



WEEK OF AUGUST 2ND, 2021 #31/52

### Feeling Fulfilled

Can you believe it is August already? For some reason I always think July is a little slower but that is really never the case, that's just wishful thinking on my part. With the end of June and the month of July, there are many different things going on, we dig up what's left in the potato field, tomatoes saucing starts, aromatics, like lavender, are distilled with countless trips to Sonoma and back, it is pretty hectic. Over the past 10 days I have had 3 different tomato saucing



events here at the farm house, did the Sonoma and beyond drive twice, and had a tv crew here to do a bit about our communal saucing. All in all, it has been a pretty fulfilling week.

This morning (Sunday morning) I cleaned up what was left from yesterday's saucing event, and now I am enjoying some quiet time, in the shade, in my front garden. Out here in the garden, I'm cooking down a bit of sauce leftover from yesterday, and grateful that it is not inside the house steaming up the kitchen. There is an indescribable sense of satisfaction and joy in seeing loads of filled sauce jars. Like a pile of wood, neatly stacked before winter, a cupboard with rows of jarred summer sunshine tells you, "I will survive those, cold, dark months." But you know, there is more to saucing on the farm than just having loads of jars put up for winter; cooking communally makes it all the

more special. This past Saturday we had about 10 folks here, set up in the front of the house, chopping, cooking and pureeing. I decided to make this a morning of just cooking, so we didn't actually can, because that takes a lot more time. With so many hands we got through 300 lbs in just a few short hours. Everyone packed up as



much sauce as they could handle and headed back home to finish it off how they preferred. We were done before the day got too hot, which was wonderful. It was fun to have folks I have never met before come out to farm, and experience something most people never get to do, cook together in a group. Communal cooking gets the work done faster and easier, many hands and all that. But you don't have to come to the farm to do something like this. If you belong to a place of worship that has a big kitchen, maybe you could organize your own event? They typically have giant pots and nice commercial stoves too. If you can get a group together, I would be happy to walk you through the process. Our tomatoes are coming in strong right now, so if you would like to organize a saucing event of your own, please let us know.

*Last Thursday I included the following in our email. I am re-posting it because your opinions and feedback are really important to me and not everyone reads the Thursday email:*

It wasn't long ago that filling up our vans cost somewhere around \$40.00 per trip, per van. Today we are looking at \$75 per van, per trip. And of course diesel to run the pumps and tractors has gone up significantly, and we are now in summer pricing for PG&E. Today I opened a bill from one of our vendors and they are adding a 4.9% fuel surcharge on all deliveries, which kind of shocked me. All of our costs keep going up; the increase in fuel cost is one that always seems to poke you in the eye. At the number of boxes we are delivering currently, with all the vacation holds, just the difference in our gas cost works out to .43 per box. Growing organic fruits and vegetables is quite costly, and getting hit with these extra costs hurts. But here's the thing, I know we are all in the same boat, you all are paying more for gas too, and who knows what extra charges you are paying for because of rising costs. Do I raise the price on the box, maybe .25 to cover part of the difference? Or maybe set up a donation option to help offset the increase in expenses, that way people can give if they can and give what feels comfortable, and if you can't, you don't? What are your thoughts? Eatwell is not a small farm, nor are we a big farm, we are kind of in this weird in between zone. Unlike the big CSA's, we do not have a large wholesale business as a primary source of income that balances out these costs. Our focus remains our CSA. Wanted to throw this in the mix as well, we offer a lot of extra items, coffee, flour, vinegars, meat, butter/cheese, granola, rice, Rancho Gordo beans, plus all of our available fruits and vegies. When you order those extras from us, rather than buying them at a store, that alone increases the value of our truckloads significantly. Those extra purchases make a really big difference for us and it is an easy way for you to help out the farm and get some of the best food the Bay Area has to offer. I really appreciate your consideration on this, and thank you to the folks who already responded! Text me 530-554-3971 or email us at [organic@eatwell.com](mailto:organic@eatwell.com).

# RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM ELISE

## Stir-Fried Eggplant and Chiles with Basil

Recipe adapted from *Bon Appetit*

2 hot **peppers** (*Serrano would probably be better than jalapeño flavor-wise, and if you want a milder heat level, you could use one small bell pepper instead*)

1 tbsp honey (*try Pleasants Valley from our friend Clay*)

Salt to taste

2 large **eggplants**

3 tbsp olive oil

1/4lb ground meat (pork, chicken, or beef—try Avdis) or crumbled tofu

3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced

1 tsp toasted sesame seeds

1/2 c **basil** leaves (*plus more for serving*)

2 tbsp rice vinegar

2 tsp tamari or soy sauce

Finely chop peppers (coarsely is fine if using bell pepper) and toss in a small bowl with honey and salt. Let sit until ready to use. Slice eggplants crosswise into 3" pieces, then quarter lengthwise. Heat 2 Tbsp. oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high until shimmering. Cook eggplant, tossing occasionally, until browned and crisp-tender, about 6–8 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Heat remaining 1 Tbsp. oil in same skillet. Cook meat, breaking into small pieces, until browned, about 2 minutes. Add garlic and sesame seeds and cook, tossing, until very fragrant, about 1 minute. Add ½ cup basil leaves and toss until wilted, 2–3 minutes. Stir vinegar and tamari into chile mixture. Return eggplant to skillet and add half of sauce. Cook, tossing often, until eggplant is tender, 1–2 minutes more. Season with salt if needed. Transfer eggplant stir-fry to a plate and drizzle with remaining sauce. Top with more basil.

## Soft Polenta with Blistered Tomatoes, Kale, and Yogurt

Recipe adapted from *Heartbeet Kitchen*

5 c water

1 c coarse ground polenta (*Try polenta from Bayview Pasta*)

Salt and pepper to taste

2 tbsp olive oil

1 spring onion, thinly sliced (*white part w some green is fine*)

1 pint **cherry tomatoes**

3 cups torn **kale** leaves (*my guess is this would be delish with collards too*)

3/4 c whole milk yogurt

2 tbsp butter

In large saucepan, bring water to a boil. Whisk in polenta and 1 tsp salt. Turn heat to low. Polenta should be barely simmering. Stir occasionally so polenta doesn't stick to bottom. While polenta is cooking, heat olive oil in a medium saucepan to medium high. Add onion and cook for 4 minutes, until translucent. Add tomatoes, cook for 10 minutes on medium, until they're bursting. Add kale leaves, stirring to coat. Cook

## This Week's Box List

\*Basil

\*Tomatillos

\*Eggplant

\*Tomatoes

\*Cherry Tomatoes

Parsley

Bell or Hot Peppers

Zucchini

\*Lemon Cucumbers

\*Plums or Nectarines

Potatoes

Collards or Kale

\* = Items in Box for 2

on low for 5-8 minutes until kale is wilted. Stir approx 1/2 tsp S&P into the mixture. After 35 minutes, polenta should be thick and creamy. Remove from heat and add yogurt and butter. Whisk until completely smooth. Spoon polenta into bowls and top with tomatoes and kale, then add extra dollop of yogurt and drizzle with olive oil to serve.

I've been watching *High on the Hog* on Netflix, which is a documentary series about the influence of African cuisine on food in the United States. It's very informative and integrates a lot of cultural history (as food always does) and storytelling; I recommend it! It's inspired me to look into more

African-style dishes that I haven't explored before, and I'm including one below that I plan on trying out this week some time.

## Chipsi Mayai (Tanzanian-Style Chips and Eggs)

Recipe adapted from *Mayuri's Jikoni*

*This Tanzanian street food is often paired with a kind of tomato salsa/sauce called Kachumbari which is very simple to make.*

For the Chips/ French fries:

3 medium **potatoes**

oil for deep frying or for oven baked chips

For the Omelette:

4 large eggs

1 medium **tomato** finely chopped

1 small onion finely chopped

2 tbsp coriander

1-2 hot **peppers** finely chopped, optional

2 tbsp oil

Salt to taste

Peel the potatoes and cut into long wedges not too thick or too thin. Keep the chopped potatoes in the water till required. Heat oil for deep frying in a wok or large deep frying pan. Remove the chopped potatoes from the water, pat them dry on a kitchen towel. Add to the oil slowly and fry till done. Keep the chips on the side till required. Mix chopped onion, tomato, coriander and chilis in a bowl. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a small frying pan. I made two separate omelettes as 1 big one would have been difficult to flip. Break two eggs in another bowl.

Add ¼ tsp salt and whisk it. Add half the chopped onion tomato mixture it in and whisk again. When the oil is hot add half the amount of chips to the pan. Make a thin layer of the chips in the pan. Let it cook a bit till its a bit crispy. Pour the omelette mixture over it. Lower the heat. Cover the frying pan and let the omelette cook. When you see the edges are beginning to curl up slightly, very carefully flip it over. Let it

cook for a few seconds and serve immediately with some kachumbari. Prepare the second omelette in the same way.

Didn't quite have enough room for this Grilled Scallops with Plum & Tomatillo Salsa recipe, but it looks so fresh and flavorful for an easy but sophisticated backyard grillin' dish— I was too excited about it not to at least talk it up a little. And here's couple more suggestions if ya need 'em:

Ginger Cucumber and Peppers

Parsley and Lemon Cod with Zucchini Salad

Cucumber-Basil Smoothie