



WEEK OF APRIL 3RD 2017 #14/52



Excited about Pasture



For the last 8 years, growing pasture as the basis of fertility at Eatwell Farm has been my goal. I would now go as far as saying, if I concentrate on the pasture then the vegetables grow themselves. That statement has seen my journey in organic agriculture in the last 36 years, and yes it has been that long, make great strides.

It all started out with lots of compost and manure. Stinky, and hard work to spread. Some crops needed more nutrients than the compost could supply, so we had to use pelletized chicken manure or guano from Chile. We are getting ready to plant peppers here in ten days and 'normally' we would add extra applications of compost plus bags of organic materials.

Basically, we would be replacing chemical fertilizers with their organic equivalents. This is how corporate organic has succeeded, because it is really not that difficult.

Back in the pasture....my grandfather always knew to grow a pasture before a cash crop, where he needed as much fertility as possible. There are some great books on this, 'Fertility Pastures' by Newman Turner from the 1940s. The big change has come about because of the work of a group of soil scientists, almost all ladies, over the last 40 years. With modern microscopes, and some now less than \$500, you can observe the soil microfauna and learn what to do to grow your own fertility.

In 1990, I came to California for the first time and attended a couple of farming conferences. I heard Elaine Ingram speak. She said she was starting to understand the incredibly complex life in the soil. Jump forwards to spring two years ago and our Lorraine attended a week long class on soil biology. I have been watching and learning on YouTube. It has been fascinating with Jose and I experimenting and observing in the field all the time.

Basically, the plant exudes sugars, proteins and carbohydrates, particularly when they are impacted by grazing whether that is a bison on the plains, wilder beasts in Africa or my mower. The grazing shock needs to be short, the animals are moved on by predators. The plants exude their stuff, the soil bacteria and fungi grow like crazy. They feed the next level which poop out nutrients right next to the plant roots. One big circle of growth, which the farmer needs to keep moving at a pace. We have built soil at an astonishing rate over the years. There is much more to this, particularly adding a great variety to the pasture.

Look for videos on YouTube by Gabe Brown, Elaine Ingham, Allan Savory and more.

Fancy Tangerines

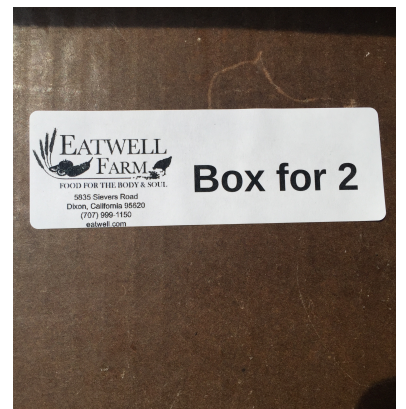
We are now coming to the end of tangerines. The crop was a big one. We are really growing these at the limit of their range, so we have a yield 50% of the years. I know they have seeds, which the kids may not like, but seeds are needed to reproduce. Our citrus has done well for us this year, but only the west half of the field. The farm is very flat, laser leveled by a previous owner, so his water would flow well. Over the years, from observation only, that slight fall protects the western half of the citrus from the extremes of frost. Our pomelo, grapefruits, valencias and lemons are planted in that sweet spot.



Box for 2

Just a reminder, we now have 2 Sizes of CSA Boxes going out in our deliveries. If you would like to change your subscription from one size to another, please contact us. Our standard size, the 'Family Box', is much larger and has 10-12 different items. The new 'Box for 2' is a little taller, but narrow and short and contains just 6 items.

Please check the Sign In Sheet to see which size box you are scheduled to receive. It is listed next to your name. We will begin labelling the 'Box for 2' starting this week, but if you are confused about your order or which box you should be picking up don't hesitate to call the office at (707)999-1150 or email [Connie](mailto:connie@eatwell.com) organic@eatwell.com.



Event Dates

Links to purchase tickets are located in your Friday email.

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

WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS!

ORGANIC@EATWELL.COM TEXT/VOICE 707-999-1150



A Note From Lorraine

Last week I had a couple of recipes that started out as one thing, then over the next couple of days were “re-purposed” into something else. This week I found myself doing it again. Our friend Georgeanne Brennan, who has written many cookbooks, said to me the other day, the secret to really good Minestrone is Kale. I have kale, I also had a bunch of chicken stock and I have loads of jars of canned San Marzanos from the summer; so I thought why not? I didn’t over season this soup, rather I let the flavor from the tomato shine. A couple of days later, I had one pork chop for 3 people. I thought why not slow cook the pork chop in some of the leftover soup, which I seasoned appropriately, and made tacos. I had a batch of the vegetable rice I included in last week’s newsletter, that I flavored up with a little bit of the now “Mexican-like” seasoned minestrone, and made a hearty and flavorful rice to go with the tacos. Add a simple citrus slaw for crunch and extra veg, and you have yourself a fantastic dinner!

Minestrone

This is when those jars of canned tomatoes/sauce from last summer really come in handy. I was using sauce since that is what I have and it worked out wonderfully. Actually I thought it was almost a little too tomatoey, but delicious none the less.

A good glug of Olive Oil

1 or 2 Spring Onions, chopped

3 - 4 cloves Garlic, minced

3 - 4 Carrots, diced

1 bunch Kale, washed, and chopped. You can use the stems too, just chop them small

32 oz Eatwell Chicken Stock, you can easily substitute any good Vegetable Stock

Tomato Sauce -I used 2 pint jars of homemade, but you could use a 28 oz can of crushed tomatoes

1 can Beans, you can use a white bean, garbanzo, kidney whatever you like

Salt and Pepper to taste - I used Eatwell Rosemary Salt

1 Bay Leaf

Heat the olive oil in a heavy bottomed soup pot, over medium heat. Add the carrots, onion and garlic, cook stirring so the onion and garlic do not brown or burn. When they are all softened a bit add the kale. Mix well and cook until the kale has wilted. Add the beans, chicken stock, tomatoes, salt, pepper and bay leaf. Cover and simmer on low until everything is cooked through and the flavor has developed. I used my Instant Pot, which I absolutely LOVE!! Because you can make a soup in 35 minutes that tastes like it has simmered on the stove all day.

Warm Red Cabbage Salad

Green’s Cookbook and Recommended by member Nancy M.

15-20 Walnuts, enough to make 3/4 cup, shelled

2 tsp walnut oil

salt and pepper

1 small cabbage

1 crisp red apple

1 clove garlic, finely chopped

2 TB balsamic vinegar

2 1/2 TB olive oil

1 red onion, quartered and thinly sliced

3 to 4 oz goat cheese, broken into large pieces

1 TB parsley, chopped

1/2 tsp marjoram, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 350F. Crack the walnuts, leave the meats in large pieces, and toss them with walnut oil and some salt and freshly ground black pepper. Toast them in the oven for 5-7 minutes, or until they begin to smell nutty. Then remove them from the oven and let them cool. Quarter the cabbage and remove the core. Cut the wedges into thin pieces, 2-3 inches long, and set them aside. Cut the apple lengthwise into sixths, cut out the core, then slice the pieces thinly, crosswise. Put the garlic, vinegar, and oil in a wide saute pan over a medium-high flame. As soon as they are hot, add onion and saute for 30 seconds. Next add the cabbage and continue to cook, stirring it with a pair of tongs for approximately 2 minutes, or until just wilted. The leaves will begin to soften. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and more vinegar, if necessary, to sharpen the flavors. Add the goat cheese, apple, herbs, and walnuts. Toss briefly and carefully before serving.



Tacos

To make the pork tacos I took several cups of soup and added about 1 TB Cumin and Chile Powder, and about 1 tsp Coriander. You could easily spice it up by adding chilis, jalapeños or chipotle, or chili pepper flakes. Mix it all up well, put the pork or whatever meat you want to use right into the newly seasoned “soup” and slow cook until the meat is tender. You can do this on low on the stove top, or in a slow cooker. Again I used my Instant Pot so it was done in pretty quickly. Top your tacos with chopped lettuce, sour cream, hot sauce and a little grated cheese.

For the Rice, this is the perfect time to use up some that you have leftover. I always put a good amount of butter in my Mexican Rice, then I added a small amount of the seasoned soup, just enough to get it heating. Heat up on a medium low temp, and once it is warmed through you can decide if you want to add more of the soup for more flavor.

Use the cabbage for a light slaw. Mandarin slices and some grated beet make delicious additions and make for a slaw that goes well with this taco dinner.

Sole Florentine

The Farm House Kitchen

This Week’s Box List

**Items in Box for 2*

*Red or Green Kale

Cabbage

*Lettuce

Spinach

*Beets

*Spring Onions

Green Garlic

*Parsley

Chives

Mandarins

*Raisins (Capay Canyon Ranch)

Bag of Spinach, washed well

3 TB Butter

About 4 TB Chives, finely minced

4 TB All-Purpose Flour

1/3 cup Cream

1 tsp Salt

Freshly Grated Nutmeg

White Pepper, to taste

2 TB Parmesan Cheese, plus a bit extra for the top

Bread Crumbs

1 lb Petrale Sole

2 TB Butter for frying

Glug of Olive Oil

All Purpose Flour

Salt

To cook the spinach, heat some water (enough water to cover the bottom to about 1/2" up) in an ovenproof skillet and cook until done. It doesn't need to be mushy or completely soft. Drain the spinach over a bowl, keeping the spinach water. Wipe out the skillet, then put it back on the heat - medium low for now, add 2 TB butter and a good glug of olive oil - this is for the fish, so you are letting the pan heat up slowly while you finish up the spinach. In a good sized sauce pan melt 3 TB butter, then add the flour, stir well, cook until just turning the slightest bit golden. Add the cream, whisk well. Slowly add a little bit of the spinach water until you have a very thick sauce. Add the salt, nutmeg and pepper if you are using it, chopped chives and the Parmesan cheese. Add the cooked spinach. Stir it all in and if it seems too thick (pasty), you can add a bit more of the spinach water. Now - on to the fish! Rinse your filets and dry off with a paper towel. Turn the heat up on your skillet to a good medium. Turn the broiler on in your oven. On a large plate mix some flour and some salt and pepper if you like. Dredge the fish in the flour, then gently place it into the heated skillet. Fry on both sides until a lovely golden. It shouldn't take too long, Petrale cooks very quickly. When the fish is done remove it from the skillet, and set aside for the moment. Pour out any butter/oil left in the pan into a little bowl and save for the topping. Spoon the creamed spinach into the skillet and spread evenly. Place the fish on top. Grate on some Parmesan and sprinkle with some breadcrumbs, then pour over any of the butter/oil that you have left. Pop it under the broiler for 2 to 3 minutes and done. Enjoy this dinner with a salad of lettuce, slices of roasted beets, finely chopped parsley and chives.

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