or cucumber for garnish (optional).



PHOTOS OF DEMONSTRATED RECIPES

Discussion

- Taste is closely linked to memory and emotions!
 - What does your concept of summer taste like based on your own positive memories and experiences?
- Recipes for belonging
 - What summer crops and recipes are tied to your connection to self, loved ones, and community?
 - What is your preferred method of finding new ways to use your ingredients/produce? How do you share the results with others?



Future Discussion Topics

What would you like to talk about in future meetings?

Any guests you would like to see?

Do any of you have a food topic you'd like to present on?





Contact us!

Client Services: 612-767-7333

Mon – Thurs 8:30 am to 4 pm

Friday 8:30 am to 3 pm

Meals@openarmsmn.org

Nutrition Services: 612-540-7760

Nutrition@openarmsmn.org

If we cannot answer your call live, please leave us a detailed message with your name, date of birth, and what we can assist you with!

If we are having a hard time reaching each other, leave a timeframe that would be best for us to call you back.

THANK YOU FOR JOINING!