



WEEK OF FEBRUARY 15TH, 2021 #7/52

Projects And New Adventures

There are a bazillion projects screaming for attention around the farm. One does not have to look for or create new ones because there are plenty in the queue. However, sometimes the ones you seek out or create are a lot more exciting. Because really, if all of those other projects were fun and exciting we would just do them, right? The latest project we have taken on (kind of out of necessity) is both exciting and fun.

For the past several months I have been trying to figure out how to deal with the fact that our start company has severely limited the variety of tomatoes they will grow for us. Out of the many varieties we typically grow each year, I have only 2 coming from Headstart. I have ordered those two in large quantities to make sure we have at least the basics covered. There have been loads of discussions around here about this problem, and I have talked to other farmers to hear how they are handling the situation, because it is a pretty big problem for many of us. One thing has become clear, to offer a nice/better variety of veggies we are going to have to figure out how to do some starts here on the farm. So this latest project I went looking for has been all about making that happen. We do have a greenhouse but we use more than half of it for the crazy amount of starts that come in when the Headstart deliveries arrive. This past week we got over 11,000 cauliflower starts. My initial thought was we have to keep that space available for when those orders come in. I did come up with a lot of alternative ideas, most rejected by my "advisers". Then one morning I woke up with the most obvious thought, why not clean out and fix up the back half of the greenhouse, an area we weren't really using, put in a removable divider and doors to protect the tiny little starts and use that space. Cory and I went out to assess the state of that end of the greenhouse, and it looked pretty disastrous. But once we broke the project down into steps, we realized it was pretty manageable. First step, clean out all the dead plants and old start trays. Over the years, farm detritus has piled up all around the greenhouse, so Ian and Cory spent a few days moving it out and into a "waiting for the dumpster" pile. Next, Cory and I sorted out how many tables could be salvaged. Fortunately many could and we won't need to build new ones, and at this point he has almost finished rebuilding what we need. The new side walls have gone up, and we hope the door will be put on this coming week. Cory dug out all the old dirt, and got the ground pretty evened out. This past weekend a friend of Jose brought us 5 yards of gravel. Jose is pretty



excited with all the progress we have made. The last task will be to build a removable dividing wall. One of the problems Nigel had years ago, which pushed him over the edge to stop doing our own starts, were the wild turkeys getting in and pulling the plugs out. This could be quite disastrous. We also had issues getting seeds to germinate properly, it is tough if you don't have stable temperatures and the right environment, and he always said the pH of our water was a problem. So lots of issues to address and challenges to work on overcoming. The temperature in the farmhouse is pretty constant, and I have devised a plan to germinate seeds in here. The farm house was always meant to be a working house, so I am happy and excited to use some of this space to bring little tiny seeds to life. And if all goes

well, we will have some fun items for the boxes and to sell as extras later this year. Wish us luck!

Sugar Snap Peas & Potatoes

When I was out walking the farm the other day taking my "field notes" (doesn't that sound official) I saw that the peas are growing fast and strong. I love pea shoots and I think I squealed for joy when I saw them. Funny how simple things can be so thrilling. Pea shoots in the box soon? I hope so, they are delicious. Last week Jose sent me photos of the guys planting the seed potatoes. Thursday when he came to the office to give us this week's box list, he had the biggest smile because all the potatoes were planted and we had a nice rain afterwards which was just perfect. I have come to understand that these are more than just crops that will end up on your dinner table, each veg is the result of hard, honest work that our guys take great pride in. I see the smiles on their faces when they bring the harvest in, and the excitement when they get the work done, like planting the potatoes. With the small improvements we have made around here and having the CSA at about maximum, they are really happy, they know what they do matters. Peas and Potatoes, are so much more than basic veg, and I hope you will taste that in every bite!



RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

Pancakes With Blood Oranges and Greek Yogurt Recipe fro sainsburys.co.uk

Tuesday is Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day or more likely you know it as Fat Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent and fasting. It is still tradition in the UK to eat pancakes on "Pancake Tuesday". To be clear, in this context I am not referring to the coma inducing fluffy buttermilk version we all gorge on at weekend brunch. Pancakes in the UK are more similar to a French Crepe, but a bit thicker. I found this wonderful recipe for Blood Orange Pancakes on Sainsbury's website. I hope you enjoy it!

2/3 cup All-Purpose Flour
Pinch of Salt
2 large Eggs
1 TB Sugar
1 TB Orange Liqueur
3 Blood Oranges, zested and juiced
1 cup Milk
2 TB melted Butter
1 tsp cold Butter, for frying
3/4 cup + 1 1/2 TB Honey Greek Yogurt
For the sauce
1 TB Butter
2 Blood Orange, finely zested and juiced
1 Lemon, zested
3 TB light Muscovado Sugar OR use Dark Brown Sugar
3 TB Orange Liqueur
1 Sprig of Rosemary

Sift the flour into a bowl with a pinch of salt and make a well in the center. In another bowl, whisk the eggs with the sugar, orange liqueur, orange zest, milk and melted butter to combine, then pour into the well. Using an electric hand whisk, whisk the liquid into the flour until you have a smooth batter. Heat the butter in a small frying pan until hot and foaming. Add 2-3 tbsp batter for each pancake, swirling it around the pan as you add it. The batter should make 10-12 pancakes in total. Cook each pancake for 3-4 minutes, then flip over and cook for 1 minute on the other side. As the pancakes are ready, layer them between sheets of baking paper. Melt the butter in the (cleaned) frying pan. Add the orange zest and juice, lemon zest, sugar, orange liqueur and rosemary. Bubble everything together for 5-10 minutes or until syrupy. Remove the rosemary. Put a spoonful of Greek yogurt in the centre of each pancake, then fold the pancakes into quarters. Drizzle the hot sauce over the pancakes to serve.

Leek and Kale Lasagna Recipe found on Olive Magazine's website

If you have the Box for 2 and don't have Kale this week, try a mix of Bok Choy and Arugula.

1 bunch Kale, stems removed and leaves chopped
1 TB Olive Oil

3 Leeks, halved lengthways, washed well and chopped
1 clove Garlic, crushed
12 oz Ricotta
3/4 cup Vegetable Stock
4 TB Pesto
8 sheets of fresh Lasagne
1 oz Grated Parmesan

Heat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. Drop the kale in boiling salted water, bring back to a simmer then cook for 5 minutes. Drain really well. Heat the olive oil in a frying pan and add the leeks with a good pinch of salt. Cook for 8-10 minutes or until really soft. Add the garlic to the leeks and cook for 2 minutes. Keep 4 tbsp of the ricotta aside then stir the rest into the leeks with the kale. Mix everything well then add enough vegetable stock to make it a little saucy but not watery. Take off the heat. Put a 1/4 of the sauce in the bottom of an oiled baking dish approximately 18 x 25cm. Top with 1 tbsp pesto then 2 sheets of lasagne. Repeat 3 times, ending with lasagne. Mix the rest of the ricotta with another splash of vegetable stock and spread over the top layer. Scatter over the parmesan and bake for 20 minutes until golden and bubbling.

Rosemary and Romanesco Recipe found on Food52

Sadly, our celeriac didn't grow. If you have never had it, I highly recommend it, as it is delicious! If you have some turnips hanging out in the fridge, I bet you could make a delicious "cream" out of those in place of the celeriac.

1 head Romanesco, cleaned and broken into beautiful florets
1 TB Butter (any butter will do, but this is the BEST!)
2 TB fresh Rosemary, minced
Zest of 1 Lemon
Sea Salt and ground Pepper
1 large bulb of Celeriac (celery root), cut into 1 inch pieces
1 TB Butter
1 tsp Lemon zest
Sea Salt

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Toss the florets with the melted butter, rosemary, lemon zest and salt and pepper. Roast on a lined baking dish for about 20 minutes, tossing every so often to prevent burning.

Meanwhile, in a medium pot, cover the celeriac pieces with water and bring to a boil. Reduce to a rolling simmer and cook for about 20 minutes, until beginning to smell sweet and rather soft to the touch. Drain and transfer to a high speed blender and add butter and lemon salt. Puree into a smooth cream. Serve both veggies, the Beauty and the Beast, alongside lemon-rosemary roasted chicken and a beautiful glass of wine.

This Week's Box List

*Blood Oranges from Twin Girls
Spinach
*Bok Choy
*Turnips or Beets
Parsley
Mizuna
*Romanesco
Lettuce
*Leeks
*Arugula
*Rosemary
Red Kale or Cauliflower

**Indicates Box for 2*