



WEEK OF FEBRUARY 14, 2022 WEEK 7/52

### What's Happenin' On The Farm

Well, the wind is howling again, and it's cold. But the farm and the crew are busy. Monday Roberto started working on the sections where we typically plant our basil. Even though it is not ideal to churn up the soil in this much wind, we don't have much choice. We have to get beds ready for plants that are due to arrive later this week. Our greenhouse is all cleaned out, and actually looking pretty good. When I compare it to how it looked a year ago, it is quite the transformation. It is empty



and waiting for our starts to arrive nearly weekly for the next several weeks. Due to arrive this week are more winter type veggies, followed by the start of summer crops like tomatoes.

Out in our mini-greenhouse the artichoke seeds Zach had sown are popping out. It is just so

exciting to watch that happen. A week ago I was carefully studying all the trays, hoping and praying we hadn't blown it by putting them out there instead of starting them inside the house. We have had some cold mornings, but I have faith



in nature. And you know seeds really want to burst to life.

As I got down close, did I see soil pushing up a bit? Was that a green leaf popping out? Or was it a weed? Just a couple of days later, indeed you could see the action. By the end of the week we had artichokes sprouting. This morning I was thrilled to find the San Marzano seeds are shooting out as well!



We need to get more trays

sown, but our supply of these old seeds is a bit limited, and I wanted to make sure we weren't blowing it putting them outside in the greenhouse this early. Last week I made spaghetti using last summer's San Marzano sauce. Looking at these tiny little first signs of life, all I see are tomatoes wanting to go into my saucing pot later this summer. San Marzanos always take forever to grow, bear fruit and ripen. I think they are the slowest of all the tomatoes we grow, so getting a jump earlier in the season I hope will mean we will have saucing tomatoes sooner. After sowing more SM's we want to try some of the old Copia tomato seeds Nigel had saved. They were always Eric and Andrew's favorite tomato and developed in Napa at Copia. Maybe we will get a nice crop and we can save more seeds and the Walker boys can have some for their new farming adventure next year!

Going through Nigel's old store of seeds, Zach found this note in the bag of Copia seeds: *1st pick of second Copia. Lots on plant, smaller than N01CP01. Beautiful coloration and mostly round fruit. Tasty indeed. There was a GD black widow on one of the tomatoes, it scared the f'n s\*\*t out of me.*

Seeds are life in storage. Sometimes an unexpected gift from the past. I hope some of Nigel's old seeds will be a gift we can all enjoy later this summer.



# RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

## What To Do With Loads Of Fennel

No rain, too much wind and too many squirrels, are not making for a happy farm. I apologize that our pickings are on the lean side, but it is also the leanest time of year. Later this week I hope Zach and I can go out and find some options to make the box better next week. In the meantime, this is what we have to play with so let's have some fun and make the best of what this season brings us!

I'm sure most of you have some fennel still in your fridge and more coming this week. So what do you do with it all? Last week I pulled out many bunches, plus some old turnips I had in the cooler and decided to play with the French technique of Confit. If you don't know what that is Kenji Lopez Alt gives a great and thorough explanation on the site [Serious Eats](#). Basically you are slow cooking meats or vegetable submerged in fat, at a low temperature. You also store it under that fat. Cooking completely under fat (oil in this case) creates a barrier to keep out inhospitable bacteria. For me, I was looking for a way to use up a bunch of stuff I had in the house. And from this Fennel/Turnip confit I made a creamy soup and eventually a sauce for ravioli. Here is what I did:

First take the frond and long stocks off the fennel and any outer layers that are funky, then slice the bulbs. For the bigger ones I cut them in half and then did thin slices. Wash, tip and top turnips, and if you need, peel them. Cut in half and then slice. Put everything into a heavy bottomed pot and completely cover in oil. I put a lid on my pot, turned the heat on medium and cooked for at least an hour, until fennel and turnips were completely silky soft. At this point you can put it into a container, making sure everything is covered in oil and store in the fridge. But I made soup and here is what I did for that:

2 cups of stock, chicken or vegetable OR water with veg bouillon cube or two.

2 or 3 Spring Onions, no green tops, thinly sliced

2 cloves Garlic, roughly chopped

1 TB Oil for sautéing onion and garlic

1/2 to 1 cup Cream

Fennel/turnip Confit

Salt, Pepper to taste

Fresh Rosemary and Parsley, finely chopped

Heat the oil and sauté the onion and garlic until glassy. Add a cup or more of the fennel/turnip confit and heat in the pot with the garlic and onion. Mix well then add the stock, bring to a simmer and cook for a few minutes for all the flavors to merge. Add salt and pepper and maybe a pinch or two of the chopped fresh rosemary. Puree with immersion blender. Turn the temp down to low and add cream. I found I didn't need that much cream. Adjust seasoning before serving.

Sprinkle a bit of chopped parsley and or a bit more rosemary on the bowl.

## Soup to Pasta Sauce

A few days later I took my leftover soup and turned it into a sauce for ravioli. First I washed well a bunch of spinach, chopped it a bit, then cooked it some water until it was tender.

Add some of the fennel/turnip soup, heat a bit then puree. This would be delicious on ravioli or tortellini and don't forget the Parm!

## Mandarin Orange Salsa

Recipe by Lisa Bryan on

[Downshiftology](#)

4 Mandarin Oranges, peeled and segmented

1/4 cup diced Red Onion, use spring onions

1/4 cup chopped Cilantro

1 Jalapeno, deseeded and finely diced

2 TB Lime juice (from one lime)

1/4 teaspoon Salt

Once you've peeled and segmented the mandarin oranges, slice each segment into quarters. In a small bowl, stir together the oranges, red onion, cilantro, jalapeno, lime juice, and salt. Serve with tortilla chips or use as a topping on grilled seafood.

## Skillet Rosemary Chicken

Recipe from Food Network Magazine

3/4 pound small Red-skinned Potatoes, halved, or quartered if large

Salt

2 sprigs fresh Rosemary, plus 1 TB leaves

1 clove Garlic, smashed

Pinch of Red Pepper flakes

Juice of 2 Lemons (squeezed halves reserved)

2 TB Extra-virgin Olive Oil

4 skin-on, bone-in Chicken breasts (6 to 8 ounces each)

10 ounces Cremini Mushrooms, halved

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F. Cover the potatoes with cold water in a saucepan and salt the water. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and cook until tender, about 8 minutes; drain and set aside. Pile the rosemary leaves, garlic, 2 teaspoons salt and the red pepper flakes on a cutting board, then mince and mash into a paste using a large knife. Transfer the paste to a bowl. Stir in the juice of 1 lemon and the olive oil. Add the chicken and turn to coat. Heat a large cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken, skin-side down, cover and cook until the skin browns, about 5 minutes. Turn the chicken; add the mushrooms and potatoes to the skillet and drizzle with the juice of the remaining lemon. Add the rosemary sprigs and the squeezed lemon halves to the skillet; transfer to the oven and roast, uncovered, until the chicken is cooked through and the skin is crisp, 20 to 25 minutes.

### This Week's Box List

\*Rosemary

\*Lettuce

\*Fennel

\*Spring Onion

\*Lemons OR Oranges

\*Parsley

\*Gold Oak Mandarins

Cabbage OR Romanesco

Mustard OR Mizuna

Spinach OR Pea Shoots

Turnips

\* = Items in Box for 2