*Wok & Roll by Peter Kwong, (Frederic) Inter-County Leader*

**Garden recipes: 3 ways to use cucumbers, zucchini**

My wife started a small garden in early spring with the help of many of our friends and neighbors. I totally stayed out of it, as I am still in the “city boy” mode.

Growing up in the cement forest in Hong Kong, I knew nothing about gardening. She really takes it seriously, and I do have tremendous respect for the hard work she put in.

First, she built a fence around her garden with posts and a swinging gate and then the planter boxes which are gopher-proof. Living in an area where animals roam freely, she has to do a lot of extra work to make sure that the squirrels, gophers and deer do not enjoy the fruits, or vegetables, of her labor easily.

The first few months were OK, with some snow peas, carrots and radishes to munch on. Then, all of a sudden, she started to bring in squash, zucchini and cucumbers in buckets. And on top of that, our neighbors and friends are doing same.

They are taking up all the precious spaces for my beer in the fridge, and I have to do something. What better way than to eat them and get rid of them?

I heard a story that folks used to leave baskets of zucchini and cucumbers at their neighbors’ house at midnight and sneak away. Maybe I’ll try that soon. But meanwhile, I’ve found ways to get rid of them. Here are some simple recipes:

**Quickie pickie pickle**

*(makes 6 quarts with 12 cucumbers)*

6-8 cucumbers, sliced paper thin

2 cups wine vinegar

2 cups water

2 cups sugar

2 tablespoons kosher salt

4 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed

1/8 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)

Boil the wine vinegar, water, sugar, salt, garlic and red pepper flakes first; adjust the seasoning to taste. The red pepper flakes definitely add a kick. Add the sliced cucumbers and store in the refrigerator. It can keep for four to six weeks. Great with salads or your burger.

What to do with all those zucchini? I have two recipes for them. One is just to stir-fry them with onions and mushrooms, and another is to make a zucchini pie (quiche) with brats or Italian sausage.

**Stir-fried zucchini mix**

3 zucchini, sliced thin

1 yellow squash, sliced thin

1 tomato, quartered

1 red onion, sliced thin

In a heated frying pan, add oil and two cloves smashed garlic. Add red onion, tomatoes, squash and zucchini. Stir-fry for three to four minutes. Add 2-3 ounces of wine (red or white, it doesn’t matter, but make sure the chef shares some). Put lid on and let it cook for one to two more minutes. Add 1/8 teaspoon of kosher salt and some ground pepper.

It is unbelievable! Be creative, add whatever you find in your garden — string beans, Brussels sprouts, carrots and some button mushrooms; the list can go on and on. Simple pleasure at its best.

**Quickie quiche**

*(makes two pies)*

2 refrigerated pie crusts

8 eggs

4 cups grated cheese

1 can condensed milk

1 pound sausage mix, chopped and cooked

2 zucchini, shredded and cooked

2 cups sliced mushrooms, 1 cup for each pie

Turn oven on to 400 F. Unroll the pie crusts and place in two oiled glass pie dishes. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes till brown. Take them out of the oven and layer the zucchini, sausage and mushrooms in the crusts. Mix eggs, cheese and milk and pour over pies. Turn oven down to 375 F and let them cook for 20-30 minutes. They are done when a toothpick doesn’t stick to the ingredients. The top will be golden brown and puffed up. Let them cool off and enjoy.

It is a lot of work to make the quiche, so I usually make two at a time, one for the road, and one for the freezer.

Have you found ways to get rid of your tomatoes yet? Make tomato salad, grill them and top with cheese, make salsa (pico de gallo), marinate them and serve them on grilled toast. Make your own V-8. The list can go on and on.

Enjoy your garden, and enjoy summer.