



WEEK OF JULY 26TH, 2020 #31/52

### The Scout Onion

At the beginning of the big mess-up with our transplant orders, I put a message out on a farmer group we are a part of through the Capay Valley Farm Shop. I had asked if any of the farms had extra plants they could possibly sell us. Literally, within minutes I had an email from Jim Eldon at Fiddler's Green. He had about 5,000 onions he wanted to give us. When I went up to his place to pick them up he told me they were a gift to the memory of Nigel, who had worked for Jim many years back, before starting his own farm. The generosity and kindness I find in the farming community so often touches my heart and makes me proud to be a part of it all.



Getting back to onions, the variety Jim gave us is Scout, and they are what we have been enjoying in the boxes the past couple of weeks. I have really been enjoying them. They are delicious, and I like the fact that there isn't too much paper on them. Since this is a new variety for us, I want to make sure they

get slotted into our planting lineup for next year. I called one of our seed reps to get an order in and discovered that planting onions is not quite so simple as plopping plants or seeds into the ground. There are essentially three types of onion: Long-day, intermediate (or day-neutral) and short-day. This all refers to the number of hours of daylight. Different onions require different amounts to form bulbs. Long-Day onions require 14 to 16 hours and grow best in more northern latitudes. Short-days need only 10 to 12 hours and grow best in the more southern states. The intermediate onion needs a 12 to 14 hour day and grow well across the middle of the country. That is what the Scout is.

Beyond daylight requirements there are onions which you can overwinter. They are planted in the fall, make it through the winter and are ready by mid-Spring. Typically, you would thin these onions and use as more of a scallion type when the green tops are tall sometime later in the fall. The remaining plants will have plenty of space to grow into fully matured bulbs later the following Spring. But over-wintered onions never store well. We prefer to have onions that store well, grow lots of them and have them in the boxes for several weeks. Some onions can be kept in proper storage for more than 6 months. Ours never last anywhere close to that long.

### Refer Repair

Over the past couple of months we have been working on our cooler. First we took everything out of it and power washed the entire cooler. After cleaning the coils we found it worked much better, but still not quite where I had hoped it would be. We had a refrigeration guy from Sac come in and top up the coolant and that seemed to do the trick. But over the weekend the cooler went down, dead, nothing, nada. That's when you call Jan, a long time CSA member and host, partner to Liz (our former CSA manager), and people I consider family. Jan is also a genius at repairing all sorts of equipment, primarily in restaurants. Jan and Liz came up yesterday morning and by the end of the day we had a very cold cooler, humming away. Jan had suggestions for making our setup better, including putting in "inner doors" to help us become more efficient and it would make the process of getting in and out of the cooler a lot easier. And he is coming back to wire in some lighting that we can switch on and off. Currently we have a system that requires us to grab an extension cord to plug the lights in. When loading delivery trucks at 4 am, those seemingly little extra steps are really annoying. At that time of day you just want to get the boxes out of



the cooler and into your van and hit the road. Something as simple as having wired lights with a switch will be very nice. The best thing about having Jan here to work on equipment is the opportunity to learn from him. And then of course there is the peace of mind factor; having the cooler go down at the start of a week of 100 degree weather is just a tiny bit worrisome :). So having family to turn to for help with such an important problem is pretty amazing. Thank you Jan!

# RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

## **Colcannon**

*Recipe from Bon Appetite*

Take advantage of this rare convergence of what most people consider winter crops in late July and pair it with summer crops by adding sautéed summer squash to the mix. Maybe serve it with a fresh tomato salad topped with garlic chives. The original recipe calls for savoy cabbage which is more tender so I would probably cook the cabbage a bit longer.

1 3/4 lb Potatoes

Kosher salt

6 TB unsalted Butter, divided

2 Leeks, white and pale-green parts only, sliced in half lengthwise, thinly sliced crosswise

2 Garlic cloves, thinly sliced

2 cups (packed) shredded Cabbage (from about 1/4 large head), divided

1 1/4 cups Milk

1/2 cup Heavy Cream

Freshly ground Black Pepper

Garlic Chives, thinly sliced

Cover potatoes with water in a small pot; season with salt. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, then reduce heat and simmer until a paring knife slides easily through the flesh, 30–40 minutes. Drain, let cool slightly, and peel. Meanwhile,

melt 4 Tbsp. butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add leeks and cook, stirring frequently, until very soft, 8–10 minutes. Add garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until garlic is fragrant and leeks are just beginning to brown around the edges, about 3 minutes longer. Add 1 cup cabbage and cook, stirring constantly, until wilted. Add milk and cream and bring to a simmer. Add potatoes and remaining 1 cup cabbage, then coarsely mash with a potato masher. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer colcannon to a large serving bowl. Top with remaining 2 Tbsp. butter and sprinkle with garlic chives.

## **Basil Corn Pudding**

*Recipe found on Tuesday Recipe*

2 TB Butter, plus more for dish

3 Green Onions, sliced

2 cups Corn kernels (2 or 3 ears)

Salt

Handful fresh Basil leaves, chopped

4 large Eggs

1 cup Half-and-Half

1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

pinch Cayenne, optional

Preheat an oven to 375°F and butter the insides of a 1-1/2 quart soufflé dish or other baking dish. In a sauté pan, melt the butter over medium-high heat and add the green onions. Cook, stirring for a minute or two to soften, then add the corn and a good pinch of salt. Cook for 4 minutes, then stir in the basil and remove pan from the heat. Let cool for a few minutes until the corn is just warm to the touch. In a bowl, beat the eggs well with a whisk, then whisk in the half-and-half and the cheese. Scrape the cooled corn mixture from the pan into the bowl and stir well. Stir in the cayenne if using. Pour the mixture into the buttered baking dish and bake until puffed and golden, about 45 minutes (if using a baking dish that's flatter than a

soufflé dish, start checking after 35 minutes). Serve warm.

## **Paneer With Burst Cherry Tomato Sauce**

*Bon Appetit August 2020*

The original recipe calls for Cherry Tomatoes, and as I sit here writing the newsletter I am not sure if the tomatoes we have are cherry or not. But I think it will still work with regular tomatoes. And the original calls

for sugar snap peas, but I am switching that to Gypsy or Bell pepper. I realize this will change the flavor profile a bit, but when you cook with the seasons, you just work with what you've got!

8 oz Paneer

6 Scallions

1" piece Ginger

2 Garlic cloves

1 tsp. Coriander seeds

1 tsp. Cumin seeds

1/2 tsp. Black Mustard seeds

1/2 tsp. Kashmiri Chile powder or 1/4 tsp.

Cayenne powder

1/4 tsp. ground Turmeric

4 oz. Gypsy/Bell Pepper, cut into thin strips (about 1 cup)

3 Tbsp. Extra-Virgin Olive oil, divided  
Kosher salt

12 oz. Tomatoes

1/2 cup (lightly packed) Mint leaves

Cooked rice (for serving)

Slice paneer into generous 1/4" thick planks and pat dry; set aside. Trim roots from 6 scallions and discard. Thinly slice on a deep diagonal anyplace in a medium bowl. Scrub and thinly slice a 1" piece of ginger. Stack ginger slices and slice crosswise to make strips the size of matchsticks; add to bowl with scallions. Peel and thinly slice 2 garlic cloves; add to bowl. Using a mortar and pestle or the side of your chef's knife, coarsely crush 1 tsp coriander seeds and add to vegetables. Mix in cumin seeds, black mustard seeds, Kashmiri Chile powder or 1/4 tsp cayenne, and ground turmeric; set aside. Slice the peppers into strips. Heat 2 TB oil in a large skillet over medium-high until shimmering. Arrange reserved paneer in a single layer. You are only browning on one side. Cook until golden brown underneath, about 1 minute. If it sticks to the pan, give it a bit more time to brown, it will release when it is sufficiently crisped. Using a slotted spatula or spoon, transfer paneer to a plate, leaving as much oil behind in pan as possible. Arrange browned side up and season generously with salt. Set pan over medium heat and add remaining olive oil along with reserved scallions, ginger, garlic and spices. Cook, stirring often, until scallions are wilted and mustard seeds begin to pop, about 2 minutes. Add peppers, tomatoes and 1 cup water. Increase the heat to medium-high, season with salt, and bring to a simmer. Gently smash each tomato open with spatula or spoon, and simmer until tomato juices thicken slightly, about 3 minutes. Taste sauce and add more salt if needed. If your tomatoes aren't super sweet, you may need to add a pinch of sugar at this point to balance their acidity. Add paneer back to the pan and simmer until warmed through. Remove from heat and mix in mint leaves. Serve with cooked rice.

### **This Week's Box List**

\*Onions

\*Tomatoes

Garlic Chives

\*Chard

\*Potatoes

Basil

Leeks

\*Nectarines or Peaches

\*Zucchini

Cabbage

\*Padron/Shishito Peppers

Gypsy or Bell Peppers

\* = Items in Box for 2