



WEEK OF AUGUST 17TH, 2020 #34/52

Saucing Tomatoes

Jose says the San Marzano tomatoes are just about there and will be coming in strong by next week. We have members who order amazing amounts of cases of these delicious saucing tomatoes. But with our vans filled with CSA boxes, I am concerned that we do not have the capacity to deliver all these extra tomatoes during our regular route days. My solution is to find a few good pick up sites in SF and the East Bay where we could deliver all the extra ordered tomato cases on Saturdays. Is anyone interested in hosting, temporarily, for tomato orders? Please let us know ASAP because we really need to get this set up quickly. You can let Elise know at organic@eatwell.com.



The dog days or dog days of summer are the hot, sultry days of summer. They were historically the period following the heliacal rising of the star system Sirius, which Hellenistic astrology connected with heat, drought, sudden thunderstorms, lethargy, fever, mad dogs, and bad luck. They are now taken to be the hottest, most uncomfortable part of summer in the Northern Hemisphere.

I think they nailed it. It continues to be incredibly hot on the farm, but worse than the heat, is the humidity. I

know, not humid by Southern standards, so please don't text me telling me how bad it is in Georgia. I am a Californian, we don't do thunder, lightning or even a little bit o'rain in the summer. We are all about dry, hot heat. That's why our hills are golden, the true California Gold. So this week's weather is pretty unusual. I have told the guys to do only what needs to get done, and then head home. Working out in the field at temperatures of 109 to 111 is hard work— seriously hard. Like I can't stand to walk out my front door and they are out there hustling all day kind of hard. Weeks like this, I like to remind everyone on the planet who relies on others to feed them, there are few jobs out there as important as a farm worker. They are our truly essential workers and real heroes.

But to my original thought, the days are growing shorter, hooray! I know for most people that is a sad fact. For those of us who farm, it is a blessing. The slightly shorter day means I think about dinner before 8 at night. I look up from my computer at 6:45 and realize it's time to stop and go cook something to eat. Dinner is now done by 7/7:30, and even though it is 8:30 right now, and I am still working, I am doing so after having eaten a terrific meal, feeding the horse, locking up the house, and even have even brushed my teeth. My day is nearly done. And with that I will say good night, and acknowledge just how blessed I am to live a life dictated by the natural flow of the seasons and nature.

Celery

On one of my walks out on the farm I passed our planting of celery. The transplants were so small, but all I could see were future meals. Standing out there, in the heat of summer, I was immediately transported to fall dishes, a Thanksgiving feast with stuffing that maybe this celery might go into. The variety we are growing is Conquistador. It is an "early" celery that tolerates heat fairly well, which is a good thing since California's summer months are extending into mid November. This variety does not have the common wide stems we are all used to, however it does pack in the flavor. I learned years ago to pull back a bit on the amount I use unless I am really looking for a strong hit of celery flavor. Even though I am over the moon eating tomatoes every day, it is pretty fantastic when the farm reminds me that there is always something exciting coming down the road.



The Dog Days of Summer

It's kind of funny, because I just opened my computer and thought to write something about the heat and the shorter days. The expression "the dog days of summer" popped into my head and I wondered, where the heck did that expression come from? So I googled it and here is what Wikipedia had to say:



RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

We have a lot of fruit coming in right now, so I hope you will enjoy it all. Our grapes are amazing. And while we wait, patiently, or perhaps not so patiently, for the eggplants to come in, and the summer squash and cucumbers to replenish, this week will be fruit-focused. Try a [Nectarine Basil Tomato Salad](#), like the one linked here from Food52. The plum cake recipe that I have included in the newsletter a few times is simple and incredibly delicious. If you can't find the recipe from past newsletters, text me and I will get it to you. And as for the grapes, how about a [Fruited Tofu Salad](#), just a few suggestions for getting through your box this week!

Cashew Chicken

My mom is here with me. She had a mild stroke last week and we brought her here to recuperate. My inclination, when someone is not well, is to make sure they are eating really well. So the morning brings fresh squeezed OJ from Guru Ram Das Orchards (if you haven't tried their oranges, you really should), and toast with good Spring Hill Jersey Butter and cottage cheese.

For lunch we enjoyed Eatwell Farm tomato sandwiches, with really good sharp cheddar, on Vita Vittles Real Bread. I mentioned this exact sandwich a couple of weeks back, and have been eating it several times a week ever since! Tonight for dinner I made cashew chicken, which was a big treat for me because I seldom buy cashews, and save them for special occasions, but I figure an almost 97 year old stroke patient, who is up walking and talking (a lot) is something to celebrate. I served this over some Blonde Chico Rice. We thoroughly enjoyed this very Eatwell meal. You could easily make it with tofu instead of chicken, but perhaps marinate and bake the tofu first. Of course I didn't write down quantities but here is what I remember.

1 lb boneless, skinless Chicken Breast, cut into cubes
2 Onions, cut in half then cut into thin slices along the grooves
Peppers, as many as you like, tops and seeds removed, cut into thin strips
1 bunch of Chard, washed well (it's dusty out there) and chopped
4 Zucchini, cut into half moons
2 cloves Garlic, minced or grated on a microplane
4 TB Tamari or Soy Sauce
2 TB Corn Starch
1/4 cup Water
1 TB Rice Vinegar
1 TB Toasted Sesame Oil
Black Pepper, to taste
High temp oil for cooking
Cashews, for topping each plate

Mix the soy sauce, cornstarch, water, vinegar, and toasted sesame oil, and black pepper, in a bowl, then

add the chicken. Mix it well and let marinate for 15 minutes.

While it is marinating, chop your veggies, and get your rice cooking. Heat a pan or wok to high, using tongs or a slotted spoon add a portion of the chicken/onion mixture, letting as much of the liquid to drip off before putting into. Do this in batches to not overwhelm your pan thereby cooling the wok. Put the cooked chicken/onions into a holding bowl, and repeat until all the chicken is done, adding more oil as needed. Once I had finished all the chicken I cooked the chard on its own and put it in the bowl with the chicken, then cooked up the peppers and the zucchini. When the peppers and zucchini were done I threw the chicken and chard back into the pan, mixed it up well, and poured over the liquid. Stirring and cooking until the liquid thickened up.

Serve onto a bed of rice and top with cashews.

Heirloom Tomato Gratin Recipe

from Food52 by the Kitchen Witch

3 pounds ripe Heirloom Tomatoes, cut 1/3-inch slices
Sea Salt
Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 large Onion, finely chopped
2 cups whole wheat breadcrumbs
1 TB minced Garlic
2 tsp Honey
freshly ground black pepper
3 tsp fresh Thyme leaves, chopped
1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Generously sprinkle tomatoes with salt and let them drain in a colander. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a shallow baking dish with extra-virgin olive oil.

Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook for about five minutes or until onions are translucent, not brown. Sprinkle with salt, pepper, and 1-1/2 teaspoons thyme. Combine the tomatoes, honey, and black pepper in a large bowl. Add half of the onion mixture to the bottom of the baking dish and spread in an even layer. Layer half the tomatoes overlap the tomato slices to fit. Season with freshly ground black pepper and add the rest of the onion mixture, another overlapping layer of tomatoes, and freshly ground black pepper. In a medium bowl, mix together bread crumbs, 2 tablespoons olive oil, 1-1/2 teaspoons thyme, cheese, salt and pepper. Mix until all crumbs are moistened. Sprinkle breadcrumb mixture evenly on top of gratin.

Bake for 35 to 40 minutes until crumbs are golden and tomatoes are bubbly. Serve warm or at room temperature.

This Week's Box List

*Plums
*Onions
*Tomatoes, mix
*Potatoes
*Basil
Zucchini
Padron Peppers
Chard
*Cherry Tomatoes
*Grapes
Garlic Chives
Nectarines

* = Items in Box for 2