



WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 21, 2020 #39/52

### It's That Circle of Life Time

Saturday, Agustin sent me this photo of 3 eggs laid by our spring flock, the 850 girls who arrived late May. About a month ago they were moved out to the field, although not yet on good pasture, but they are, at least outside, and so happy about that. Last week I asked Agustin if they had started laying yet, he just smiled and said no, not yet. Our experience with the last couple of flocks is they started laying right around the 4 month mark, and we are just about there with these girls. With our egg inventory as limited as it has been for the past several months you can imagine how anxious I am to get production going. So big yay, pullets on the way!

The chickens play such an important role on the farm. They give us eggs, chicken stock, and the very important fertility we need to grow our plants. With over 2,000 hens, they are also quite the enterprise. All of our chicken houses were in pretty bad shape, so as we eliminate old hens and empty a house, Cory and Agustin have been working on complete house overhaul. Cory has replaced the old plastic corrugated roof with brand new shiny metal corrugate. This will be much more durable, and we hope will last longer. Any boards that need replacing, Cory takes care of them. Agustin spends a couple of days power washing the entire house and its contents, and then the house gets a fresh coat of paint. When all is said and done, each house refurb runs about \$1,000.00. Looking at our latest remodel, I can tell you it is money very well spent. Funny how farming numbs you to spending a \$1000 :)

We have been really out of whack with bringing in new flocks which is why we haven't had enough eggs this year. That is partly my mistake not understanding how many and when we needed more birds, but the other problems have been not having an empty house to put new girls into because we had so many old birds. It's not so easy to get rid of well over a 1000 hens. When we process chickens for stock that only takes care of 250 birds, and we do that twice a year.

Fortunately I worked with an organization this past spring who finds homes for old hens. Over a couple of months, I think they took close to 400 hens. This week we will process 250 for stock and after that we will have only 150 to get rid of. Those girls will also go to new backyard homes. This should free up one more house so we can get another one repaired and remodeled by early next spring when we are ready for our next flock chicks.

As the circle of chicken life turns here on the farm, this past Friday we received a supplemental flock of 600



chicks. Now our spring chickens are starting to lay, and the end of the week we will process old birds for stock. Not too often you get to see it all come together at the same time. In the past many of you have helped us out by pre-purchasing chicken stock. We get more containers than I have freezer space to store. But the stock holds for several weeks in the fridge. So if any of you want to stock up on stock and help us move bunch from the fresh batch to come in the next week or so, it would be enormously helpful.

### Scenes Around The Farm

Friday the air seemed to be clearing and Saturday it was gorgeous up here. But Sunday, you could smell



the smoke again, and the haze was back. I did get a little gardening done Sunday morning before it warmed up, primarily, I cut some of the banana stalks. Two of our bananas are actually producing hands this year, although there aren't many bananas on them. Seeing those bananas grow is always exciting, and I know Nigel is keeping an eye on them too. He absolutely loved the fact that he could grow them here in Dixon, albeit, only right in front of our house. By Monday morning the sky was really hazy again, but my walk around the farm was lovely nonetheless. The San Marzanos are looking really sad, and what a disappointment that is. But on the other hand, the shishitos are super producers. I can't get over how

many peppers are on one little plant! And the eggplant plants look really fantastic, bushy and green and they have quite a lot of flowers on them. I think we will have a little more eggplant coming in. I am making Eggplant Parm for dinner tonight, so I am pretty excited about more eggplants. As I walked back toward the house I saw the guys had harvested a bin of the carnival squash for your box this week. The carnival is a cross between acorn and sweet dumpling squash. Like the delicata, you can eat the skin. We sold hundreds of these beauties to the Ritz Carlton last year for their Thanksgiving Dinner. I hope you enjoy them!

# RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

## Roasted Squash With Yogurt, Walnuts, and Spiced Green Sauce

*Recipe from Six Seasons by Joshua McFadden*

Pair this dish with a roasted Root Down Chicken, and I doubt you will want much else. If vegetarian is your

preference, maybe try these

### Chicken Fried Tofu Strips

1 1/2 cup Plain Yogurt

1 small Garlic clove, minced

1/2 tsp finely grated Lemon Zest

Salt and freshly ground Black Pepper

About 2 lbs Winter Squash

Extra Virgin Olive Oil

2 TB slightly sweet White Wine

Vinegar

1/2 recipe Spiced Green Sauce - recipe below

1/4 cup Walnuts, lightly toasted, and roughly chopped

Line a sieve with some dampened cheesecloth and set over a bowl.

If you don't have cheesecloth you can use paper coffee filters, but it will take a bit longer. Put the

yogurt in the cheesecloth and let it sit for at least 1 hour, so the

whey drains out and the yogurt gets thick and creamy. Save the whey for other uses,

like pancakes. You can do this overnight in the fridge. Mix the drained yogurt with the garlic, lemon zest and

1/4 tsp salt. Set aside. Wash the squash well, then trim off the top and bottom, cut in half and remove the

seeds. Cut into 1/2" slices. Toss the squash, either in a large bowl or directly on a rimmed baking sheet, with

2 TB olive oil and a generous seasoning of salt and pepper. Spread out on one or two rimmed baking

sheets, and roast until tender and nicely browned on the underside, 20 to 40 minutes depending on the

texture of the squash. Let the squash cool slightly on the baking sheet. Arrange the squash slices on a

platter, spoon a ribbon of yogurt on top and then sprinkle with the vinegar. Drizzle/spoon the green

sauce over the squash so it looks pretty. Scatter the walnuts on the dish and finish with a few drops of

olive oil. Serve warm or room temp.

### \*Spiced Green Sauce

1/2 tsp Coriander seeds

1 tsp Cumin seeds

Seeds from 4 Green or Black cardamom pods

1/2 cup de-ribbed, seeded and coarsely chopped fresh

Hot Green Chiles, such as Serrano (2 to 4 chiles)

1 to 3 Garlic cloves (to taste), smashed and peeled

2 cups (2 oz./60 g) lightly packed fresh Cilantro leaves

2 cups lightly packed fresh Flat-Leaf Parsley leaves

A pinch of ground Cloves

1 tsp finely grated Lemon zest

About 1 Tbs fresh Lemon juice

Salt and freshly ground Pepper

1/2 cup Extra-Virgin Olive Oil

To make the spiced green sauce, put the coriander, cumin and cardamom seeds in a dry skillet. Toast the

spices lightly over medium heat, shaking the pan

frequently, just until they become fragrant, about 4

minutes. Dump them out of the skillet onto a plate to

cool, then grind finely in a spice grinder or with a

mortar and pestle. Put the chiles and garlic in a food processor and pulse few times until they are fairly

finely chopped. Add the cilantro, parsley, toasted seeds, ground cloves, lemon zest and juice, 1 tsp salt and few grindings of black pepper. Pulse until everything is finely chopped into a coarse puree. With the motor

running, drizzle in the olive oil. Stop the processor

before the sauce is completely

blended and smooth; you want a

slightly "bitty" texture. Taste the

sauce (be careful of the blade!) and

adjust the seasoning with more

salt, black pepper, lemon juice or

any of the spices—though show

restraint with the spices, because

they can get overwhelming. Cover

and refrigerate until ready to use.

The sauce can be made up to 1

week in advance.

### Chard, Caramelized Onion, and

### Gruyère Crepes

*Recipe from myrecipes.com by Ivy*

*Manning*

I love crepes. When I was a young

girl and my mom took me

downtown to go shopping, her

favorite place to take me for lunch

was The Crepe Escape. They are

always satisfying, filling, often

meatless, but you don't miss that.

Serve with a fresh tomato salad to make a simple meal.

3/4 cup Whole-Wheat Pastry Flour

3/4 cup plus 2 TB Milk

1/2 tsp chopped fresh Rosemary

1/4 teaspoon Salt

2 large Eggs

2 TB Olive Oil, divided

2 teaspoons Butter, melted

Filling:

1 tsp Olive Oil

1 large Onion, halved and thinly sliced

2 TB Water

1 1/2 tsp minced Garlic

1 lb Swiss Chard, trimmed and thinly sliced (about 8 cups)

2 TB Pine Nuts, toasted

1/2 tsp freshly ground Black Pepper

1/4 tsp Salt

1 oz Cream Cheese

1 oz Gruyère cheese, finely grated (about 1/4 cup)

To prepare crepes, weigh or lightly spoon flour into dry

measuring cups; level with a knife. Combine milk,

rosemary, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and eggs in a blender;

process until smooth. Add flour; process until smooth,

scraping sides. With blender on, add 1 tablespoon oil

and butter. Pour batter into a medium bowl.

Refrigerate 15 minutes. Heat an 8-inch crepe pan or

nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Place 1

tablespoon oil in a small bowl. Brush a thin layer of oil

to coat bottom of pan. Pour 1/4 cup batter into center of

pan; quickly tilt pan in all directions so batter covers

pan with a thin film. Cook about 1 minute. Carefully

lift edge of crepe with a spatula to test for doneness.

Turn crepe over when it can be shaken loose from the

pan and the underside is lightly browned; cook 30

seconds. Place crepe on a clean towel; keep warm.

Repeat procedure 7 times with remaining batter and

oil. Stack crepes between single layers of paper towels

to prevent sticking.

## This Week's Box List

\*Chard

\*Tomatoes, mix

\*Sweet Potatoes

Tomatillos

\*Basil

Garlic

Eggplant

\*Onions

\*Winter Squash

Leeks

Melon, Strawberries or Cucumber

\*Valencia Oranges from Guru Ram

Das Orchards

\* = Items in Box for 2