



WEEK OF AUGUST 24TH, 2020 #35/52

The sky is filled with smoke. The one positive thing, at least for the moment, is the large visible ash has stopped falling. All weekend long I watched the evacuation line, which held at the other side of highway 505. Between us and the highway are several miles of irrigated orchards and farm land. I feel safer than if we lived at the base of the dry hills, but I do not take this barrier for granted. These fires jump multiple lanes of freeways, and I don't think anyone feels they can say for sure that there is safety anywhere in California right now. I have been getting updates from a lot of friends, some with just nightmare stories. I wanted to update you on the folks we are personally connected with who have been affected:

Soul Food Farm evacuated and part of the farm burned. Alexis and Eric's house and Olive Orchard were still standing after the fire moved on. There were still embers burning when they got back on their land and they were able to save their barn with buckets of water from the animal trough. Fire means no power, no power means no pump for the well which means no water. Soul Food Farm is one of the olive oils we offer.

Guru Ram Das Orchards is safe. However, last week when they went out to pick our order, the fire was a mere 1.8 miles from the farm and it was too dangerous and hot to harvest. I spoke with Joanna, and she told me that was the closest the fire got to them. A big sigh of relief, but we may not have oranges for you this week. If you have some ordered we will make sure to get you credit. Last I heard from David at **Capay Mills**, he was fine. The fire made it up to the floor of the Capay Valley, which is terrifying for many of our farmer friends up there. Paul Muller and Rye from Full Belly spent 3 days working straight through cutting grass and fire breaks. **Sky Ranch**, I am heartbroken to tell you, did not survive. They have lost their home, winery, well everything. They produce the Il Cocuzzolo olive oil we sell in the gallon cans. And as far as I know, we have at least one **CSA member** who has lost her home. The stories I have heard from friends are literally something out of a nightmare movie and I can't imagine the shock so many of our neighbors must be feeling right now.

So what can we do? Christina, one of our Vacaville members put me in touch with Anna Eaton the director of the Boys and Girls club who has the ability to find the families in need. CSA boxes are great if you are staying somewhere with a kitchen, so I really needed someone who can coordinate this for us. This week we are donating 22 boxes to families in Vacaville out of our Care Share program. So many of you have generously donated to this

fund, which helps us do even more of this kind of work. Our friend Alexis from Soul Food Farm has done an amazing job of posting where you can donate and how you can help. If you are interested in seeing her list please check out the FB or IG for Soul Food Farm. CAFF, Community Alliance With Family Farms has a relief fund going for farmers and if you are interested in donating to them here is the link: https://www.caff.org/2020firefund/?fbclid=IwAR1dQGByLFu90ojbx6X5a_vyIPpnmEtvApa15BcnrLlvXxb7KENTg04XtE

It's A Dusty Time Of Year

Even if there wasn't smoke, it is tomato harvest. The machines run night and day. A 40 acre field can be harvested and plowed clean in anywhere from 48 to 72 hours. Naturally this kicks up a lot of dust, and our air is already horrible. I am grateful that the land next door to us is no longer 40 acres of tomatoes. Once the commercial tomatoes are done, the walnut harvest will be just around the corner and then the dust gets incredibly awful. The machines go from tree to tree shaking like crazy to drop the nuts. Another machine that looks like a mini-Zamboni follows sucking up the nuts. It all creates thick plumes of dust and dirt. I, for one, am looking forward to



cold, dark winter days with some rain, but not too much rain. As long as I'm asking I might as well be specific.

And Speaking Of Tomatoes

As of today, Monday, I am putting saucing on the farm on hold. I have no idea what the air quality will be this weekend or for that matter the next few weekends to come. Here is what I am proposing, if you are scheduled to come to the farm please get in touch with me and let me know if you are still wanting to come IF conditions are good. Since we are not charging for these mini-events, I am asking everyone to order the tomatoes they feel they need for saucing. If you have a weekend confirmed with me, please order the amount of tomatoes you want for saucing for that Saturday and choose a pick up location that works best for you. We have until that particular Friday to decide if we are a go here or not. If we decide to go ahead and sauce here on the farm, I can hold your tomatoes here and not have them delivered. If conditions are not good, you can pick up your tomatoes close to your home and sauce there. I hate being so up in the air with this, but I feel there is no way to really know what conditions will be like. If you have any questions please text me directly at 530-554-3971. Thanks everyone, and remember switch to the masks that do a better job of protecting your lungs!

RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

The recipes this week are somewhat similar but they fit so well with what we have in the box, I thought to just go for it.

Pisto Manchego With a Fried Egg on Top

Recipe by Caitlin Raux Gunther from Food52

2 TB Olive Oil, plus more as needed
2 Onions, sliced thin
Sea Salt (to taste)
2 Zucchini or Yellow Squash (or one of each), peeled and chopped
3 Sweet Peppers, cored and chopped
4 cloves Garlic, diced
6 medium Tomatoes, cored and chopped
Splash Sherry Vinegar (optional)
1/2 cup Water
4 Eggs

In a large saucepan over high-medium heat, add a generous coating of olive oil. Once oil is hot, add onions, salt and continually stir. When onions are golden and some are a little singed, add squash and a splash more olive oil. Throw in a few more pinches of salt. Once the squash cooks down, add pepper and another splash of olive oil. Cook for a few minutes then add the garlic. If the mixture is getting dry, add another touch of olive oil. Keep stirring continually. Salt to taste, it should be little extra salty at this point because the tomatoes will absorb a good deal of it. By now, your vegetables should be soft and coming together. Add the chopped tomatoes, which will contribute some much-needed moisture. Cook tomatoes down until they seem to have released all of their water. Stir in a splash of sherry vinegar. After a couple of minutes, pour in a half cup of water, stir and lower heat, letting ingredients simmer together for at least 10 minutes. Salt to taste. In a medium saucepan, add a healthy glut of olive oil. Once oil is hot, crack four eggs into the pan and fry to preferred doneness. Serve pisto with a fried egg for each person and a baguette.

Garbanzo Beans with Padron Peppers and Heirloom Tomatoes

Recipe by Mandy Bora from Food52

Another great recipe from Food52 taking advantage of the Padron peppers and pairing them with Garbanzos. Hope you have some Rancho Gordo's on hand.
10-15 Fresh Padron Peppers
2 TB plus 1 tsp Extra Virgin Olive Oil
3 Heirloom Tomatoes
1 Onion
1 tsp Tomato Paste
2 cups fresh or canned Garbanzo beans
2 Garlic cloves, sliced thin
1 tsp freshly ground Cumin seeds
1 pinch Red Pepper
Sea salt and ground black pepper to taste
Remove only the hard stems from 10-15 Padron peppers, leaving the pods intact, drizzle them with just a bit of olive oil (about a teaspoon) and a pinch of sea salt, and toss them around. Place them in a hot frying pan and let them sizzle until they are blistered and just tender (about 5 minutes). (Now I recommend popping

one in your mouth -- because they are so good! -- and reserving the rest for the dish.) Next, I peel and slice three beautiful heirloom tomatoes into 8-10 wedges per tomato. Likewise, peel & slice one white onion into thin vertical slices. Salt the tomatoes after slicing with a pinch of sea salt to enhance their flavor. Heat up about 2 tablespoons of olive oil in a Dutch oven. Saute the sliced onions in the olive oil for a few minutes

until they are a bit tender, and then I add the tomatoes and let them cook together over a medium heat for a few minutes, stirring frequently. Then add the blistered Padron peppers (whole), and just a tiny amount of tomato paste. Finally, add the Garbanzo beans, 2 cloves of fresh garlic sliced very thin (or a few dashes of garlic powder), 1 teaspoon of freshly ground cumin seeds (it's fine to substitute cumin powder), a bit of spicy red pepper to taste, and salt and black pepper to taste. Cover the mixture with enough water to just cover the beans, bring everything to a boil, and simmer for at least an hour so that the beans are tender and the water reduces. Then taste and adjust the spices as needed and let everything continue to cook, if necessary, until the desired tenderness

is reached. Serve over rice.

Roasted Sausages With Grapes and Onions

Recipe by Melissa Clark

1 large Spanish Onion, thinly sliced
4 TB Extra-virgin Olive Oil
1/2 tsp fine Sea Salt, plus more to taste
1/2 tsp freshly ground Black Pepper
4 cups Red grapes (1 1/4 pounds), destemmed
1 tsp Fennel, Coriander, Cumin or Caraway seeds, lightly crushed
1 lb any Sausages, poked all over with a fork
1/2 cup Parsley, coarsely chopped
2 TB chopped Garlic Chives
2 tsp Rice Vinegar or Sherry Vinegar, plus more to taste
Heat oven to 450 degrees. On a large (13-by-18-inch) rimmed baking sheet, toss together onion slices, 2 tablespoons oil, salt and pepper, and spread in an even layer. Roast for 8 to 12 minutes, until the onions turn translucent and the thinnest pieces take on a pale gold color at the edges. After 10 minutes, add grapes, seeds and the remaining 2 tablespoons oil to pan with onions, and toss well. Spread in an even layer and nestle sausage into the mixture. Roast until sausage has browned, 25 to 30 minutes, flipping sausage and tossing grapes and onions halfway through. Transfer sausages to a platter or to individual plates. Add parsley and chives to pan with grapes and onions and gently toss (this warms up and wilts the herbs). Use a slotted spoon to transfer grapes and onions to plates with the sausages. Add vinegar to rimmed baking sheet and scrape up any browned bits on the tray. Drizzle pan juices over the grapes and sausages, taste, and sprinkle more salt or vinegar on top, if desired.

This Week's Box List

Cucumbers OR zucchini
*Onions
*Mixed Sweet Peppers
Padron Peppers
Potatoes
*Tomatoes, mixed
*Tomatoes, cherry
*Grapes
*Nectarines
Plums
*Basil
Garlic Chives

* = Items in Box for 2