



WEEK OF JANUARY 1ST, 2018 #1/52



Happy New Year

Here we are, 2018!
I remember looking forward to 2017, eager to put 2016 behind us. If ever there was a time or words I could take back, well that would probably come in on top. As I write this article I am sitting in Nigel's parents kitchen. It is Friday and we fly to France Saturday morning to

spend New Year's at Ellie's. I find it hard to be excited about a new year; moving through the milestones of the year on one's own. Intellectually I am looking forward to learning more about farming, getting through my first CCOF inspection, and the mountains for paperwork that happens at the start of a new year.

Cameron, Noelle and I are exploring ways to increase our sales and find new opportunities to meet and connect with more of you. Some of the ideas we have are kimchi and kraut classes. And after two weeks in England, I am keen on hosting tea parties either on the farm or in your home. I have so enjoyed the teas here in England, and I think it could be a very fun way to enjoy the bounty of the farm.

The holidays in general are a time to be with family, and that is exactly what I have done. Nigel's parents have been so generous and kind, putting us all up. Their home of two is currently a house of 10! We have shared a lot of laughs, a few tears, many hours of games, far too much food, a delicious turkey dinner on Christmas, celebrated Nigel's birthday and then Thora's (Nigel's mum) 80th! Got to spend time with the brothers, sisters, aunties and uncles a niece and nephew, and of course, our kids. What a blessing to have such a wonderful family to get through such an emotional time. We find strength with one another.

The kids and I enjoyed a serious Farm Future planning meeting at Ottolenghi in London. As a family farm, even though most of the kids are far and wide, it is very important to me that we can all connect occasionally. We started planning this year's lavender harvest, assessed all of our delicious Ottolenghi dishes for potential newsletter recipes, and talked a bit about Nigel's memorial in June. I wonder if I could make an Ottolenghi lunch an annual meeting? A girl can dream:)

One thing this year has taught me is we should never take our time for granted. Resolutions or not, I hope we all can take a good, realistic look at our lives, commit to what is important, whittle out what is not, hug each other a little more, spend more time with those we care about, less time on social media, selfies never make anyone happier. From me personally, to you our CSA family, I ask that you try to make it up to the farm at least once this year. Connecting with the land that produces the food that nourishes you is a blessing we Northern Californians should not take for granted.

I wish you all a happy, but most importantly a healthy New Year!



Harvesting by Hand

On a farm like ours there is a tremendously us amount of hand work. Nigel did an amazing job finding equipment that was appropriate for a farm like Eatwell, not big, but also too small, and one that grows a tremendous variety of crops on this one farm. The job of researching has fallen through us. Cameron has already found a handheld lettuce harvester that Jose is interested in. The problem we have to sort out will be weed control. Realistically, that is a problem we have to deal with regardless. In the meantime, getting veggies to you every week still requires a dedicated crew, hands-on in the field.

Strawberries and Chickens, Written By Nigel

This time last year, Nigel wrote a story about Strawberries and Chickens. This is something I have been wondering about recently. Perhaps Nigel and I talked about this, and that's why it was rolling around in my brain? After last year's rain, I am reluctant to move the chickens onto an area we would absolutely have to move them out of quickly. But perhaps the solution is to run the gees through? The more I look at the weeds all around the farm, the more I come to realize we need more geese. — Lorraine

"The strawberry plants are dormant, taking a break for the winter and getting ready for the spring. This is last years crop which we will harvest again this spring then plant a new crop to replace it on another part of the farm. Last year, we put the chickens on some old strawberry



beds to scratch away the leaf debris so that we could remove the woven plastic mulch. As we moved them down the field where they had been the week previously, the strawberry crowns regrew. So I am thinking that I will try that for a very short period on this years crop. It will make the berries easier to pick and increase airflow around the plants reducing the risk of disease. My concern is that it rains heavily we cannot move the house and they damage the plants and future crop. Farming is a gamble, I have no need to go to Vegas, I gamble every day on the farm..." — Nigel



RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LIZ Y.

Fennel Stew

Adapted from Heidi Swanson's *Near and Far*

2 small or 1 large fennel bulb, cut into thin wedges (reserve the fronds)
1 generous pinch of saffron
Fine grain sea salt
¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
2 small yellow onions, cut into ¼ in slices
2 medium leeks, washed and trimmed into ¼ in slices
3 small garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1 pound cooked corona beans or other white beans
⅓ cup dry white wine
2 cups warm water (or bean broth from cooking)
To serve:
Feta or goat cheese
Chopped oily black olives
Lemon wedges
A handful of well-washed spinach leaves

Bring a small pot of well-salted water to simmer, cooking the fennel wedges until tender, a couple of minutes. Place in ice bath to stop cooking, drain well and set aside.

Meanwhile, use a mortar and pestle to grind the saffron with a ¼ tsp sea salt. In a large, heavy pot over medium heat, combine the olive oil with the saffron salt and heat until fragrant, just a minute or so. Add the onions and cooking, stirring regularly, 10 minutes or so, until tender and silky-you don't want browning here. Stir in leeks and garlic, cook for another few mins, until leeks soften. Stir in beans and wine. Add water or broth to cover beans and bring to a gentle simmer for a few mins. Just before serving, stir in fennel wedges and a pinch of the reserved fronds. Top each bowl with any or all of the remaining suggested serving additions.

Serves 3-4

Radishes and Nori Butter

Adapted from Heidi Swanson's *Near and Far*

1 bunch radishes, sliced (if small french breakfast type, leave whole)
1 sheet of nori
½ cup unsalted butter, at room temp
¼ tsp fine-grain sea salt
1/4 tsp lemon zest
4 tsp toasted sesame seeds
¼ tsp ground cayenne pepper
½ tsp ground toasted cumin

Wash and trim the greens from the radishes, dry well, slice and arrange on a plate.

To make the compound butter, start by toasting the nori. If you have a gas burner, you can carefully wave it across the flame until it brightens and crisps up. Alternately, you can toast it in the oven at 350 on a baking sheet or on a skillet. Let cool, then crumble and chop into the smallest flecks you can manage. Set aside.

In a bowl, cream the butter using a spoon until light, then add the nori, salt, lemon zest, sesame seeds, cayenne, and cumin. Stir until all of the ingredients are evenly distributed. Serve with the radishes.

Makes ½ cup Butter

Risotto with Cabbage, Lemon, and Parsley

Adapted from Janet Fletcher's *Fresh from the Farmer's Market*

This is one of my favorite cabbage dishes to make in the winter. It is so warming and creamy and a definite crowd pleasure in my house. I like to reserve veggie waste each week from cooking (ie..the peeled discards from carrots, onion ends and skins, green tops of leeks, leafy celery tops, turnip tops, etc..) and add it to a bag I keep in the freezer as my "veggie-stock-in-the-making". When the bag fills, I dump the frozen bits in a stock pot, cover with water and add bay leaf and some coarsely ground peppercorns and simmer 1-2 hours before straining. I like to use homemade veggie stock in this dish instead of the suggested chicken broth, but of course both are delicious. Also good, with sauteed fresh mushrooms on top.

2 tbsp unsalted butter
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 onion chopped (or 2 small leeks, chopped)
1 green cabbage, thinly sliced (the thinner the better!)
Salt and fresh ground black pepper
4 ½ cups chicken or veggie broth OR 2 cups broth and 2 cups water
1 ½ cups arborio rice
½ cup dry white wine
¼ tsp grated lemon zest, or more to taste (if you don't have lemons, try a tiny bit of orange zest)
2 tbsp minced italian parsley
¼ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese

Heat butter and 2 tbsp olive oil in a large saucepan over moderate heat. Add onion and saute until soft and sweet about 10 mins (if using leeks instead, lower heat and stir, making sure not to burn). Add cabbage, season with salt and pepper, and toss to coat. Cover and cook until cabbage is tender, about 15 mins. Check occasionally to make sure it is not burning and adjust heat accordingly.

Bring broth water mixture to a simmer in a saucepan and adjust heat to keep it barely simmering. Uncover pot with cabbage and raise heat to moderately high. Add rice and cook, stirring until wine is absorbed. Begin adding hot broth ½ cup at a time, stirring frequently and waiting until each addition has been absorbed before adding more. Adjust heat so that mixture simmers gently, not vigorously. It should take 20 to 25 minutes for the rice to become al dente-firm to the tooth without a hard core. The mix should be neither soupy nor stiff. You may not need all of the liquid or you may need more, if so, use boiling water.

When rice is done, add remaining tbsp olive oil, ¼ tsp lemon zest, the parsley and the cheese. Stir vigorously, then taste and adjust seasonings. You may want more zest, but the taste should be subtle.

Serves 4

This Week's Box List

**Items in Box for 2*

*Spinach

*Cabbage

Bok Choy

*Broccoli

*Romanesco or Cauliflower

Fennel

Turnips or Radishes

*Leeks

*Pomelos

Oranges

*Raisins