



WEEK OF APRIL 27TH 2015 #17/52



Strawberry Days

May 2nd (THIS SAT!)
May 10th (almost sold out)
May 16th
May 24th

Tickets are now on sale for
CSA members and our
Good Eggs customers!

Purchase tickets for yourself,
friends and family at:
[http://
strawberrydays2015.bpt.me](http://strawberrydays2015.bpt.me)



Pollinate

That's the job of bees on the farm. Lucky for us Gary, whose family we lease the 40 acres to the east of the farm from, has bee hives on the farm. They produce honey and do a great service to our crops. Walking through the orchard with a photographer from Greenpeace just a few weeks ago, I asked to stop and listen to the hum of all the pollinating insects that call Eatwell Farm home. We do not spray pesticides so they get to live. I read recently that for every one pest species there are 1800 beneficial insects. So we leave spaces on the farm where they can live undisturbed. If I have learned anything in the last 33 years of farming it is that often it is best to observe and not just reach for a pesticide, organic or not. The ever increasing biology on this farm that was almost non-existent when we became its stewards in 1998 is one of my proudest achievements. That is not to say that we have arrived, we most certainly have not. Lorraine's studies on soil biology have proven that we may be on the right track but there is much work to do. But ask any three year old at a strawberry day in May eating a sun-ripened fully red fruit and wearing lots of strawberry juice, and the smile will tell all.



Refer a Friend, Get Some Sauce!

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Farms thrive on word-of-mouth referrals, Yelp and Facebook reviews, and community outreach. Help grow YOUR farm by sharing the love of Eatwell with neighbors, friends and family. Share this code: **3YQYWUQ** for friends and family to receive their first 4 CSA box subscription for \$99. If they mention your name when they sign up, you'll receive some of Nigel's Homemade Naked Sauce. The only way to get it is referring a friend!

WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS!
ORGANIC@EATWELL.COM TEXT/VOICE 707-999-1150

Peaches, Nectarines and Plums

Now is the time to thin these crops. Yes, we have to take fruit off the trees. The reason being that many of the trees have too many fruits which will exhaust the trees' energy. The result will be that next year they will flower much less and we may get little or no fruit. Our goal is to balance how much fruit we mature on the tree with the need to grow fruiting buds for next year's crop. This also gives us the chance to remove any fruit that is damaged or too close to another. The more fruit you remove the bigger the remaining fruit will be. We aim for medium fruit, child friendly. Some trees do not need thinning, others need a great deal.

The citrus trees have about ten times the amount of blossom on them compared to fruit that will mature. Lucky for us they take care of the fruit thinning on their own.



Little Jose, Our Irrigator

You have heard me talk about Jose our foreman on the farm who has worked tirelessly for 16 years now. We have another Jose, Josesito. He is our irrigator. Last week we walked around the farm with a spade checking soil moisture. My challenge to him this year is to cut the days we irrigate from 4 to 3. Not an easy job as he will have to make sure each crop has enough moisture but no more. We already use many miles of drip tubing. Now with our improvements to our finger weeder we do not have to move the drip tape. The machine lifts it out of the way, and we can use even more. Josesito will have to spend more time digging into soil, walking the farm and managing his irrigation more than ever before. I am confident that with help he can do it.



Plastic Strawberry Containers

While we strongly dislike using plastic in our CSA boxes, there are some produce items that hold up best when packaged in plastic. Strawberries are very fragile, and they do very poorly in the compostable containers and little green baskets. When packaged in plastic clamshell containers, the strawberries are better protected and last a little longer (still eat them ASAP, though). These clamshells are expensive, so we ask that you please rinse them out and return them when you pick up your next CSA box. We will reuse them until they need to be recycled.

Recipes and Menu Suggestions

Recipes and Menu Suggestions:

Steamed New Potatoes with Roast Chicken, and Sautéed Dino Kale

Uses: Potatoes, Dino Kale, Garlic and Onion

Spaghetti with Garlic, Chard and Oregano, again nice with a little Salad on the side

Uses: Garlic, Chard, Oregano, Salad fixings - lettuce, arugula, spinach, radishes, tiny bit of onion, sprinkle of freshly chopped oregano and a light dressing

Grilled Fava Beans, served with Radishes, Sheep's Milk Cheese and Salami or Prosciutto

Uses: Fava Beans

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

Brain Overload

It is not easy to get away from the farm for a full 5 days, but I did it! What an experience the week long class with Dr. Elaine Ingham has been. To put it into "nutshell" form, Dr. Ingham's work over the past 45 years has been learning, and experimenting with the health of soil biology. It's all about those critters; bacteria, fungi, nematodes, protozoa, etc. Much like the state of our personal microflora, those great probiotics we are so fond of consuming, the biology of soil is incredibly important. The last day of class we were learning how to use our microscopes, which believe me will take practice. My brain is so filled with new information I have yet to stop dreaming all night long about soil critters!

I would say we do a lot correctly here on the farm, but I am so excited to learn more and put this into practice. Moving the farm into a biological focus can help us reduce water usage, improve crops, particularly in the orchard, and help us mitigate the effects of pests and diseases that are inevitable. It is also my hope to build better biology in the soil which will allow us to either sow more of our seeds directly, or at the very least get to a place where we will be able to do our own plant starts here. These efforts, combined with a reduction in water usage and greater yield can potentially save us thousands of dollars every year. But more importantly, if I can make this happen here at Eatwell, I hope to use us as an example for the farmers around us. Most of our neighbors are pretty turned off by the simple word "organic", but maybe they would listen when we start talking soil biology. Like I have said before, let's keep this conversation going, keep learning, keep moving forward and in the process let's make those chemical giants a thing of the past! - Lorraine

Heirloom Flour

Eatwell Farm Heirloom Flour, what can I say? I was never a fan of whole wheat until a few years ago when we started playing around with milling it ourselves in a small grinder attachment for my KitchenAid. I am now a convert; freshly milled whole wheat flour is nothing like the flour you buy in stores. The flavor of our wheat is so nutty and delicious, and the freshness is obvious. The results are not the typical dense, slightly bitter flavor, most of us expect with whole wheat. I actually made this shortcake recipe using only our flour and they were wonderful, but I think for most people it is good to start out with a mix, and I think you will find yourself soon switching over to 100% Eatwell Whole Wheat. I know many folks have issues with gluten in varying degrees. There is a good amount of information regarding heirloom wheat varieties and the differences between organic and non-organic. It is worth doing a little googling to read about it.

You can purchase stone-milled Heirloom Sonora Wheat Flour as an add-on item to your box. Just be sure to place your order by 4pm the Sunday before your next delivery to have it delivered with your next box.

POTATOES!!!!

New potatoes are here! Nigel and I have been enjoying them for over a week now. I am such a lucky girl; my husband went out a week ago and picked me potatoes, most girls just get flowers:) If you have never experienced new potatoes, fresh from a farm, you have a pleasant experience ahead of you. So let me say this, the skin on new potatoes is extremely thin and delicate, this is why we don't wash them before sending them to you. You will have potatoes with bits of mud on them, no fear! Simply soak in a bowl with lots of water, for several minutes to soften your bonus farm goodness, then try to rub the mud away with your fingers. If you absolutely must, brush lightly. We have been steaming our potatoes, it doesn't take long, maybe 15 minutes depending on how large they are. I try not to cut them, they seem to taste better if you can leave them whole, so I put the bigger potatoes into the pot first and just as they begin to soften I add the small ones on top. Serve with butter and salt, pepper if you like. I can tell you, this very simple potato is a true pleasure.

Strawberry Shortcakes

Eatwell Farmhouse Kitchen

1 1/4 cups Sugar

3 tsp Baking Powder

2 cups Eatwell Farm Heirloom Whole Wheat Flour

1 cup All-Purpose Flour

1 1/2 sticks cold unsalted Butter, cut into small pieces

1 tsp Salt

3/4 cup Heavy Cream

2 Eatwell Farm Eggs

Strawberries

1 to 2 cups Whipping Cream

Sugar

Preheat oven to 375 F. In a food processor, quickly blend the dry ingredients until well mixed. A few pulses should do the trick.

Then add the butter and pulse until you have a coarse meal texture, about 12 times.

In a bowl whisk the cream and eggs, then pour over the flour in the food processor.

Pulse until it all comes together. With the

whole wheat flour you need to do a bit more mixing than usual and this recipe took a bit more liquid than other recipes. If it seems too dry add a touch more cream, 1 TB at a time. Form 8 biscuits, you can use a 1/2 cup measure, or just do it with your hands. I used parchment paper, but that isn't really necessary, Bake for 15 minutes and check; if they are too soft bake another 5 minutes. The whole wheat flour is darker and they brown up pretty nicely. Since all ovens vary it's best to check and keep an eye on them.

I did not use sugar on our strawberries because instead we enjoyed a little lemon curd with the berries and whipped cream. But the standard way of serving is to slice the strawberries before you start your shortcakes. Sprinkle a bit of sugar over them and let them sit. The juices will make a nice syrup. For the whipped cream you can make fresh, with or without added sugar. If you like sugar in your whipped cream add 1 to 2 TB plus about 1/2 tsp of Vanilla extract, whip until nice and thick.

To serve, slice the shortcakes in half (horizontally), place in a serving bowl, spoon on strawberries, including some juice, and top with whipped cream.

Find the recipes for:

Sautéed Dino Kale

Pasta with Chard, Garlic and Oregano

&

Grilled Whole Favas

at

www.eatwell.com under the "CSA Farm Box" tab. Just click "Recipes."

This Week's Box List

Spinach

Lettuce

Garlic

Arugula

Fava Beans

Chard

Strawberries

Desiree New Potatoes

Onions

Oregano

Dino Kale