



WEEK OF MARCH 9TH 2015 #10/52



Show us some farm love!

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Nigel Update

So as many of you know I am at UCSF medical center getting treatment for my cancer. Everyone on the farm is doing a great job while I am away. Many of our key crew members have been with us a long time. I have always made sure they were trained well, and now it is paying me back dividends.

I have finished all my treatment but still have to get strong enough to come home for the final recovery. My doctor says I will be fine for the strawberry days on the farm. He knows about these because some of his support staff are long time members of the farm. So you can rest assured I am getting the very best care.

A big thank you for all the cards and chocolates etc. Yes, I can be bribed with chocolate. I have not the energy so far to thank you all but am hoping to see many of you on the farm in May and through the summer at all our farm events. Please remember your Eatwell farm membership is so much more than just the produce you receive from us. Please take advantage of all the opportunities we offer to visit the farm. - Nigel

Precision Farming and Permaculture

We get all the agricultural magazines delivered to the farm whether we like it or not. The big talk these days is using GPS to control tractors. The accuracy achieved can be quite incredible over many hundreds of feet of row. This means that cultivating and planting can go faster. Over the past five years we have been getting help from our neighbors to set up our beds with one of these Satellite controlled tractors. We cannot afford or need one.

Jason drove one of our delivery trucks and many other duties on the farm several years ago. He now works for a software company which controls earth moving equipment. He is using his skill driving these machines to test and problem solve what the software engineers produce. He is also helping us map the farm accurately on the computer. This will help us know exactly where all our underground pipes are located, and where every tree or variety of vegetables are. On our journey to take the farm into permaculture we will need this as there will be many more varieties planted, particularly trees.

The cost of the technology is coming down so this starts to make sense for us. Jason spent last Saturday putting in survey monuments with Jose. We have a reference point on the wall of the irrigation canal to work on. They then put in five more around the farm which will enable us to get an extremely accurate map. I can then, when I have a faster computer, do design work on the farm for the future. - Nigel



Right Tools For The Job

I have to admit that I have had to accept a little ribbing from some of my fellow organic farmers for all the fancy European farm equipment I have. I have shown some of them why I invested the time and money but alas no one has gone down this road so far. My original day job 33 years ago was as an engineer so I like machines that work well and do the job intended. So does our crew. If I took the German made finger weeder away from Ramon, I would hear about it very soon as our crew does not like hoeing and we have had to do very little of it since getting this machine.

The latest purchase was this planting machine from Italy. It was expensive but it enables us to get plants in the ground fast, get them watered sooner, and is way more comfortable for everyone to use. Our tractors are built in Europe even though they are an American company, and the engines are much more fuel efficient than your regular tractor here running on 3 gallons of fuel per hour compared to five for the same size tractor. This alone over the life of the tractor has saved us a considerable sum of money.

A few weeks ago Lorraine and I had the pleasure of spending time with one of the leading organic advisors in the State, Bob Cantisano. Last fall he spent several days at the Italian farm equipment show where farmers from all over Europe get to see all the new toys. He was very impressed and started to tell me how they were 10 or maybe 20 years ahead of us in California. He came home with lots of ideas and is starting to spread them amongst his clients. So now maybe I will not seem so strange to my fellow organic farmers.



WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS!

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Recipes and Menu Suggestions

Main Course Crunchy Cabbage Salad, Celeriac Chips served with Green Garlic Aioli

Uses: Cabbage, Beets, Blood Orange or Pomelo, Cabbage, Lemon and Dill for salad dressing (you can use the Yogurt Dill Sauce from the Salmon recipe), Celeriac, Green Garlic for Aioli dip

Chicken Piccata served with Spinach, if you want a carb I always enjoyed a simple rice pilaf

Uses: Lemons, Spinach

Pan Seared Salmon Fillets with Yogurt Dill Sauce and Sautéed Greens, the Celeriac Chips would be good with this meal as well

Uses: Dill, Green Garlic, Any or a combination of All this week's Greens including Beet and Turnip Tops

Mock Potato Salad and Burger

Uses: Turnips, Dill, Lettuce on your Burger

All recipes can be found at: www.eatwell.com under the "CSA Farm Box" tab. Just click "Recipes."

Chicken Piccata on Sautéed Greens

When I was a young adult my friends and I would often have dinner at Little Joe's, Baby Joe's. Back then their statement of "Rain or Shine, there's always a line!" was actually true. This is where I enjoyed my first Chicken Piccata, and I have been making it ever since. It is a great use of lemon and tastes so good with greens that are simply sautéed or cooked in just a tiny bit of water. Even though at Little Joe's they served this with pasta, I always found this recipe so flavorful and satisfying that I enjoyed it best without a carb dish, but rather really enjoyed it with simply cooked spinach, kale or broccoli. I don't have a really solid recipe since I usually eye it.

1 lb. Chicken Breast, most people pound it out to be very thin I cheat and slice it thinly
Flour, Salt and freshly ground Pepper for dredging
A good amount of minced Garlic
Olive Oil
Butter
1/2 cup Dry White Wine, maybe more I usually just pour it in
1/2 cup Eatwell Farm Chicken Stock, you might use more if you want your sauce thinner
Juice from 1 Lemon
Salt and freshly ground Pepper to taste
Capers

In a large skillet heat about 2 TB olive oil with 2 TB of butter on medium high. On a large plate mix flour with some salt and pepper. Dredge the chicken pieces in the flour, then fry in the hot oil/butter. Cook the chicken until golden, flip over and cook the other side until golden. Adjust your temp up or down so as not to burn it. When the chicken is cooked remove to a warmed platter and keep in a warm oven. If you are cooking the chicken pieces in batches you might need to add more oil and butter. Once all the chicken is cooked and a bit more butter and garlic and sauté until the garlic is just beginning to turn golden. You don't want to burn the garlic! Then slowly add the chicken stock and wine to the pan, whisking all the while. It should thicken up some from the residual flour from the chicken, add the lemon juice. If it isn't thick at all you can slowly add bits of butter whisking quickly. You can pour the sauce over the chicken and top with capers or keep the sauce separate.

Mock Potato Salad

From *Mediterranean Paleo Cooking* Caitlin Weeks

This looks like a great use of Turnips, although Emily and I are still stuck on Cream of Turnip Soup!

About 2 lbs Turnips, peeled and cut into bite sized pieces
Fine Sea Salt and freshly ground Black Pepper
1/4 Aioli (you could use Nigel's Green Garlic Aioli recipe)
1 tsp Dry Mustard
2 TB Apple Cider Vinegar
1/2 cup fresh Cilantro leaves OR use the fresh Dill instead
1 medium Red Onion, minced (optional)
(Recipe continued to the right...)

City Girl to Cowgirl

It's Sunday and the farm is blanketed in a quiet that just doesn't happen during the week. There are no tractors running, no people, and no music from afar. I just came in from giving Stella a bath, not an easy task given her size of over 17 hands. Spent an hour combing out her mane, all the time sitting up on the rails of her stall so I can reach the top of her head. As I was washing and brushing her I realized this is why young cowgirl/tomboys don't play with dolls. They don't need to, they have their horse, and let me tell you, that is WAY better!

After horsey bath and grooming I put Stella out on the pasture so she could run around with HelenMay and MayBelle (our two Guernseys). As soon as I let her out she kicks up her heels, gives a toss of her head and my big beautiful girl is off and running.

I walked the field, the portion the cows and Stella don't currently have access to, needing to check out how well the grass is growing. Kalina and I moved their fencing last Thursday but they are eating through that fresh grass quickly. We were talking the other day about what a satisfying feeling you have moving the fence. It isn't hard work, it just takes a little bit of time. When the job is done and it's time to let them back out, I can't help but laugh when the cows are running and kicking up THEIR heels! Seeing those big animals chomping down on fresh grass, well, it's just sweet.

I milk HelenMay a few days a week, the other days our friend Anne milks. The two of us are learning all about cows and milking. A couple of weeks ago while I was out in the barn with HelenMay I thought to myself I am becoming a "cowgirl", milking my cow, taking care of our heifer, loving my horse, enjoying the deep satisfaction of walking our small pasture. How in the world did this girl from West Portal end up here? City Girl to Cow Girl, wow, that is some accomplishment! - Lorraine

These recipes will help you use

everything in your box

Spinach
Lettuce
Dill
Beets
Green Garlic
Cabbage Red or Green
Red Kale
Celeriac
Mustard Red or Green
Turnips
Lemons (Twin Girls)
Pomelo or Blood Oranges (Twin Girls)
Mercot Mandarins (Twin Girls)

Pan Seared Salmon with Yogurt Dill Sauce

Martha Stewart

1 cup plain Yogurt
2 TB chopped fresh Dill
2 tsp Lemon Zest
1 TB Extra Virgin Olive Oil
1 TB Butter
4 4 oz Salmon Fillets
1 TB Oil
3 stalks Green Garlic, finely chopped including a good portion of green tops
2 cups cooked mixed Greens, Mustard, Kale, Turnip or Beet Tops, Spinach
Salt and Pepper, to taste

In a medium bowl combine the yogurt, dill, lemon zest and olive oil. Mix well and set aside. In a large sauté pan, melt butter and sear salmon fillets on medium-high heat, flesh side down, for about 3 minutes. Turn the fillets over and cook for about 3 minutes more. Place fish on a warm serving plate. Heat oil; sauté the green garlic until fragrant, then add the mixed greens. Season with salt and pepper. To serve, arrange greens around fish fillets and spoon yogurt sauce over fish. Serve warm.

Mock Potato Salad Continued

Place the turnips in a stockpot, cover with water and bring to a boil. Boil the turnips until fork-tender, about 20 minutes. Transfer the turnips to a bowl and let cool for 5 minutes.

Make the dressing: In a small bowl, mix together a pinch of salt and pepper and the aioli, dry mustard, vinegar and cilantro or dill. Add the red onion, if using, to the bowl of turnips. Add the dressing and toss well to coat. Serves warm or chilled.