



WEEK OF MAY 23RD 2016 #20/52



Fresh Basil
Our first pick of basil this week. We planted this in early March. The basil had grown fast in the nursery in Gilroy so we had to plant them. Unfortunately, the weather turned bad for ten days after that. The result was that the plants took a beating. They have recovered now and we have plenty for the summer.



Cabbage Patch Kid

Farm events are all about the kids. They are the future and the experiences we give them now are life long ones. This young one was captured on camera by Connie last Saturday after getting a fill of strawberries. Last year, I saw a boy of about ten in our lunchbox pepper field eating as many as he could and stuffing every pocket he had with more. Little did he know how happy he made me. We had plenty of peppers and it was such a joy to see. So please bring them out this spring, show them your friend's and neighbor's crop and show them how great food is grown.



Chestnuts and permaculture

The furthest north field on the farm is where we have started the first permaculture planting. We were able to keep this weeded well last year. This chestnut tree was one of three American chestnuts that we were able to buy last year. It is the one from the East coast that got blight early last century. The blight does not do well in California. We have sown and planted out some hybrids which are crosses of the Chinese and American.



We have planted more trees in two other fields but have not been able to keep the weeds down over winter. Alas, I may have to buy some plastic similar to the strawberry beds to make sure we have the best environment for trees and the herbs we have ready in the greenhouse.

Tomato growing changes

Our crop is looking good, but things are a little different this year. We have decided not to stake the crop. For 23 years, we have driven in stakes and tied the crop. Some of the heirlooms get to five foot high. This keeps the fruit high off the ground. Last year, we planted some heirlooms without staking, the results were encouraging. The crop was of a slightly shorter duration, yield was good and spoilage of fruit where it touched the ground was minimal. Jose and I are always struggling in May and June when we have far too much for everyone to do. Our crew is stable year round, meaning we do not hire and fire though the year. This is a big challenge as we have to make sure the work is evened out. Sometimes like now it is a pretty impossible task. Our purchase of the weeding machines helped first, then the Italian planting machine three years ago, and just a few months ago the strawberry harvesting rig shows promise. The decision to not stake tomatoes has made a big difference this year. We now have a chance to really keep our onions and summer squash plantings clean. We hope to have more time to pick lavender and harvest our huge crop of garlic, too. As I have said about the farm, 'change is what we do here'.



Fingerling Potatoes

Every year at the end of November I get an email with an attached spreadsheet from Sheldon in Colorado. This is his potato seed list both organic and not. I try to attend to it that day, because we want as much organic seed as possible. I try to get at least eight different varieties to make it interesting for your harvest shares every week.

The seed arrives in late January on a big semi holding about 22 pallets for all the organic farmers on our block (a farm block is about 50 miles by 50 or more). Three or four pallets are dropped at our farm for us and two or three others that pick up here. Roberto always tries to have the beds ready so that we can plant the as soon as they arrive. Rain can delay planting, though.

Today's variety is fingerling for most people. They are long and narrow, delicious in salads. The skin is set and are described as fully mature at harvest unlike new potatoes where you can brush away the skin on the very first harvest. Enjoy.

Baby Lettuce Harvest.

We have a new lettuce planting program for spring and summer. It is too hot to directly seed the crop at this times of the year, so we send a mix of varieties that are heat tolerant to the nursery. We mix them up to save money, as the nursery charges much less to sow 5,000 mix rather than 1,000 of each variety.



Recipes and Menu Suggestions

Roasted Fennel Soup; Serve with bread and lettuce salad

Uses: Fennel, Lettuce

Chard with Cannellini Beans; Serve over pasta or creamy polenta

Uses: Chard

Oven Risotto with Kale Pesto

Uses: Kale, Parsley

Herb Roasted Pork Tenderloin (recipe included) and Herb Roasted Fingerling Potatoes, Stir Fry Mix; I would sauté the stir fry mix, then when the potatoes are done, remove them from the pan and finish the stir fry greens in the oil and herbs.

Uses: Fingerling Potatoes, Stir-Fry Mix

Lemon Verbena Tea; Boil Water and pour into a heat proof pitcher, put a few stems of Lemon Verbena in and let sit for 5 minutes.

Taste, if it is strong enough, remove the Lemon Verbena, or if you want more flavor leave it longer or add more stems. Nigel and I have been enjoying a lot of fresh ice teas recently, our current flavor is Lemon Balm and Mint because that is what is in the house. This week I will switch to the Lemon Verbena!

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

Roasted Fennel Soup

Believe it or not I found this on the Campbell's Website:)

3 each Fennel Bulbs, cut into 1/2" slices

2 large Onions, cut into 1/2" slices (about 2 cups)

2 cloves Garlic, minced

1/4 tsp freshly ground Black Pepper

Salt to taste

2 TB Olive Oil

5 1/4 cups Eatwell Farm Chicken Stock or good Vegetable Stock

1/2 cup Heavy Cream

1/4 cup coarsely chopped fresh Basil Leaves

Heat the oven to 425 F. Place the fennel, onion, garlic and black pepper into a 17 X 11" roasting pan. Pour the oil over the vegetables and toss to coat. Bake for 30 minutes or until the vegetables are tender. Place half of the vegetables and 1 cup of the broth in a food processor. Cover and blend until the mixture is smooth. Pour the vegetable mixture into a 4 at saucepan. Repeat with the remaining vegetables and 1 cup of the broth. Stir the remaining broth, cream and basil in the saucepan and heat over medium heat to a boil. Reduce the heat to low. Cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season to taste with salt and additional black pepper.

Chard and Cannellini Beans

Found on the Willam Sonoma website

1 bunch Chard

1/4 cup Olive Oil

1 Yellow Onion, chopped

1 Celery Stalk, chopped

1 Carrot, chopped

2 Garlic Cloves, roughly chopped

1- 14 1/2 oz can chopped Tomatoes

1/4 tsp Red Pepper Flakes

1- 15oz can Cannellini Beans, drained and rinsed

Salt and Freshly Ground Pepper, to taste

Trim the stems and center ribs off the chard and reserve for another use. Rinse the leaves, shake off the excess water and stack the leaves on a cutting board. Thinly sliced crosswise. Set aside. In a wide sauté pan or 5 to 7 quart Dutch oven over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil and add the onion, celery and carrot. Cook, stirring, until the vegetables are softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds, then stir in the tomatoes and the sauce thickens a bit, about 10 minutes. Stir in the chard by the handful, letting each addition cook down a bit before adding the next. Stir in the beans. Cover the pan and simmer until the greens are very soft, 10 to 15 minutes more. Season with salt and pepper.

Oven Risotto with Kale Pesto

Bon Appetit February 2015

1/2 cup Walnuts, coarsely chopped, divided

4 TB Olive Oil, divided

1 medium Onion, finely chopped

1 cup Arborio Rice

Salt and Freshly Ground Black Pepper

1/2 cup dry White Wine

1 small Garlic Clove

1 cup (packed) fresh Parsley leaves

3 TB chopped fresh Chives

2 cups torn Kale, divided

2 TB unsalted Butter

3 oz Parmesan, finely grated (about 2 cups)

Preheat oven to 350 F. Toast walnuts on a rimmed baking sheet, tossing occasionally, until golden brown, 8-10 minutes. Let cool. Meanwhile, heat 2 TB oil in a large ovenproof saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and cook, stirring often, until soft and translucent, 5-8 minutes. Stir in rice, season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, until some grains are translucent, about 5 minutes. Add wine, bring to a simmer, and cook until pan is almost dry, about 3 minutes. Add 2 cups very hot water, season with salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer, cover, and bake in oven until liquid is mostly absorbed but rice is still starchy in the center, 15-18 minutes (it should be undercooked). Meanwhile, pulse garlic and toasted walnuts in a food processor until very finely ground. Add parsley, chives, half of kale, remaining 2 TB oil and 1/4 cup cold water process until smooth. Season pesto with salt and pepper. Set saucepan over medium heat. Add 3/4 cup very hot water and cook rice, stirring constantly, until it is tender but still has some bit and a sauce is creamy, about 3 minutes. Stir in pesto, butter, 3/4 Parmesan, and remaining kale. Adjust consistency with water, if needed season with salt and pepper. Serve topped with remaining walnuts and cheese.

This Week's Box List

Fingerling Potatoes

Fennel

Radishes

Lettuce

Stir Fry Mix

Red Kale

Chard

Parsley

Basil

Lemon Verbena

Strawberries

Apriums

Rosemary Pork Tenderloin

Found on Martha Stewart's Website

3 TB Butter, melted

1 TB Olive Oil

3 Garlic Cloves, minced

1 1/2 tsp dried Rosemary, crumbled

Coarse Salt and freshly ground Black Pepper

2 small Red Onions, halved and cut lengthwise into 1/2" slices (about 2 cups)

2 Pork Tenderloins (3/4 to 1 LB each)

2 tsp All-purpose Flour

1/4 cup Madeira

Preheat oven to 450 F. In a small bowl, stir together 1 TB butter, oil, garlic, Rosemary, 1 tsp salt and 1/4 tsp pepper. In a small, shallow roasting pan, toss onions with half the butter mixture' push to asides' place pork in center. Rub remaining butter mixture over pork. Roast 10 minutes. Heat broiler' set rack 4" from heat. Broil until pork registers 155 F on an instant-read thermometer, 10 minutes. Remove pork from pan. Whisk flour and remaining 2 TB butter In a small bowl' set aside. Place roasting pan with onion over medium-high heat. Add 3/4 cup water' bring to a boil, stirring to loosen any browned bits. Add Madeira and flour mixture. Cook sauce, stirring, until slightly thickened, 3 to 5 minutes. Slice pork 1/4" thick and divide among plates spoon sauce on tops.

Herb Roasted Fingerling Potatoes

Found on William Sonoma Website

1 lb Fingerling Potatoes

1 TB chopped fresh Rosemary

1 TB Extra-virgin Olive Oil

1 TB Whole-grain Dijon Mustard

Kosher Salt and freshly ground Pepper, to taste

Preheat oven to 400 F. Place them on a rimmed baking sheet and sprinkle with Rosemary. In a small bowl, stir together the olive oil and mustard. Drizzle the mixture evenly over the potatoes, then season generously with salt and pepper. Toss to coat the potatoes evenly, then spread them out in a single layer. Roast the potatoes, turning them 2 or 3 times, until the skins are golden and the flesh is tender when pierced with a fork, 40 to 45 minutes.

WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS!

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