



WEEK OF AUGUST 29TH 2016 #35/52



## State of the CSA

Sometimes I feel like the bearer of bad news, but I feel it is important to be open with our members. It goes without saying that these past 4 1/2



years have been incredibly hard on us with Nigel's illness, many ups and downs. That has taken a toll on the farm, mostly it is hard on our crew. For several months now, Nigel has not been able to go out onto the farm at all. But the other reality is, over the past several years, the number of CSA boxes has steadily gone down. When Nigel and I were first together, our CSA share numbers were in the 900's every week, we are now down to 450. Summer is the worst time of year, because that is when people go on vacation and so many shares are put on hold. The start of school is literally at our door and this is the perfect time to ramp things up and get our numbers up again.

Truthfully, we can not be a successful farm without bringing our numbers up at least by 100 every week. My goal is to get us back to 700. Most of our members only get a box every other week, so even though we still have over 900 CSA members, that quite often leaves us at 450 boxes per week.

We seriously need your help. Imagine if each of our 900 members got just one person to sign up for a share! If they got a box every other week, that would increase our numbers by 450 shares per week. So truthfully, we only need half of you to do that to reach my goal, but please don't think you should be the half that doesn't find someone. Connie and I are working on coming up with some strategies to get the word out and find new ways to grow the CSA. Connie has been doing some outreach and going to various events around the greater Bay Area. Keep us in mind for speaking to groups or organizations you might be involved with. If you want postcards to share with co-workers or parents at your kids' school, please request them or order them to be delivered with your box. They are available as Add-On Items under Donations & Promos in CSAware. If you have any ideas for other ways we can reach out to the community, let us know, we are open to all suggestions! Pass along this referral code 16E@TWELL to anyone interested in signing up for their first subscription to receive 4 CSA Box deliveries for \$99. Have them include your name when they make their purchase and you will receive a referral gift.

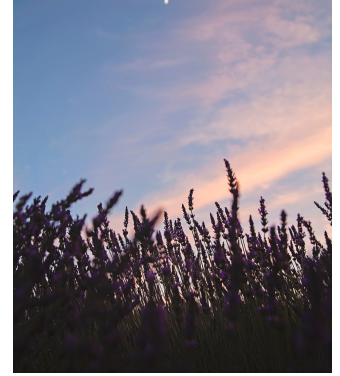
One area I really want to explore is how to get good food to people who really can't afford it or live in areas where they do not have easy access to good food. We are working on getting set up with CalFresh, the state program that provides funds to purchase food. In the meantime, one option to consider is sponsoring a family with a 4 box subscription. We opened a new drop site in the Bayview where Bay Leaf Kitchen and Laughing Monk Brewing has their offices. A very high percentage of the culinary campers from Bay Leaf were here on a scholarship. Those kids love to cook, love the farm and love the food they experienced here. Wouldn't it be fabulous to offer them a heavily discounted CSA membership, or even one that is completely covered by a sponsor? We will have a place on CSAware where you can donate if you would like to do that. There will be an option to purchase 4 CSA Box deliveries for \$99 or donate a specified amount that can be used towards a subscription. If any of you have any ideas, please don't hesitate to share it with me. You can always reach me at [drinkwellsofters@gmail.com](mailto:drinkwellsofters@gmail.com) or call (texting is actually better) 530-554-3971.

I really want to keep all of you in the loop on the progress we make with increasing our CSA numbers each week, so I will ask Connie to include the weekly number on the newsletter. After all, this is Your CSA and it is Your Farm and for many of you, it is a big part of Your Life. I know this is important to you as well. If we work together, I have no doubt we can reach my goal of 700 shares a week, so let's make this happen!

## Can Do Spirit

I know it is a bit of cliché, but this morning it just feels so apt. Last week I wrote about the State of the CSA and your response has been tremendous (we have run that same article again this week for all of the 'every other week' folks)! Within a couple of hours of the post hitting FB we had a few thousand reaches and 5 new CSA members! I realize, with a goal of 250 by October 31 (I have added a date to my goal!), 5 doesn't seem like much. By this time, we have reached 40 taking advantage of the first time discount code, so we are well on our way. My heart is overwhelmed by your response and support.

However, there is another reason for writing about the *Can Do Spirit* and here is that little story. It's Monday morning, I am in Davis waiting on my train to take me to a friend's wedding in SF. I noticed a blind man walking out of the station. He clearly is well adapted to his lack of vision. When I saw him from the side, I realized I actually knew him from when he was a little kid. His mom shopped at the health food store where I worked nearly 30 years ago. Hoby was born blind and as he looks like the grown version of that very happy little boy I knew, I was pretty sure it was him. I went over to say hello and let him know I knew him when he was a baby. As it turns out, he is friends with my son Cameron. He was so excited to see me, his exact words were "how nice it is to see you!", which made me realize this is a man who doesn't let much hold him down. He asked what the heck I was doing in Davis and of course I asked him what the heck *he* was doing in Davis. He's just finishing up his doctorate in organic chemistry at UCD! That is an enormous achievement for anyone, but how amazing that he has not let his lack of eye sight hold him back. How utterly amazing he is and what a tremendous lesson I can learn from him. Life can certainly throw us a load of crap, but if Hoby can overcome, I think I can as well. This morning just before I left the house, Nigel and I were discussing how slow his recovery has been. I definitely felt my optimism waning, but this unexpected meeting has kicked me right out of that. Thank you Hoby, you have no idea what this chance encounter meant to me!



## The Dave Matthews Band

The Chef cooking for DMB called a couple of weeks ago asking if we could deliver produce, herbs and our salts to the Greek Theatre in Berkeley. Apparently, when Dave is in town he likes Eatwell Farm produce or at least his chef likes

cooking with it. Connie got in bright and early yesterday morning to get all of the herbs harvested. Some of the herbs they are using include chives, chocolate mint, oregano, and basil. Jose and the crew picked their order first thing and Cory got the order down to the Greek. When I think about it, it seems crazy to do all of this for a fairly small order, but I suppose we all have a bit of "fan" in us. Musicians bring much joy to the world, I listen to music all the time, so I guess this is our way of sending joy back to them. So which salts does the DMB enjoy? Smoked Chili and Heirloom Tomato.

This Week's  
Total CSA  
Boxes: 481



## Recipes and Menu Suggestions

Thora's Cooked Tomatoes, White Fish cooked in Milk and Butter, with good bread

Uses: Tomatoes

Roasted Tomato Soup; serve with whatever you like with creamy soup

Uses: Basil, Tomatoes

Indian Spiced Chicken Pitas

Uses: Cucumbers, Tomatoes

Basil Vinaigrette; serve over White Beans and Cherry Tomatoes and Lunchbox Box Peppers on the side

Uses: Shallots, Basil, Cherry Tomatoes, Lunchbox Peppers

Southern Baked Summer Squash side dish with Barbecued

Chicken, Pork or Beef

Uses: Summer Squash,

**All recipes can be found at: [www.eatwell.com](http://www.eatwell.com) under the "CSA Farm Box" tab. Just click "Recipes."**

## A Note From Lorraine

When family comes to visit, you get to eat your usual food cooked in different ways. Nigel's parents are here from England and what a blessing they are. They completely watch over him, bring him cups of tea, glasses of milk, bubbly water and bits of food as often as he can eat. That constant attention is something I just cannot give him. There is so much to be done, so it is really wonderful having this kind of help. One of the things Thora has made that I have fallen in love with is pan cooked tomatoes. During the summer months, I usually just slice them, sprinkle on a little lavender salt and eat them raw, quick and easy. But she gently cooks them up in a pan, which changes them completely. The nice thing about this dish is it really brings the sweetness out of the tomatoes and drops the acid a bit.

## Thora's Cooked Tomatoes

For this dish, you can use any tomatoes. Cut Cherry Tomatoes in half or for larger tomatoes use thick slices. In a pan, add Sunflower or Safflower Oil (you want to use an oil that doesn't have much flavor), a knob of butter (1 or 2 TB), and heat over medium. When the oil/butter is heated, add sliced tomatoes, sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook until the bottom is soft then flip them over, or as Thora says, "toss them about a bit!". Cook until they are nice and soft the whole way through. The juices will thicken with the butter and oil and tastes delicious! We enjoyed the cooked tomatoes as a side dish to some Dover Sole she cooked in a bit of milk and butter. Sprinkle the fish with salt and pepper, put in a pan with some milk and butter and cook until done.

## Roasted Tomato Soup

Another Recipe by Thora

I make roasted tomatoes all the time. I use them for sauce and soup. The soup Thora made recently included garlic and a basil leaf on each tomato slice. While they were in the oven roasting, the aroma was wonderful. The garlic gave a deeper flavor to the soup.

Tomatoes, cut in half

Oil

Garlic

Basil Leaves

Salt and Pepper

Preheat the oven to 350-375 F. Take a shallow roasting pan and fill with tomato halves, cut side up. Drizzle on each half, a little oil, sprinkle of salt, pepper and top with one basil leaf. Place a clove of garlic down the long row between every two tomatoes. Roast in the oven for about an hour. The timing will vary according to the tomato size, but you will know they are done when they are completely soft or as Thora says, "a bit squishy". The tomatoes and garlic will be nicely caramelized. When the roasting is done, add everything to the blender or put into a pot and use an immersion blender. Be careful with a regular blender when pureeing hot food. It can blow the lid off and you can easily get burned. Puree until smooth, adjust seasoning with more salt and pepper. A bit of cream or creme fraiche can be added to the soup bowl.

## Lunchbox Pepper Poppers

Recipe by Kelsey Nelson found on the [Cookingchanneltv.com](http://Cookingchanneltv.com) I must admit, I do enjoy a good jalapeno popper with a Margarita every now and then! These sound like a great alternative and relatively easy to make at home. And yeah, I can make my own Margarita:)

10 Lunchbox Peppers

Salt and freshly ground Black Pepper

6 oz Goat Cheese

1/4 cup Ricotta Cheese

1 tsp fresh Thyme leaves, chopped OR Eatwell Farm Thyme Salt

1/2 cup Panko Breadcrumbs

2 TB unsalted Butter, melted

Preheat oven to 400 F. Slice each pepper in half lengthwise.

Remove the seeds, hollowing out pepper. Sprinkle with salt and

pepper. Place in an 8x8 baking dish. Whip goat cheese and

ricotta together until light and airy using a hand mixer, about 2

minutes. Stir in the thyme, 1/2 tsp salt and 1/2 tsp black pepper.

Taste and adjust the seasoning, if necessary. Fill each pepper

halfway with cheese mixture and level off with a small offset

spatula. Place the breadcrumbs in a small bowl. Pour butter

over the breadcrumbs and toss to combine. Sprinkle each pepper

with the buttered breadcrumbs. Bake until golden and bubbly,

15 to 20 minutes.

## Basil Vinaigrette

Recipe by David Lebovitz sent to me by CSA member Nancy M.

I put this recipe in last week's newsletter, but am repeating it this week, because, of course, we now have shallots! In any case, it is delicious, easy and perfect for this time of year. I used this vinaigrette for days on cooked cannellini beans and I used some on the side of roasted chicken. It is also perfect drizzled over tomatoes or grilled summer squash.

1/2 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

1 1/2 TB Red or White Wine vinegar

1 TB Water

1 small Shallot, peeled and sliced

1 tsp Dijon Mustard

3/4 tsp Kosher or Flaky Salt

2 cups loosely packed fresh Basil Leaves

Put olive oil, vinegar, water, shallot, mustard and salt in a blender. Coarsely chop the basil leaves and immediately put them in the blender. Cover blender and mix on high-speed for 15 to 30 seconds until the vinaigrette is smooth. If the sauce is too thick for your liking, add a little more water or olive oil to thin it out. This vinaigrette can be used right away or will keep for a week in the refrigerator. Best served at room temperature.

## Southern Baked Summer Squash

Recipe by Melissa Hamilton found on [allrecipes.com](http://allrecipes.com)

I love Southern food and I get really excited when I see one that has all great ingredients, as this one does! Definitely planning on making this dish some time this week.

3 lbs Summer Squash, cut into 1" cubes

1/2 cup dry Bread Crumbs

1/2 cup chopped Onion

2 Eatwell Farm Eggs

1/4 cup Butter, melted

1 TB White Sugar (OK, almost all good ingredients!)

1 tsp Salt

1/2 tsp Black Pepper

1/4 cup Butter, melted

1/4 cup dry Bread Crumbs

Preheat oven to 375 F. Grease a 2 qt baking dish. Place squash in a large saucepan, cover with water and boil until soft, about 15 minutes. Drain squash well, place in a large mixing bowl, and mash until slightly chunky. Stir in 1/2 cup of bread crumbs, onion, eggs, 1/4 cup of butter, sugar, salt and pepper until thoroughly combined. Spread mixture into the prepared baking dish. Drizzle the top of the casserole with 1/4 cup melted butter and sprinkle 1/4 cup bread crumbs over the butter. Bake in preheated oven until the casserole is cooked through and the top is golden brown, about 1 hour.

**The Indian Spiced Chicken Pitas Recipe and all other recipes can be found at: [www.eatwell.com](http://www.eatwell.com) under the "CSA Farm Box" tab. Just click "Recipes."**