



WEEK OF MAY 22ND 2017 #21/52



Lavender Harvest- A Magical Weekend

Take a moment- close your eyes. Imagine with your mind's eye the dappled morning light on acres of lavender, the sound of little birds (ok, mostly chickens) singing, a soft morning breeze on your face, and the scent of lavender transporting you to a place far, far away, Dixon!



Two years ago we tried something new when we organized the first Lavender Harvest weekend. Folks came up to help us fill the drying room with thousands of bunches of lavender. It has been invaluable to have members come and help us power through the harvest,

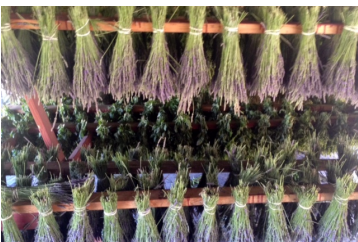
making it possible to get this done in just one weekend. June is the busiest month of the year for the crew, and they simply do not have the time to do it on their own. Our dried lavender has become so popular we have run out about this time the last couple of years - we are down to our last box right now. It is a very valuable crop for us, and getting that much dried in one weekend is impossible without your help.

Much like the grape harvest in France where groups of strangers from all over gather to help bring the fruit in, spending days working together, eating great food, and making new



friends, we have tried to create that same type of experience here with the lavender. It is one of the most memorable experiences people have on the farm. This year we hope to get close to 30 people up here to help. Nigel is hoping to pack even more bunches in, which is why we are opening this up to more people. The way it works is everyone comes up Friday evening and sets up camp. There will be a simple supper waiting for you whenever you arrive. We skip the formal dinner on Friday night since people get here at different times, but never worry, no one ever goes hungry here at Casa Eatwell!

Saturday morning early we gather in the house for breakfast, safety meeting/training and then we head out into the lavender fields. The crew starts cutting the plants at about 6 am. The idea is they have a lot cut before we get out there, to keep ahead of us throughout the day. We come back to the house for lunch, and then we head out to finish bunching what the crew has cut. Some folks work in the field bunching (rubber banding) and



loading the truck and some folks will be in the drying room emptying the truck and hanging the bunches on the drying racks. When the day is done, everyone comes back into the house for a big hearty meal. Sunday morning we start all over again and work till lunch. If all goes well, the drying room will be full and the work was done. There is a possibility of needing to work a bit more after lunch, but the goal is to get it all done beforehand.

This is a working weekend, so we ask that only adults come up. It is open to members and your invited guests. And as with all events on the farm, no pets allowed.



Potatoes Finally Growing Well

Remember back in early February when it was raining cats and dogs? That's when our potato seed arrived and when we should have planted them. As you know the rain never stopped, and the potatoes didn't make it into the ground until March. Then we had a cool Spring which meant they had a slow start. Now they are growing like crazy, after they flower we will start to harvest in June, but later in the month. The problem we can run into is getting them out of the ground fast enough because July can be too hot for them if they are still in the ground. With lavender harvest, June is an extremely busy month, so it will be a challenge to this all done. The seed comes from Colorado, where it is grown at high altitude, and aphids can not survive. The aphids transfer a destructive virus, and as an organic farm, we do not have the option to spray. New potatoes, fresh from the ground, is one of my favorite foods.

Cherry Tomatoes

These black cherry tomatoes are always the first to come in. Like the potatoes, they were planted late in a cold spring. We do not expect to have enough for all the boxes until the middle of June, and maybe not until July. We do have a flavorful variety this year, cherries, red slicers, heirlooms, and Lorraine's favorite the San Marzanos. We are expecting a great crop.

Flower Power

I like to throw you all a curve ball each year, so what about a bunch of fresh or dried flowers in your box? I planted some flowers, such as statice, that you can enjoy fresh or dried. We try to put a lavender bunch in about once a year, so I thought I would try to change things up a bit.



WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS!
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Swiss Chard or Collards Crostata

From *The Vegetable Butcher* by Cara Mangini

As you are using fennel seeds in the crust, I would add some thinly sliced fennel to the sauce portion of this recipe.

3 TB. Extra Virgin Olive Oil
 2 Onions, from this week's share, finely chopped
 4 to 5 Garlic cloves, minced
 1 1/2 lb Swiss Chard and/or Collard Greens, stems cut into 1/4" dice to equal 1 cup, and leaves sliced into 1/4" ribbons (to equal 15 loosely packed cups)
 1 tsp fine Sea Salt
 1/2 tsp crushed Red Pepper flakes
 2 tsp dried Italian Seasoning or use a few TB of fresh chopped Basil from this week's share
 2 pinches of ground Nutmeg
 4 large Eggs
 1/2 cup chopped Scallions, use the green tops from the onions in this week's share
 1 cup Ricotta Cheese
 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan Cheese
 1 Fennel Seed Crust (Recipe on this page)

Heat the olive oil in a Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until it just begins to soften, about 2 minutes. Stir in the garlic and chard stems and cook until the stems begin to soften, about 5 minutes. If you are using collards, first blanch the chopped greens (omit the stems) in boiling water until tender about 2 minutes. Drain and rinse them. Squeeze them gently to release excess water and proceed as you would with Swiss chard. Add the chard leaves (in batches if needed to fit the pan), salt, red pepper flakes, Italian seasoning, and nutmeg. If you are using fresh basil as your seasoning add that at the end when the cooking is done. Cook until leaves have fully wilted and any liquid has cooked off, about 10 minutes more. Turn off the heat and let cool. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 375 F. On a piece of parchment, flatten the crostata dough and roll it from the center outward with a lightly floured rolling pin. Turn the dough and parchment as you go to create a circular shape about 15" in diameter and a little less than 1/4" thick. Don't bother trying to make a perfect circle, but do try to even out the thickness of the dough. Transfer the parchment and dough to a rimless baking sheet (the dough can hang over the edges for now). In a small bowl, lightly beat 1 of the eggs with 1 teaspoon of water to make an egg wash; set it aside. In a large bowl, lightly beat together the remaining eggs, then stir in the chard mixture scallions, ricotta, and parmesan to combine. Transfer the chard mixture to the dough, spreading it out evenly but leaving a border of about 1 1/2". Trim any dough edges that seem too long or thick. Gently fold the dough border up and over the filling, pleating it as you go. Brush the dough lightly with the egg wash. Bake the crostata until the crust is golden brown and the filling is firm in the center, 40 to 45 minutes. Slide the crostata, still on the parchment, onto a wire rack to cool for at least 15 minutes before cutting and serving. It can be served warm or at room temperature.

Fennel Seed Crust

(This recipe pairs with the Swiss Chard or Collards Crostata)

Makes a 15" round of dough

2 tsp Fennel Seeds (optional, but strongly recommended)
 2 cups All-Purpose Flour
 1/2 tsp fine Sea Salt
 1/2 cups freshly grated Parmesan Cheese
 1/2 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
 Up to 1/2 cup plus 2 TB Ice Water

Toast the fennel seeds in a small skillet over medium heat, continuously stirring or shaking the pan, until the seeds are golden and fragrant, about 3 minutes. Let cool. In a food processor or large bowl, briefly pulse or stir together the fennel seeds, flour, salt and parmesan until just incorporated. Add the olive oil and blend or stir to combine. While the processor is running, or while stirring, pour in a 1/2 cup of the ice water (no ice), then add more as needed, 1 TB at a time, until the dough just begins to form a ball. It should be wet and smooth, but should not stick to your fingers. Knead the dough on a lightly floured board for about 30 seconds until it comes together fully. If it pulls apart at all or is dry and tough, place it back in the food processor bowl, add up to 2 TB more water and blend or stir until it is just incorporated. Flatten the ball of dough just slightly and wrap it in plastic; let it rest in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes or up to 1 day in advance of assembling the crostata.

This Week's Box List

*Items in Box for 2

*Lettuce
 Chard
 Spring Onions
 *Green Garlic
 *Turnips
 Spinach
 *Collards
 Fennel
 *Basil
 Strawberries
 *Apricot

Miso-Butter Turnips and Greens

From *The Vegetable Butcher* by Cara Mangini

2 TB unsalted Butter
 1 1/2 lab Turnips and Greens, greens separated, stemmed and cut into 1" pieces; roots cut into 3/4" wedges
 1/4 tsp fine Sea Salt, plus extra as needed
 2 TB Mirin
 2 TB White Miso

Melt the butter in a deep saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the turnips and the 1/4 tsp of salt, stir to coat, then cook, stirring occasionally until they begin to turn golden, about 3 minutes. Add the mirin (it will foam) and cook for 1 minute more. Reduce the heat to medium and add the greens. As they begin to wilt, stir to incorporate them. Cook, stirring, until wilted and tender, 1 minute. Push the turnips and greens to the side of the pan to make room in the center. Add the miso and 1/4 cup of water to the center of the pan, stir the miso, then stir this miso mixture into the turnip mixture to coat evenly. Cook, stirring occasionally, til the turnip roots are tender, golden, and glazed, 3 minutes. Season with more salt to taste. Serve over rice if desired.

Spinach Mac and Cheese

Recipe found on Martha Stewart's website

3 TB unsalted Butter
 1/2 cup minced Onion
 1/3 cup All-purpose Flour
 4 cups Whole Milk, room temperature
 Coarse Salt and freshly ground black Pepper
 About 1 3/4 lb Spinach, trimmed, washed and cut crosswise into 1/2" thick strips
 5 oz Gruyere Cheese, grated 2 cups
 3/4 lb Elbow Macaroni, cooked according to package instructions

In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium. Add onion and cook until translucent, 6 minutes. Whisk in flour and cook, stirring frequently, until mixture is pale golden and has a slightly nutty aroma, about 2 minutes. Whisking constantly, add 2 cups milk. Add remaining 2 cups milk, raise heat to medium-high, and whisk until smooth; season with salt and pepper. Cook, whisking constantly until sauce comes to a boil, 8 to 10 minutes. reduce heat to low and simmer gently, stirring occasionally, until sauce thickens, 13 to 15 minutes. Add spin each and cook, stirring constantly, until wilted, about 3 minutes. Add cheese and stir until melted, about 2 minutes. Add cooked macaroni and stir to combine. Serve immediately.

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

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