



FOOD FOR THE BODY & SOUL
WEEK OF MAY 24TH, 2021 #21/52



Sweet Potatoes

This morning (Sunday) the crew came out at 6 am to put the sweet potato slips into the ground. Today is day 7 for them, so they get bonus pay, and it is well worth it. It takes all hands to get these little guys in the ground quickly in the cool of an early morning before the sun finds its



strength and beats down hard. In under two hours the project is complete and irrigation is running. I am beyond relieved the wind is calm today, and the temps are sweetly mild. It seems every year you can count on harsh winds when we plant our sweet potatoes, which is really hard on the plants. And hooray for nearly perfect conditions for the next week!

As a crop, sweet potatoes are tricky. Sometimes you see lush gorgeous plants but not much is happening underground, or you will find giant honkers and then a few really small guys. Because they are such a problematic crop, many of the CSA farms like Full Belly and Terra Firma gave up on them years ago. Nigel was always so proud of his Dianes, he would never dream of not growing them. Funny, I never liked sweet potatoes until I met my farmer and now I would never dream of giving them up! So a little bonus for being an Eatwell CSA member, you get sweet potatoes in a few months!



So what is a sweet potato? Well, they are *not* related to potatoes, although they too originated in the Americas, and they are *not* yams, yams come from Africa. The sweet potato is actually considered a root vegetable, although often referred to as a tuberous root vegetable. Whereas potatoes are actual tubers. The sweet potato is part of the Morning Glory family. Sweet potato plants are started from plant slips, small stemmed plants, whereas the potato starts out from cut potatoes, as the potato itself is part of the reproduction process. Even though we have several months

before they will be ready, it is exciting and comforting knowing they are all tucked up snug in our warm soil. And in the meantime we have our glorious potatoes to enjoy!

Guess Who Came To Dinner

Last week my step-son Andrew came down from Full Belly to pick up some sweet potato slips for the interns' garden. For you newer CSA members, my late husband Nigel had identical twin boys, Andrew and Eric. Andrew worked with us as our CSA manager before Elise, and then headed up to Fully Belly to do their intern program. Since he was making the drive down I promised to make him mac n' cheese for dinner and of course we went for a long walk around the farm. It was great seeing him and showing him some of the changes we have made here, and of course it was fascinating hearing stories of what he is doing up at Full Belly. Andrew is working quite a bit in their greenhouse and is finding he has a great love for that work. Funny coincidence, as this is my first year sowing seeds and doing starts, I have found I really love it too! Walking around we had lots to share, he told me the aphids have been a terrible problem for them this year. Here we are seeing loads of ladybugs, more than I remember ever seeing, and, fingers crossed, the aphids won't so bad for us this year. It was a great walk n' talk session and so much fun to see him and hear about his experiences this past year!

Lavender Harvest

Lavender buds are forming, so that means it is time to schedule our Lavender Harvest. I am definitely planning one for the weekend of June 19th and 20th. This is a working weekend, we start early in the morning, breakfast at 7, work starts at 8. We break for lunch and then back at it for another couple of hours. Sunday morning we start all over again. Most folks come out for both days, camping on the farm, usually Friday and Saturday night. The way it works is the crew will harvest the lavender into bins and bring it up to the pizza garden where we will work on making bunches to hang for drying. This is a great family weekend if your kids are on the older side and able to work. It is also a very important weekend for us, as the dried lavender is sold by the bunch, the buds are used in our salt, macerated in oil for scrubs, massage balm and salves. Please let me know right away if you are interested in joining us. It is a great weekend to bring some friends out too. And quite possibly might be the only organized overnight on the farm this year. Shoot me a text if you are interested in joining us, 530-554-3971.



RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

Mashed Potatoes and Fava Beans

Recipe from *Martha Stewart*

This recipe calls for unshelled favas, in case you have never cooked with them before what that is referring to is the skin that forms around the actual bean, not the pod.

1 1/2 lbs Gold Potatoes
1 cup Buttermilk
1 TB Unsalted Butter, melted
3/4 tsp Salt
1/4 tsp freshly ground Black Pepper
1 lb unshelled Fava beans (about 1 1/2 cups)

Place potatoes in a small stockpot, cover with water, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium high, and gently boil until tender, about 40 minutes. **The recipe says to simmer the potatoes 40 minutes, I think that is far too long, I would try 10 minutes, test and then determine how much longer you need.** Drain in a colander. Using a towel to hold the potatoes, peel while still hot. Pass them through a potato ricer or a food mill into the top of a double boiler or a large heatproof bowl. Meanwhile, fill a small stockpot or bottom of a double boiler about a quarter of the way, and bring to a simmer. To the riced potatoes add the buttermilk, butter, salt, and pepper; mix well to combine. Cover the bowl, and place over simmering water to keep warm. Meanwhile, split fava-bean pods lengthwise with your fingers, and remove beans. Bring a small saucepan of water to a boil, and add beans. Cook until beans are very tender, about 3 minutes; drain. Peel one end of each bean, squeeze gently to pop bean from skin; discard skins. Roughly mash half the beans, and stir into potatoes. Serve immediately garnished with the remaining whole fava beans.

Wakefield Cabbage = Sauerkraut

This past winter I greatly missed having cabbage in the box, so I am beyond thrilled to see the Wakefield is sizing up nicely and has a good heft. Over the years I have made countless massive pots of heavily seasoned sausages like chorizo, with a full head of cabbage plus leeks or onion, green garlic and whichever bunches of greens I have on hand. I love this over rice or noodles or just as it is. The cabbage is ridiculously sweet and when cooked low and long it just melts, oh sooooo good! The other cabbage item I have really missed this year is homemade Sauerkraut. Once you know how to make your own you won't want store bought. Starting small and simple, you can make a small batch with just one head of cabbage. It is very manageable and hopefully it will get you into the world of making your own kraut. Here is what I do:

You will need a scale. I always measure in metric, because it is so much easier to increase or decrease recipes and figure out your salt percentage. Don't forget to get the tare weight on your bowl. Remove the outer leaves of the cabbage, cut in half and remove the core in the center. Shred cabbage thinly. I often cheat and just use a large knife and slice as thin as I can.

Weigh your shredded cabbage, then add 2% salt. You can go as low as 1.5% and as high as 2.5% salt. I do 2% because it is easy for me to remember. So if you have 100 gm of cabbage add 2 gm of salt. Now for the work, massage that salt in or pound it with a kraut pounder until the juices are released and you have a good amount of brine. Then put into a jar and weight down to cover cabbage with brine. If you are doing a small batch with one cabbage, put the salt/cabbage mix into a wide mouth mason jar.

Using the handle end of a wooden spoon start pounding the cabbage until your cabbage is completely covered in juice. During the fermentation process you need to keep the cabbage under the liquid at all times to keep it from spoiling. There are some really great tips at culturesforhealth.com. I leave my jars on the counter and each day I open and punch the cabbage down. Doing this every day also gives you the chance to smell what is going on and in a few days you should notice the start of that delicious "sauer" scent. The time it takes for your kraut to sauer will depend on how warm or cool your house is. I find with our cabbage, it typically goes pretty quickly, sometimes in just a few days, but my house is typically warmer than most houses in the Bay Area.

This Week's Box List

*Potatoes
*Lettuce
*Green Garlic
*Cabbage
*Peaches or Strawberries
*Chives
*Collard Greens
Red Mustard or Bok Choy
Red Kale
Chard
Fava Beans
Oregano

** indicates Box for 2*

Southern Style Collard Greens

Recipe from pbs.org courtesy of *Fresh Tastes*

A few years back for our Lavender Harvest weekend I decided to make Black Eyed Peas and Collards. But I wanted it to be a vegan dish, so I came up with the idea of smoking the collard greens. If you have a way of smoking, I highly recommend this, it is delicious and imparts that smokey flavor we get from the meat. Collards are so hearty and kind of chewy you can skip meat entirely when give them some time on a smoker. Here is a meat version, but you could also try using Fakin' Bakin' made from tempeh, although I find it does not impart as much smokey flavor.

2 large bunches Collards, roughly chopped and stems discarded

3 slices hickory smoked Bacon

2-4 cups water

1 Yellow Onion, minced

1/3 cup Dark Brown Sugar

2 cloves Sarlic, minced

1 1/2 tsp Salt

2 tbsp Apple Cider vinegar

Hot Sauce, to taste

Black Pepper, to taste

Fry the bacon in a large heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat until just done but not quite crispy yet. Add the onion and collards, and sauté in the hot grease until they wilt. Pour the water in the pot, it should just cover the collards. Add the brown sugar, minced garlic, apple cider vinegar, salt and a few dashes of hot sauce. Bring to a boil then cover, reduce heat to low and simmer for 3 1/2 - 4 hours. Season with additional salt, hot sauce and pepper to taste.