



WEEK OF MAY 11TH, 2020 #20/52

### What's Happening In The Field

Potatoes are what's happening. Not quite there yet, but the Desiree's are flowering nicely and Jose was able to harvest a few this past Friday. It will be at least another week before we have enough to really harvest for the boxes, maybe even 2 weeks. We want to make sure they are a good size before we dig them up. But I can assure you they will be worth the wait. One of the perks of living on the farm is getting the sneak peaks, which I did this last Friday. I grabbed a handful and steamed them for dinner. If you are a new CSA member, let me just say this, there is nothing like a freshly dug new potato. It is nothing like potatoes we buy in the store, they are just in a food category all of their own. People often ask me what is my favorite crop, and honestly I don't really have one, just like I don't really have a favorite food. BUT thinking about it right now, I would have to say it might just be a new potato from Eatwell Farm.



This past weekend we picked up our Sweet Potato slips, 18,000 for us and another 8,000 for a few other farms. In an extraordinary act of teamwork and determination to get a job done, the guys got them all planted in just 2 hours. Originally we were supposed to pick up the plants Friday, and the plan was to get them in the ground early Saturday morning, but as so much in life, these plans didn't pan out. We couldn't pick up the plants until mid morning Saturday, and by the time we got back from Turlock it was far too hot to plant these delicate little slips. So 12 of our guys came to the farm Sunday morning and got it done. I just walked out there (yes Sunday morning newsletter writing is the best) to get a couple of photos of them planting but they were already coming back in. It was 8:30 in the morning! Big shoutout to our crew, coming in early on Mother's Day morning and making sure our Sweet



Potatoes got into the ground. Something to remember come fall when we will be enjoying the tubers of their labor.

Regarding plantings from earlier this year, I have seen Napa Cabbage growing sporadically. Some are a good size many are not, and some are wanting to bolt. Same goes for the red cabbage. The Wakefield aka Caraflex - cone shaped cabbages are coming along but are still very small. When I checked on the broccoli was small and showing bits of yellow. That comes from the sun and heat. The broccoli is still really tasty. On Monday, Jose noticed that some of the broccoli had increased in size and we needed to harvest it before it begins to bolt. So, we will be putting it in the family boxes this week as it there is only a small amount ready. The Romanesco and cauliflower are not looking too promising either. The abnormally warm February really hurt, but I am hoping we will get something from it all.



### The Cost of Doing Business

Cory and I were speaking the other day on the subject of liability insurance. Their renewal was coming up and he was really struggling with whether or not they should continue raising quail. The premium, for their very small operation, is \$3,000 a year. That is the same amount a business doing \$200,000 a year in sales would pay. They aren't even in the parking lot of that ballpark. With restaurants closed, they have lost almost all of their sales. The CSA is really their last avenue. How long do you hang on, keep things going, hoping your customers will survive and come back? There is a lot of time, money, brain and physical energy that goes into starting any type of farming operation. When you put animals into that equation the answer is never easy or simple. Unlike vegetables, if I see a crop has failed, yes it can be a big disappointment, but the answer is simple, mow it and plow it under. For now, Cory and Tam have decided to keep the quail operation going, but in order for them to do that, they need help. The quail eggs and meat are available through the CSA which you can easily order as extras. Maybe you have some neighbors or family members who might want something different to enjoy for a special meal? You can order it for them. Anything we can do to help them increase their sales would very much be appreciated. I know members have been buying the packs of quail, I would love to hear how you are cooking them up?

# RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

## Box Soup

*Farmhouse Kitchen Recipe*

I had a truly wonderful Mother's Day, the first in at least a decade that I got to actually celebrate Mother's Day on Mother's Day. We made a fantastic brunch, homemade English Muffins for Eggs Benedict, with homemade Hollandaise. We had a lot of sautéed greens and a delicious smoked cured ham from Smoky Mountain Country Hams in Tennessee. Yes, that was a COVID purchase, but so delicious! We had pitchers of freshly squeezed orange juice from Guru Ram Das Valencias, and naturally had to have Mimosas. A perfect brunch, one that left you feeling like you might not need much for dinner. We saved the rind from the ham which I used in this "box soup". The soup was essentially my way of cleaning out the fridge. I sautéed green garlic, onions, then added collards, diced turnips, chopped turnip greens, the fennel, and chard. No potatoes, no carrots, I only used what I had on hand from the box. In the fridge I had spicy sausage so I took that out of the casing and sautéed it with the green garlic and onion before adding turnip and greens. Threw in the ham rind, added water and cooked it in my Instant Pot. I didn't salt it because I wasn't sure how salty the rind or sausage would make it, so we salted the soup in the bowl. I didn't use stock, just water, it was quite flavorful, just needing a bit of salt. Of course, if you would like to use stock any type would be a great addition. A couple of weeks ago I wrote about smoking collard greens, if you have the ability to do that, this would be the perfect soup to use those in, so you could leave out the meat, making it vegan. Of course you don't have to go the smokey route at all, and could easily season it up with herbs, like rosemary and thyme, maybe add a bit of red pepper flakes. If you are wanting a bit more substance you can always add beans. If you are ordering the Mary's Chickens from us, I highly recommend throwing a whole chicken into a pot of water and cooking it, then use the meat from the wings and the back in your soup, and you have all the breast, leg and thigh meat leftover for other dishes, like the chicken salad I have included in the recipes. Sometimes I cut the breast meat off before throwing the bird into the pot, that way I have it for meals like Piccata.

## Sesame-Miso Chicken Salad

*Recipe from NYT Cooking by David Tanis*

Since I suggested simmering a whole chicken in the Box Soup recipe, I thought I would include a Chicken Salad Recipe for you to use up some of that poached chicken. This recipe has the added bonus of being dressed with a Miso Dressing. If you have the family box this week, you can certainly use some Radicchio mixed in with the lettuce. If you prefer a vegetarian option, you could easily marinate and bake some tofu, cube it up and use that in place of chicken.

2 TB Asian Sesame Paste or Tahini  
4 TB White Miso  
3 TB Rice-Wine Vinegar  
1 TB Mirin, Sake or Sherry  
1 tsp grated Ginger

½ tsp Sugar  
½ tsp grated Lemon zest  
½ tsp roasted Sesame Oil  
¼ cup Oil, choose a light one that won't impart too much flavor  
Salt and pepper  
Small pinch of Cayenne (optional)  
1 (3-pound) Chicken, cooked  
2 heads small Lettuce  
2 medium Cucumbers, peeled and sliced 1/8-inch thick, lightly salted

3 TB thinly sliced Scallions or Chives, use your Garlic Chives if you have the family box

1 tsp toasted Sesame Seeds, for garnish  
1 tsp toasted Black Sesame Seeds, for garnish

Put sesame paste, miso, vinegar, Mirin, ginger, sugar and lemon zest in a small mixing bowl. Whisk together until well combined. Whisk in sesame and vegetable oils. Check seasoning and adjust with salt, pepper and cayenne, if using. You should have about 2/3 cup dressing. If it seems too thick, thin with a tablespoon or 2 of water.

Remove skin from chicken and pull all the meat from the carcass. With fingers or a knife, shred all the chicken meat into 1-inch strips and put in a medium mixing bowl. (Refrigerate or freeze any remaining skin, fat, bones and cartilage for making broth.) You should have about 4 cups shredded chicken. Separate

the lettuce leaves and arrange on a large platter, leaving space for the chicken at the center, then scatter with cucumber slices. Gently toss the shredded chicken with salt and pepper. Pour all but a few tablespoons of dressing over the chicken and gently toss to coat. Transfer dressed chicken to center of platter and nap with remaining dressing. Sprinkle scallions and sesame seeds on top and serve.

## Individual Turnip Gratin with Toast Fingers

*Recipe from The Greens Cookbook by Ed Brown and Deborah Madison*

1 1/2 lb Turnips  
Salt & Pepper  
1 1/2 tsp Thyme leaves, chopped OR do what I do and skip the regular salt and use Eatwell Thyme Salt  
1/2 cup Gruyere Cheese, grated  
1 1/2 cups heavy Cream  
2 to 3 slices Country French Bread, white bread or whole wheat bread

Peel the turnips, and slice them into thin rounds. Bring 3 to 4 quarts of water to a boil, add a tablespoon of salt, and cook the turnips for a minute to remove any bitterness. Pour them into a colander to drain. Preheat the oven to 375 F. Butter shallow round grain dishes that are about 5 to 6" across. Cover the bottom of each with an overlapping layer of turnips and season with salt, freshly ground black pepper, and some of the thyme. Make a second layer of turnips and seasonings, ending with the cheese. Pour the cream over the top if it has not yet begun to boil. Remove the gratins when most of the cream has been absorbed and there is a golden crust over the top, about 30 minutes in all. Set them aside to cool for a few minutes. Toast the bread and slice into lengths about 1/2" wide. Slice a rubber spatula around the edge of a each grain, reaching across the bottom, then slide it out carefully onto a serving plate. Garnish with the fresh herbs and the toast fingers.

## This Week's Box List

Radishes  
\*Strawberries  
Kale  
\*Fennel  
\*Lettuce  
\*Turnips  
Radicchio  
\*Collards  
\*Green Garlic  
Garlic Chives  
\*Chard  
Broccoli

\* = Items in Box for 2