



WEEK OF MARCH 6TH 2017 #10/52



This Year's Event Season

The last few years we opened all the events to the general public. Our hope was to get as many people on the farm as possible to experience what we do here, and maybe some of them would become members. It is a wonderful thing sharing what we have created here on this land with people, especially those who live in the City. Promoting and managing such large events is a lot of work, but I can tell you it was a lot of work when they were small. The small events became too much for just Nigel and I to manage. With Nigel's illness we knew we couldn't run the events on our own anymore so we decided to create an actual position for someone and really expand the events to make it worth their while. The past couple of years we have hosted literally thousands of people. Something we could not have managed without the hard work Emily and Connie have put into making those days happen. But there was something missing, the intimacy and connection we have with members at smaller events. So when the three of us met last week to set the dates we decided to go back to the original style - events for members, and their guests, and if there is space, Eatwell Alumni and their guests. No worries, you can still bring Aunt Betsy and the neighbors down the street. We just aren't opening up to the general public. I really hope everyone will make it up for at least one event. Tickets will still go through Brown Paper Tickets. Connie will let you know when they go live, but here are the dates.

Strawberry Days on the Farm

Sunday, April 30th; Sunday, May 7th; Sunday, May 14th; Sunday, May 28th

Lavender Harvest Weekend

Friday, June 9th - Sunday, June 11th

Summer Solstice Sleepover and Garlic Braiding Party

Saturday, June 24th - Sunday, June 25th

Tomato Sauce Canning Party and Sleepover

(Tentative Dates)

Saturday, July 29th; Saturday, August 5th; Saturday, August 19th

Pumpkin Party

Sunday, October 15th



Spring Planting

Our spring plants have arrived from Headstart Nursery. We were holding off receiving them due to the extremely wet fields. They arrive in these large bins and the trays are placed under our shade structure until they are transplanted into the fields.

Chicken Update

A few years back we embarked on the journey of breeding and raising our own hens, and of course with hens come roosters. One of our members was at BarnRaiser and she suggested we get the ball rolling by raising the initial \$23,000.00 with the help of their crowd funding program. It was a great success, which got us started in the world of breeding the heritage "Black Australorp" chicken. Full of good intentions, we bought all of the breeder flock, hatching equipment, the breeder houses, and jumped in. Not too long into the project Nigel went through another round of cancer, which left Agustin, our top chicken guy, essentially on his own to run it all. We are now at the end of our second winter with the Australorps and find ourselves facing some really hard facts. Hybrid layers have been bred to produce eggs year round. Yes production goes down in the winter, but they still lay. In past years, Nigel always managed winters by bringing in flocks at precisely the right time to have enough eggs to cover the farm's needs (the CSA and Farmers Market). We knew the production would be even lower with the Australorps, but we didn't expect them to essentially stop laying from mid September to the beginning of March! With Nigel unavailable to help out and organize a hybrid flock in time we have really suffered this winter with a severe shortage of eggs.

Fortunately, our friends at Riverdog Farm helped out when we didn't have enough eggs for all of the CSA subscriptions. You can not imagine what a disaster it is when members don't get eggs!

The second half of hatching your own birds comes in the form of roosters. The roosters - aka meat birds have brought their own set of challenges. Unfortunately, as much as Nigel and I love the taste of our heritage meat birds, they don't put on weight very fast, which means they cost a fortune to feed and bring to maturity. We are a small producer so the cost of processing is \$4.00 per bird. That is strictly what we pay the processor, it doesn't include the time for the guys to load the roosters, someone to drive down and back twice (once for delivery and then again to pick up), and it certainly doesn't include the cost of feed. As crazy as it may sound, at \$9.00 a lb we are maybe breaking even.

Facing the reality of \$4000.00 feed bills every three weeks, we can't afford birds that don't lay eggs in the winter. But when you have committed so much energy and heart, not to mention time and money (the initial \$23,000 only covered the hatching end of things) we realize we must make the hard decision and step back from breeding, at least for the time being. We have a flock of hybrid layer chicks coming in the next few days. They should be in high gear for next winter. Nigel is determined to not let the shortage we have experienced these last two years happen again next winter. So onward we go, learning all the way and always, that is just life as a farmer.



Kaleifornia

I have spent a lot of time hating on kale. I mean *really* hating on it. Stemming from my childhood when my Dad would boil it (literally boil it) into submission with none of the lovely flavors (or techniques) you find in actually good recipes for greens, for years I've suffered a dread of it appearing on my plate.

And this is so unfortunate because kale is really quite lovely when handled properly. A little time and attention, and you've got an ingredient that works in a variety of ways. You can bake it into chips, add it to breads or soups (or bread soup!), puree it into a smoothie, juice it, cook it down with some lovely bacon, or just have it in a super delicious salad.

And that's what I have for you today. Now, I know kale salads are out there in abundance, but this kale salad is a little different. It's going to take you some time to put together but it's totally worth it. It's flexible enough to accept a range of ingredients from your box, and you can adjust it to your tastes and the season. This round has the last potatoes/sweet potatoes/butternut you have lingering from the winter, but come spring feel free to use radishes, raw peas, blanched green beans, or whatever else you have in the fridge that strikes your fancy.

Note: This makes a lot of dressing (about 1 cup) but don't worry, it holds a long time in the fridge and it's great on everything!

Amie's Kale Salad for All Seasons and Occasions

Shallot Vinaigrette

Adapted from Serious Eats

1 shallot, peeled and minced fine
 1 sprig of green garlic, white and pale green part, sliced or minced fine
 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
 1 tablespoon water
 1 teaspoon honey
 ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil
 Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Put everything into a jar with a tight fitting lid. Shake vigorously until emulsified. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Vinaigrette will keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Honey Glazed Radishes or Turnips

www.food.com

6 T butter
 1 large shallot (diced) or the Spring Onions from your box
 3 lbs radishes or turnips (trimmed and cut in halves or quarters)
 1/3 C water
 1/4 C broth or Eatwell Farm Chicken Broth
 1 T honey
 1/4 t salt
 1/4 t pepper
 2 T mint leaves, thinly sliced and additional to garnish
 1 t chives (diced)

Melt butter in skillet over medium high heat. Add shallot and cook for 2 minutes. Add radish or turnips, stir. Stir in water, broth, honey, salt and pepper. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and cook for 15 minutes. Uncover and cook 7-10 additional minutes, until most of the liquid has evaporated and veggies are 'glazed'. Remove from heat and stir in diced herbs. Garnish with mint leaves.

THE Kale Salad

by Amie

This feeds 2 very hungry people as a meal, or four people as a side. Feel free to increase or decrease components depending on your taste. Reserve the final dressing if you want to pack it for lunch the next day, and I like this with a little baked marinated tofu or chicken on top (it's really not great with beef, pork, or fish/shellfish).

1 recipe shallot vinaigrette (previous recipe)
 1 bunch kale
 2 cups roasted vegetables (butternut, potato, sweet potato, turnip, rutabaga - your choice)
 1 cup cooked grain (wheat berry, farro, barley - again your choice)
 ½ cup toasted pumpkin seeds
 ¼ cup dried fruit (cranberries or raisins)
 A few tablespoons good quality olive oil
 Kosher salt
 Optional: 1 cup diced roast chicken or baked marinated tofu

In a small bowl, place your cooked grain (the Eatwell wheat berries are excellent in this). Pour ¼ cup of the shallot vinaigrette on and toss to coat. Don't skip this step. The grain will soak in the dressing, and you won't overdress your salad.

While your grain is settling, wash your kale and remove the tough stems. Dry it, and chop it fine. Place in a large bowl, and pour 1 tbsp olive oil and a sprinkle of salt on it, and give it a good massage for a minute until all the leaves are coated and feel nice.

Add the grain to the kale, and add another ¼ cup of the vinaigrette. Toss to combine and divide into serving bowls. Top with the roasted vegetables, toasted pumpkin seeds, and dried fruit. A few chopped herbs, a little watermelon radish, or other colorful fresh veg would be lovely here for contrast if you have some available. If you are adding protein, now is the time.

Pour yourself and your favorite dining companion a glass of something, and dive in while relishing the bounty of your CSA.

This Week's Box List

**Items in Box for 2*
 *Dandelion Greens or Red Kale
 Carrots (Terra Firma Farm)
 Cabbage
 *Stir Fry Mix
 *Radishes or Turnips
 *Spring Onions
 Green Garlic
 *Chives
 Mandarins
 *Tangelos
 Lemons (Twin Girls Farm)

Roasted Cabbage with Bacon

www.thekitchn.com

I was reminded by a member how good roasted cabbage is and when I came across this recipe, I thought it was a nice touch to add the bacon. Enjoy!

1 head of cabbage, outer leaves removed
 Olive oil
 salt and pepper
 4 slices thick bacon, 6 to 8 oz

Heat the oven to 450F. Cut the cabbage into quarters and slice the bottom of each quarter at an angle to partially remove the stem core. Cut each quarter in half again so you have eight wedges. Lay these down on a large roasting pan or baking sheet and drizzle very lightly with olive oil. Sprinkle generously with salt and pepper.

Cut each slice of bacon into small strips and lay on top of the cabbage.

Roast for 30 minutes, flipping the cabbage wedges once halfway through. If the edges aren't browned enough for your taste after 30 minutes, put them back in for 5 minute increments until they are.

