



WEEK OF AUGUST 16TH, 2021 #33/52



Papa Ramon Cleaning Garlic

Garlic is a crop that gives so much. Early in the spring we harvest the tender stalks, and as it matures a bit, we harvest the tender bulbs. After that, the individual cloves begin to develop and define, and finally, grow into a beautiful, fragrant head of garlic. At that point we have to harvest it all and allow it to “cure” for a couple of weeks. We fill well ventilated crates to store during this process, then eventually trim the stems off. The other day I came across Papa Ramon working on that time consuming task. He was nicely situated under one of our big trees, completely surrounded by dry, papery garlic stems. It was quite the picture.

Experiments

After last year’s disaster of planting the organic strawberries in November (which is when those starts became available to us), I decided to go ahead and tempt fate, buck the standard timing of strawberry planting in our region, and plant in early April. We normally plant the following year’s starts in July or early August at the latest. April was well out of the accepted norm, and definitely not when any of the farms around us plant. But I

thought maybe it could work, and if we have bad fires later in the summer, it will be one less big project the guys will have to do in smokey air. As things go in farming, the week we planted we had a heat wave AND our pump went down. The guys literally rigged a hose to irrigation pipe and dribbled water on our tender tiny strawberry crowns. What a way to start a crazy experiment! But I can tell you one thing I have learned from living on the farm, nature wants more than anything to survive and thrive. Plants fight like crazy to grow, and that is what these little strawberries did. After a few weeks they bounced back and we could see lots of new growth. Over the past few months they have grown quite vigorously, beautiful lush green mounds, but no flowers and therefore no berries, until now.

I was out there yesterday and was beyond excited to see loads of baby strawberries, promising juicy deliciousness to come in the next couple of weeks!



This was my first year sowing seeds for our own starts. It is, literally, something I have never done before. Naturally, seeing little sprouts pop up after we spent hours putting tiny seeds into trays of soil, was very exciting. It felt like I had brought many lives into this world. I have to say, it is pretty amazing that a tiny tomato seed turns into a big bush loaded with fruit just a few months later, which we then get to eat and enjoy like a special reward. Some of the starts Elise and I worked on were San Marzano tomatoes, from old seed packs we found leftover from years ago, and Hansel and Gretel eggplants. Our San Marzanos are loaded with fruit, but are taking an eternity to ripen! And the Hansel

bushes are loaded with long, gorgeous, more of a Japanese style, eggplants. I did not see any of the Gretels, which are similar to the Hansel, but white. Sometimes I wonder if seeds get mixed up in the packs, regardless, Elise and I are very excited to watch our babies grow!

Tomato Dinner At Millennium

Just a heads up, Millennium has scheduled their annual Tomato dinner, August 26th. This is a pre-fixe dinner and will feature many items from Eatwell Farm. Over the years, I have attended this special dinner many times, and it is never a disappointment. Owner/chef Eric Tucker is truly a visionary in the vegan gourmet world. I know several members have come out for this dinner, perhaps this year it is your turn? I would love to fill the house with Eatwell CSA members, it is a dinner you will most likely never forget, even if you are an omnivore, the flavors and innovation is exceptional. And their location in Rockridge is really beautiful, plus it is a very easy BART ride from SF and only a short walk from the station to the restaurant. I hope to see many of you there!



RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM ELISE

Grilled Stone Fruit with Basil-Wine Honey and Ricotta Salata

Recipe adapted from [Adventure Kitchen](#)

1/4 c dry white wine or dry vermouth
1/2 c honey (Try Pleasants Valley)
Small handful of **basil** leaves
3 fresh **nectarines** (or **plums** will work)
A couple tbsp high-heat oil such as canola
2 oz crumbled ricotta salata cheese

Set up the grill for high direct heat. Preheat and scrub grates. Make the honey sauce: In a small saucepan, simmer wine over medium heat for 5 min w/ lid off. Turn the heat to low and stir in the honey, followed by basil leaves. Let the mixture steep together for 30 minutes while you prep the rest of the dish. Cut nectarine in half and remove pits. Brush the cut sides with oil. Lay them cut side down onto the grill and close the lid. Check fruit after a few minutes. Turn them over when they develop nice grill marks, close the lid again until they're finished, usually 10-15 minutes but this will vary. Nectarines are done when they are caramelized and slightly softened. Cut each nectarine in half again so you have quarters. Arrange on a serving platter. Strain the solids from the sauce and drizzle over the nectarines. Sprinkle the cheese over everything and garnish with extra sprigs of basil.

This Week's Box List

*Basil
*Plums or Nectarines
*Parsley
*Potatoes
*Cherry Tomatoes
*Tomatoes
Eggplant
Zucchini
Sage
Cucumbers
*Lunchbox Peppers
Tomatillos

* = Items in Box for 2

2 medium **tomatoes**, diced
3 tbsp coconut milk
1 tbsp chili paste
1 tbsp fish sauce
2-3 tbsp lime juice
1 clove garlic, finely grated or minced
2 hot chilis (Thai chilis would be traditional but using some Serranos you have leftover would still be good!)

1/2 tsp sugar
2 tbsp lemongrass, finely chopped
2 tbsp dried shredded coconut, toasted
1/4 c roasted peanuts, coarsely ground
1/4 c onion, small diced
1/4 c cilantro or parsley, chopped
Rice Crackers, Tortilla or chips of your choice for serving

Put diced tomatoes in a strainer set over a bowl; let sit for about 15-20 minutes to drain off excess liquid. (Tip: do this first before you prep all your other ingredients, and by the time you're ready to mix, the tomato will be ready to go!) Do not discard the liquid yet, you might need it to adjust the consistency at the end. Reduce coconut milk in a small pot until thickened, remove from heat and let cool slightly. Add chili paste to the coconut milk and stir until combined. Add fish sauce, lime juice, sugar, garlic and chilis;

stir to mix. In a mixing bowl, combine drained tomatoes, lemongrass, toasted coconut, ground peanuts and red onion. Pour the dressing over and stir to combine. Taste and adjust seasoning with more lime juice as needed. When ready to serve, you can add some of the tomato liquid back in if you feel it needs a bit more liquid. Stir in chopped cilantro and serve with tortilla chips or rice crackers. Or use as a salsa to serve with fish, shrimp, or even chicken.

I don't know about y'all but the heat wave over here has me craving a constant supply of fresh snacks and cold beverages. Here's a few ideas for tasty spreads, dips, and drinks for these August afternoons...

Russian-Style Eggplant Spread (Baklazhannaia Ikra)

Recipe adapted from [Natasha's Kitchen](#)

2 lb **eggplant**, peeled and diced
4-6 lunchbox **peppers**, diced
2 to 3 medium carrots, grated (Have you tried the carrots from Terra Firma?—yum)
1 medium onion, finely diced
3 medium **tomatoes**
S&P to taste
Canola oil or olive oil to sauté

Place large non-stick pan over medium/high heat and add 3-4 tbsp oil. Add eggplant and saute, stirring occasionally until softened and moist (15-20 min), add more oil if needed to keep from sticking. At the same time in separate large skillet, add 2 tbsp oil, pepper, carrots, and onion. Saute until golden and softened (10-15 min). Combine with eggplant. Add tomatoes, season with salt and peppers, reduce to low. Cover and simmer for 1 hour, stirring occasionally. It is done when there is no liquid pooling and the mixture is a spreadable and still somewhat chunky consistency. Serve with crusty bread.

Thai-Style Coconut Tomato Dip

Recipe adapted from [Hot Thai Kitchen](#)

Additional Recipes and Ideas:

Williams Sonoma Potato & Pepper Frittata
Creamy Tomato Basil Zucchini "Linguini"
Ricotta Stuffed Lunchbox Peppers
Cucumber-Tomatillo Gazpacho
Walnut, Tomato, and Sage Pate

Cucumber, Lemon, and Sage Sipper

Recipe from [Not Not Nutritious](#)

This delicious beverage can be enjoyed by anyone, but cucumber definitely pairs well with gin, so if you subbed out some of the water for some Hendrick's, that would be a lovely, light summer cocktail.

1 c ice
2 c sparkling water
2 c **cucumber**, diced
1/2 c lemon juice
1 tsp lemon rind
2 tbsp **sage**, finely chopped
2 tsp sweetener of choice (I would recommend agave nectar for this one)

Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until well mixed. Serve over ice and garnish with cucumber or lemon slices and a sprig of sage