



FOOD FOR THE BODY & SOUL

WEEK OF MAY 10TH, 2021 #19/52



### Friendships and Connections

The other morning I heard a story on NPR about a woman who started putting water bowls out for dogs. As the pandemic raged on, it went from just water, to water and biscuits, to water, biscuits and special treats. It became such a big thing for the dogs and their owners, people were putting pics up on IG. From there they began to recognize each other, and some began to connect and walk together. And as one would expect, friendships developed. This story really touched my heart, especially at that moment because I was on my way to walk with my friend Valerie and that story was a lot like the way our friendship evolved. We first met at the Barn and Pantry when getting early morning lattes. Then occasionally we would share a table, and eventually decided we should make plans to meet for coffee one morning a week. One of those mornings we decided to go for a walk while drinking our coffee. We both felt so great afterwards we switched from sitting, chatting and coffee drinking to walking, talking and drinking. Now we go 4 mornings a week! And so a friendship and an exercise routine was born.

As those dots connected from one thought to another, I began to think about the simple ways we help our community and friendships grow. Last week I was texting with one of our members about coming up to pick strawberries. Every year Ginny brings about 25 of her friends for a Strawberry Day. In those texts trying to sort out a date and time she wrote how surprised she was that so many of her friends are now CSA members.

I laughed and told her I wasn't surprised at all, she had been bringing them up to the farm for years! And so it grows. But I wonder; can we be a little creative and help our community become something even greater, extend those connections further? Do you know your hosts? Or any of the other members picking up at your site? When I am out in the normal world I often feel like an oddball just because of the way I eat and shop. Your fellow CSA members are often kindred spirits. I am not suggesting we all need to become BFF's, merely exploring how we build and foster a deeper sense of community where we can.

The truth is simple little gestures often bring joy to a person's day, and sometimes it can start a friendship or even build a community. Some of our San Leandro members who were here a couple of weeks back, told me their hosts are so sweet they had left out bags of blood oranges, from their trees, for the members to take and enjoy. It is that kind of action that quite often makes someone's day and plays an important role in community.

Community doesn't necessarily mean you know everyone on a personal level, but it does mean you have some kind of small connection. Those little connections make our lives so much richer, like going to your favorite cafe where they know your name and exactly how you like your coffee. Thank you Barn and Pantry for always making me feel like I am at home! One of the worst things about COVID was the fact that it kept us apart from so many of our friends and families, but I think for many it also showed us how rushed and crazy our lives had been. I guess what I am suggesting is for us to find ways to make little connections. Do you have any suggestions for us? Or



perhaps you have experienced something regarding the CSA that put an extra smile on your face? I would love to see this grow into something that might once in a while make someone's day.



### Farm Update

As usual there is so much going on round here. The wind has been awful the past couple of days, blowing like crazy, which is hard on our plants. It really sucks all the moisture and life out of them. Spring and Fall are windy times around here, but this year these "wind events" seem to be more frequent and last longer. On the happier note, Elise and I spotted the first couple of little green tomatoes. The Wakefield cabbages are looking really good too, we are hoping they will size up enough before the real heat sets in. Showing up in your boxes this week are the first of the potatoes. New potatoes are such a treat and really so different from stored potatoes.

The skin is almost non-existent, so when are preparing them, don't scrub, just wash gently and use your fingers to wipe away any dirt. If you have a couple with a lot of dirt on them, soak them in water a bit then wash them clean with your hands. I like to steam these potatoes and eat them straight from the pot with butter. Several families took us up on the offer to come up this past Sunday for a Mother's Day Strawberry picking and

picnicking. It was great to see a bunch of the kids, some have been coming since they were infants. I was speaking with our Albany hosts and they were telling me that quite often their family Christmas card photo is the 4 of them in our strawberries. And so this year we took those pictures again. Their oldest daughter has started quilting and sent me a photo of one of her pieces, her family in the strawberries! If anyone would like to come up this coming Saturday I will be here. And if you would like to help with an hour or so of weeding, we would love the extra helping hands. Shoot me a text if you want to come up this Saturday 530-554-3971.



# RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

We have delicious Gold Nugget Mandarins from Twin Girls this week. Of course you can/should just enjoy them plain because they are delicious. But maybe you feel up for making a cake this week? I found this delicious recipe for [Italian Glazed Mandarin Orange Almond Cake](#) on An Italian In My Kitchen's site. It is too long to include but I did link it above. Or perhaps you prefer to stay on the healthier side of life, and will enjoy chunks of fresh mandarins in a fresh green salad.

We have lots of things in the box

to help you make a delicious, fresh salad dressing. The green garlic is transitioning to bulbs and so the stems are getting tougher and the flavor is beginning to intensify just a bit.

That being said you can throw some in the blender with the chives or basil, depending what you have, and either go in the direction of a creamy dressing using yogurt/mayo/sour cream or more of an herb-forward vinaigrette. [Full Circle](#) has a lovely recipe for a heartier salad that includes hard boiled egg slices, olives, seeds, greens and cooked grains. If you lean more to the vinaigrette side of dressing Mark Bittman says you just need 1/2 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil and 3 TB or more good Wine Vinegar, salt and freshly ground black pepper.

Throw everything into a blender and blend, add more vinegar to taste 1 or 2 tsp at a time.

## Sage Flower Simple Syrup

*Recipe from [Lester and Miya](#)*

Sage Flowers, what the heck are you going to do with those? Sage flowers have a milder flavor than the leaves so are perfect to toss into a salad. You can easily make a sage infused vinegar by filling a jar 2/3 full of the sage flowers and covering with a lighter style vinegar, maybe try Little Apple's ACV or a nice champagne vinegar. You can also make a simple syrup with them and use in cocktails. I found this recipe and if you go to the site you will also find a recipe to use this simple syrup in cocktails. They also did a Sage Flower Jelly you might try.

2 cups Sage Blossoms  
2 1/4 cups Water  
2 TB Lemon Juice  
2 cups Sugar

Clean blossoms. Bring water to boil and pour over the blossoms in a heat-safe bowl. Cry a little when the beautiful purple blossoms turn brown. (Remember this part?). Add the lemon juice now. Rejoice when the blossom-water turns pink! (This part will never get old). Steep overnight. Strain through a jelly bag if you have it, or in my case a **tea filter bag**. You should have about two cups of liquid. Bring the liquid and sugar to a full rolling boil. Ladle into jars with 1/8 inch headspace and process for 10 minutes.

## Asian Tuna Steak Salad

*Recipe by Jaimie Oliver from [5 Ingredients](#)*

The original recipe calls for Edamame, but as we have Sugar Snap Peas, I am substituting those in. If you like to cook very simply, this cookbook is great, each recipe is based on 5 main ingredients, and sometimes a few extra items we always have on hand.

1/2 lb Radishes, keep the leaves  
2 tsp pickled Ginger  
2 tso Soy Salt  
12 lb Snap Peas, tops and strings removed and cut in half to make nice chunks  
2 1/4 to 1/3 lb Tuna steaks

Finely chop two radishes with the ginger, then dress with the soy sauce, 1 TB of olive oil and 2 tsp water sandpit aside. Very finely slice the remaining radishes with their leaves. Blanch snap peas until bright green. Heat a pan to medium high. Rub the tuna with 1 tsp of olive oil and a pinch sea salt and black pepper, the ear for 12/ minutes on each side, so it's blushing the middle. Dived the peas and radishes between your plates, half-treat the tuna and place proud on top, then spoon over the pickled ginger mixture, drizzling all the juices around the plate. Finish with 1 tsp of olive oil.

## This Week's Box List

\*Turnips or Radishes  
Green Garlic  
\*Snap Peas  
\*Sage Flowers  
\*Chard  
Potatoes  
\*Lettuce  
Red Kale  
Strawberries or Oranges  
\*Chives or Basil  
Leeks  
\*Gold Nugget Mandarins from Twin Girls Farm  
  
\* indicates Box for 2

## Chard Saag

*Recipe found on [food.com](#) by Sdowsell*

I love saag paneer, and you can add paneer or potatoes to this recipe if you like. The author recommends folding them into the mixture along with the garlic and ginger.

1 bunch Chard, stems removed  
8 TB Vegetable Oil OR 8 TB Ghee  
2 medium Onions, minced  
2 TB Vindaloo Curry Paste  
1/2 cup Water  
2 cloves Garlic, minced  
2" fresh Ginger, minced

Finely chop chard leaves (or process). Set aside. Heat fat in heavy bottomed sauté pan at medium high. When it is hot, add onion and saute until transparent. Add chopped chard and let wilt. Add vindaloo and reduce heat. Simmer covered, stirring occasionally, for 10-20 minutes or until desired consistency is reached. If you find the mixture is getting dry, add water. After simmering, raise heat and add garlic and ginger. Stir and heat for 5 minutes. Serve with Naan.