



WEEK OF OCTOBER 4TH, 2021 #41/52

Changes to Our Routines

It's early Sunday morning. I get up to make my "start of the day" pot of tea, then open my curtains to look at the sunrise. In the distance, where I should see the sun, I see orange tinged smoke. That prompts me to check the AQI on my phone, it says fair. For now, the smoke is only in the distance. After several years of very long fire seasons, I realize just how much this has become a part of our accepted routine, just like checking the weather, we now look for the AQI as if it was something we always did.

Change happens all the time, and in farming, particularly organic farming, it makes what we do really challenging. This past weekend at the market I spoke with a couple of farmers about the water situation on their farms, both have wells that are running dry. We are fortunate to be located where we are because Lake Berryessa, for the time being, is still an excellent source of water. But for the Torosian's, who are farming down in Dinuba, they now can only drip irrigate three rows at a time, of their 150 rows of orchard. That is all their well can handle at the moment. And Bill, from Everything Under The Sun, who farms down the road from us, doesn't have access to the canal, his well is getting really low. This summer he has been piggy backing off of Terra Firma's canal access. After the water discussion, Bill told me about his tomatoes that set and grew but just won't ripen. He's been farming a long time and can't figure out what is going on. Spending a few minutes with him in his stand, talking over problems and looking for solutions, it is oddly comforting hearing that I am not the only one who is struggling to figure things out. The climate is changing, and that is creating all kinds of problems most farmers have not dealt with before. Little changes create far reaching ripples.

I snapped this photo about an hour later on my way into town. Finally could see the sun.

Saying Goodby To Cory

A couple of weeks ago was Cory's last official day driving for us. Cory first started working at Eatwell back in 2008 or 2009. He was with us for a few years, then took an opportunity to raise sheep and goats for cheese out on the coast in Sonoma County. After several years working on a few different ranches, he moved back to his home town of Sacramento and has been here helping me out since just before Nigel



passed. Cory has been someone I have relied on for advice, for fixing things and building things. He has worked on all kinds of projects around the farm, and as drivers left he filled those spots. Cory has solidly kept our farmers market stand going for a good while now, giving me the time to be on the farm so members could come up to pick strawberries, sauce tomatoes, or just hang out.

Like Nigel, he is someone who is always interested in learning something new. For a good while he was raising quail on our farm. Some of SF's better restaurants were buying the majority of his eggs and meat birds. We had just been talking about and exploring ways for him to expand his operation on the farm when the pandemic hit and the restaurants closed. Losing his customer base he had to make the difficult decision to stop the quail business. But his partner Tam has been growing flowers on our farm for a couple of years now, and the two of them have worked together growing that business. Their flower business has expanded from just a couple of rows to many and now in two locations on the farm.



Driving CSA deliveries is not a job people do for life. And as sad as I am to lose him, I do know it is his time. Cory has many gifts, but it is his reliability that I will miss the most. It is a rare trait to find in a person, someone you

know you always can count on. He brought me peace of mind, and for that I am truly grateful. We wish him the best of luck in all his new projects.

RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM ELISE

Cous Cous with Fennel, Chard, and Chick Peas

Recipe adapted from Anchor Run Farm

1/2lb (1 1/8 c) chickpeas, soaked in 1 quart water for 4-6 hrs
1 bu **chard**, stemmed, leaves washed and coarsely chopped
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 medium **onion**, chopped
1 **leek**, white part only, cleaned and sliced ; or a second onion chopped
2 medium **fennel** bulbs, trimmed (save fronds), cored and chopped
2 large garlic cloves, minced
1 tsp coriander seeds, ground
1 tsp caraway seeds, ground
2 tsp cumin seeds, ground
1 tbsp harissa (more to taste; substitute if harissa is unavailable), plus additional for serving
1 tbsp tomato paste dissolved in 1/2 c water
Salt to taste
1 1/3 c couscous

Drain the chickpeas and transfer to a large pot. Add 1 1/2 quarts water. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer one hour while you prepare the remaining ingredients. Tear the chard leaves off the stems. Wash the stems and dice. Wash the leaves thoroughly and chop coarsely. Set aside. Chop the fennel fronds, and set aside. Heat the oil over medium heat in a heavy casserole, Dutch oven or, if you have one, in the bottom of a *couscoussier*. Add the onion, leek, fennel and a generous pinch of salt, and cook, stirring, until tender, five to eight minutes. Add the chard stems, and stir together for a couple of minutes until they begin to soften. Add the garlic and ground spices, and stir together for 30 seconds to a minute until the garlic is fragrant. Add the harissa or cayenne and the dissolved tomato paste, and stir together for another minute or two. Add the chickpeas with their cooking liquid, plus another cup of water if you think there should be more liquid in the pot. Stir together, and bring back to a simmer. Add salt, cover, and simmer 30 minutes to an hour until the chickpeas are thoroughly tender and the broth fragrant. Stir in the chard greens and chopped fennel fronds. Simmer 10 to 15 minutes, until the greens are very tender and fragrant. Remove from the heat. Taste and adjust seasonings, adding salt, garlic or harissa as desired. Cook cous cous according to package directions. Serve in wide bowls, top with the stew and serve.

Grilled Sweet Potatoes with Jalapeño Honey

Recipe adapted from PA Produce

4 **sweet potatoes**, unpeeled
S&P to taste
Pinch of cayenne pepper
1/4 c canola or vegetable oil
1/4 c fresh whole cilantro leaves (or **parsley**)
1 c feta
1 c **jalapeno** honey

For jalapeno honey: Place 2 cups local honey, 4 jalapeños, 1 tbsp red pepper flakes in a saucepan and place on low heat until honey is melted. Place in refrigerator overnight before using.

For the sweet potatoes: Par-cook the potatoes, place in a pot of salted water and boil until fork-tender; let cool completely

before slicing. Slice each potato lengthwise into quarters or eighths depending on size. Preheat grill to medium-high or place a cast iron grill pan over med-high heat. Mix 1 tbsp salt and cayenne together. Brush the potato wedges with oil and season with salt, cayenne, and pepper. Grill until desired grill marks are acquired and just cooked through (about 1 1/2 min per side). Serve warm with a drizzle of jalapeño honey, crumbled feta, and cilantro leaves.

Chinese-Style Savory Pancakes

Recipe adapted from Honest Food

This recipe is a little labor-intensive, so make sure you have the time for making dough and letting it sit before getting started. It's worth it!

2 3/4c all-purpose flour
1 c hot water
2 c minced **leeks** and/or **garlic chives** (can also use onion but leeks & chives are preferred)
1 tbsp salt
Sesame oil for brushing, about 2-3 tbsp
Peanut or other veggie oil for frying

Put the flour in a large bowl and mix in salt. Make a well in the center. Bring the water to a boil, then turn off the heat. When the water stops bubbling, pour it into the well in the flour. Stir together with a fork until you get a shaggy mass. Wipe the goopy flour off the fork and knead the mass into an elastic dough, which should take only 3 to 5 minutes. Put the dough into a plastic bag or wrap it and let it sit for 30min to 2 hours. Take the dough out

and cut it into four pieces. Put three of them back in the plastic. For a work surface, you can use a baking sheet flipped over and light oil it with vegetable oil. Roll out the piece of dough into a roughly rectangle shape. Paint the dough with sesame oil, then sprinkle with about half a tsp of salt. Sprinkle minced leeks/chives over the dough generously, leaving about 1/2" free space on all sides of the dough. Roll the dough into a tight log starting from longer side of the rectangle. Slice log in half and pinch close the ends. Take half of the log and roll it tightly into a snail-shape. Flatten the snail with the palm of your hand. Cut free the snail and place it to the side between two pieces of parchment paper. Squash it with a rolling pin to about 1/8 to 1/4 in thick. Continue this with the remainder of the dough. Now fry the pancakes in a tbsp of hot oil in a large pan. You can continue to roll and flatten while you fry, like an assembly line. Cook the pancakes for about 2 min on each side. Serve by themselves or with soy or a sweet-spicy dipping sauce. These pancakes will keep, wrapped in a paper towel, for a day or two in the fridge.

This Week's Box List

*Chard
Cucumber or Green tomato
*Fennel
*Leeks or Onion from TF
Jalapeno Pepper
Potatoes
*Sweet potatoes
*Melons
*Basil
*Parsley
Garlic Chives
Valencia Oranges from Guru Ram
Dass

* = Items in Box for 2

Additional Ideas...

Sesame Cucumber Salad
Oven-Roasted Potatoes and Fennel
Basil Oil for Drizzling
One-Pan Garlic Butter Salmon
Turkish Potato Casserole