

A saucy solution

By Valerie Lemke

If you put in a few tomato plants a couple of months ago, you're probably awash in ripe fruit right about now.

While the family can consume only so many BLTs, there's an easy way to transform your harvest into many future meals. Marinara sauce frozen in family-size servings is the secret, said Sheryl Lozier, who with husband Marshall is proprietor of Summers Past Farms in Flinn Springs.

CREATE YOUR OWN

Adapted from Dawn J. Ranck and Phyllis Pellman Good's "Favorite Recipes with Herbs," here's a dish Marshall Lozier deems "as good as pasta can get."

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons chopped garlic
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 1 large bell pepper, chopped
- 1½ quarts frozen tomatoes, rinsed and thawed
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 pound dry linguine, cooked al dente
- Chopped fresh parsley and grated Parmesan Regiano



- 1 Pick ripe tomatoes and freeze unrinsed in plastic bags.



- 2 Sauté garlic in olive oil until golden. Add onion and bell pepper and sauté five to seven minutes, until onion is translucent.



- 3 Combine basil, oregano and bay leaf. Lozier gathers the herbs from her garden while the first ingredients cook.



- 4 Core and coarsely chop thawed tomatoes. "I use beefsteak and a smaller garden variety of tomato and leave the skin on for extra flavor and fiber," she said. Stir tomatoes, herbs and seasonings into the sautéed ingredients.



Sheryl Lozier of Summers Past Farms shows off a simply prepared marinara sauce using homegrown tomatoes and other ingredients fresh from the garden. *Laura Embry / Union-Tribune photos*



- 5 Stir tomatoes, herbs, sugar, salt and pepper into the sautéed ingredients. "Don't be afraid of the sugar, it breaks down the acid," said Lozier. Cook uncovered over medium heat for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring frequently.



- 6 To serve, put cooked linguine in large bowl, top with sauce, and garnish with parsley and grated cheese.

- 7 To store, cool sauce and pour family-serving sizes into plastic containers, leaving half an inch of space at top; cover and freeze. "When frozen you can pop them out of the containers into baggies and store in the freezer for up to a year." This recipe serves four, Lozier said. "But it can easily be doubled or quadrupled." You'll have delicious pasta with the fresh flavors of summer in the middle of winter.

Summers Past Farms is located at 15602 Olde Highway 80 in Flinn Springs. Thirty minutes from downtown San Diego, the family-owned farm offers special events, a refreshment pavilion, workshops, gift shops, herbal gardens and wedding sites in addition to their nursery. For information, call (619) 390-1523.

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