



WEEK OF JUNE 8TH, 2020 #24/52

Running A "Small" Business

Technically, we are not considered a small farm by government standards, but in the eyes of world in which we operate, we are. We grow over 150 crops which means we order a lot of seeds and transplants. The problem is we don't order acres worth of any one item. We would never get 200,000 broccoli plants, or tomatoes, and that is where we run into problems. At the beginning of shelter-in-place, we had been emailing and calling our plant start company to find out where our next order of transplants was, only to be told they didn't have anything for us, at all, for the rest of the year. No tomato plants, no pepper plants, onions, shallots, melons, eggplant, cucumbers and none of the fall plantings were scheduled. We were expecting to put plants in the ground that week and they had nothing for us. And we couldn't get our rep to return phone calls or emails. Our rep had dropped the ball, said the attachments with our orders for the entire year that we sent in January couldn't open except for the first three deliveries of the year that we did receive, but never called or emailed us to let us know. She just dropped it. After days of Andrew and I trying to get ahold of her I finally called and had a melt down with the poor receptionist who put me in touch with the woman who was in charge of all the account reps. Thank goodness she jumped into action, when she realized the severity of the situation and with a lot of figuring and formulating, we were able to get plant deliveries. There was a lot of disappointment learning that some of the varieties we wanted were no longer available, out of stock at that point in the season, or in the case of the San Marzano tomatoes we grow, nothing was being shipped out of Italy. We had to piecemeal our plant orders together, some from the extra plants Headstart had available, and some through the kindness of other farmers who let us know when they had extra plants available. We had to get whatever Headstart or other farmers had available just to be able to get something in the ground.

Here's the thing I realized in all of this, we are insignificant to these companies. And let me say that Headstart is really the only company that will work with farms like ours. Scrambling to find a solution, we spoke with a start company that is close by in Woodland. They won't even talk to you until you hit a minimum 50,000 starts of one crop. They tell you they will work with you, but you send them your figures and then they say they can't. And it isn't just us, Terra Firma Farm at over 300 acres and Fully Belly Farm at 500 acres, we're all in the same boat, too small for the start companies. Full Belly does some of their own starts and Riverdog Farm gave up and does all their starts in house, because, again at 500 acres, they are too small to get the kind of service we all need. But the truth is, none of us are small or insignificant, we are diversified farmers who grow actual food for people to eat each and every week. And that is our problem. When you come to the farm, on your drive here you will see hundreds of acres of almond and walnut trees. Right now you will also see hundreds of acres of sunflowers and canning tomatoes, and alfalfa. The nuts

are sold all around the world, most of the sunflowers are for seed that goes to France, the tomatoes are harvested and driven down the road to the Campbell Soup cannery in Dixon for tomato soup. You can make great money off alfalfa that is shipped to Saudi Arabia to feed their racehorses. We are in the middle of some of the best growing land you will find anywhere in the world, we should be growing food to feed folks year round. Those fields of sunflowers and tomatoes will be bare for months out of the year, allowing that priceless topsoil to blow in the wind, and not growing food.

I tell you this story because it was a seriously big deal for us. Andrew did a fantastic job of putting all the numbers together, from the bits and bobs-like orders we have gotten, so in the end we knew we had enough plantings. But I also tell you this so you understand just how important your choice is in supporting a farm like ours. It is because of CSA members all over the country, farms like ours can continue to farm the way we do. You make us significant. And in the end, when I was having my meltdown on the phone with that poor receptionist, that is exactly what I told her, to you all we are critical, we feed your families.

Strawberry Picking and Lavender Harvest

We had more members up this past Sunday for strawberry picking, and time on the farm. The next two weekends we will be busy with our Lavender Harvest, but after that if anyone wants/needs a farm break, call me to schedule a time on a Sunday to come on out. I can tell you for the members who have made it up, it has been



a real blessing, having a place to go to run around out in the fresh air, and enjoy the fruit. "Just want to let you know we had a wonderful time this morning at the farm. Thank you for letting us be there! It really gave us some much needed peace and quiet and open space for our three-year-old to run around and get dirty! The highlight was when one of the guys handed her a chicken to hold!"

With regard to Lavender Harvest, we are set for folks helping out the first Lavender weekend, which is this coming weekend June 13/14th. There is some space the following weekend, June 20th/21st, if you would like to join us please give me a call at 530-554-3971.

RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

Cauliflower Or Romanesco Tikka Masala

Recipe from Sprouted Kitchen Serves 4

I think I have a craving for Indian food:). This recipe was suggested by CSA member Rose L., who made it last week using Romanesco.

2 TB Yellow Curry powder
1 ½ tsp Cumin
1 tsp Paprika
1 tsp Turmeric
1 tsp Coriander
¼ tsp Allspice or Cinnamon
½ tsp Red Pepper flakes, or more to taste
1 ½ tsp Salt
2 TB Avocado Oil, divided
1 large head Cauliflower and/or Romanesco, cut into florets
1 medium Yellow Onion, diced
5 cloves Garlic, grated
1 Tbsp. freshly grated Ginger
1 6 oz. can Tomato Paste
¾ cup Vegetable stock
1 14 oz. can full fat Coconut milk
Zest and juice of 1 small Lemon
Generous handful well chopped Cilantro
2 cup cooked Basmati Rice, for serving
¼ cup salted, toasted Cashews
Naan, optional
Yogurt, optional
Preheat oven to 425. In a small bowl, mix together curry, cumin, paprika, turmeric, coriander, cinnamon/allspice, red pepper flakes, and salt. On a rimmed baking sheet, arrange florets so there is space between them, drizzle with a tablespoon of avocado oil and toss with about a third of the spice mix. Transfer to the oven and roast for 30 minutes until just browned and tender. Meanwhile, make your sauce. In a large Dutch oven, heat the remaining oil over medium. When the oil is shimmering, add in the onion and cook until golden, about 4 minutes. Add in garlic and ginger and cook until fragrant. Once the veg are golden and tender, add in the remaining spice blend, stir, and let the spices toast for an additional 2 minutes. Add in the tomato paste, stirring to combine. Slowly pour in coconut milk, broth, and bring the sauce to a low boil. Once boiling, turn the heat down to medium low, and allow to simmer and thicken for 5 minutes, until the sauce is creamy and coats the back of a spoon. Using an immersion blender or blender, puree the sauce until smooth. You can leave it chunky, but we all liked it smooth. Transfer the sauce back to the pot, add in the florets, lemon juice, and zest, and stir gently to combine. To serve, fill bowls with a generous scoop of rice, the Tikka mixture, cilantro, toasted cashews, and a squeeze of lemon.

Roasted Aloo Gobi (Potatoes and Cauliflower)

Recipe by Priya Krishna With Ritu Krishna, from Bon Appetit June 2019

Makes 4 servings

Suddenly the cauliflower has sprung into action, along with the broccoli and romanesco. Enjoy them, they won't last long.

Potatoes from this week's share, cut into 2"-long sticks

1 medium head of Cauliflower, cut into small florets

5 TB Extra-Virgin Olive Oil, divided

1 tsp. Cumin Seeds

½ tsp. ground Turmeric

1 small Onion, finely chopped

1 TB thinly sliced Ginger

Pinch of Asafetida (optional, but really great)

Pinch of Red Chili powder

1 tsp (or more) Salt

1 TB (or more) fresh Lime juice

½ cup chopped Cilantro leaves with tender stems

Preheat oven to 400°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil. Toss potatoes and cauliflower with 3 TB Oil on prepared sheet. Spread in an even layer and roast, tossing once halfway through, until cauliflower and potatoes are browned and slightly crisped, about 30

minutes. Let cool. Meanwhile, heat remaining 2 Tbsp. oil in a large skillet over medium-high until it begins to shimmer. Add cumin and cook, stirring frequently, until they turn a medium shade of brown, about 1 minute. Reduce heat to medium and swirl in turmeric. Add onion and cook, stirring frequently, until translucent, 4-6 minutes. Add ginger, asafetida (if using), and chili powder and cook, stirring, until heated through and well combined, about 1 minute longer. Stir in roasted potatoes and cauliflower, including any charred bits from the foil, and gently mix (don't overmix, or the cauliflower will fall apart). Add salt and cook, tossing occasionally, until potatoes and cauliflower are tender (but not soggy!), 5-6 minutes. Remove from heat and add lime juice. Taste and add more lime juice or salt, if needed. Transfer potatoes and cauliflower to a platter. Top with cilantro.

This Week's Box List

*Lettuce
Summer Squash
*Broccoli
Fennel
*Cauliflower
*Cabbage
Collards
*Romanesco
*Potatoes
Chard
*Peaches or Nectarines
Garlic

* = Items in Box for 2

Firecracker Vegan Lettuce Wraps

Recipe found on pinchofyum.com

For the Firecracker Sauce:

1/2 cup Peanut Butter

1/3 cup Soy Sauce

1/3 cup Sesame Oil

1/4 cup Rice Vinegar

2 TB Chili Paste

2 TB Sugar

A small knob of fresh Ginger, peeled

Aa clove of fresh Garlic, peeled

For the Lettuce Wraps:

1 container Extra Firm Tofu

4 ounces Brown Rice noodles

Lettuce leaves for wrapping

Peanuts, Cilantro, Lime for serving

Soak your noodles in a bowl of lukewarm water for at least 30 minutes while prepping the rest of the recipe. You want the noodles to be soft and flexible. Blend all the sauce ingredients together in a small blender or food processor until smooth and creamy. Press the tofu with a few paper towels to get some of the moisture out. Cut the tofu into small pieces. Heat a little oil in a nonstick skillet. Add your tofu. Stir-fry until golden brown. I usually let it sauté for at least 15 minutes. Add about half of the sauce to the pan. Stir-fry for another 3-5 minutes. As the sauce browns, it will form small crispy pieces around the tofu. Yum! Transfer tofu to a bowl. Drain and rinse your noodles. Add another swish of oil to the pan and plop the noodles in. Add about half of the remaining sauce. Stir fry for just a minute or two until coated. Add a splash of water if it's too sticky. Remove from heat immediately and toss with the tofu. Fill your lettuce leaves with the noodle/tofu mixture (it's okay if it's sticky - you're just wrapping it up in lettuce). Top with peanuts, cashews, cilantro, scallions, lime, and/or Sriracha if you want.