



WEEK OF OCTOBER 19TH 2015 #42/52



Goose Deficiency
 I have wrote much about out finger weeder and brush weeder that keeps the crops in the field clean of weeds. We do have a problem with johnson grass which we see in the orchard too.
 It just so happens that geese love to eat this weed. So next spring Agustín is going to hatch us at least 50 geese which we will corral behind electric fence in the orchard. We will move the fence so that all the geese concentrate on one area, then move on to the next patch. Some fat geese for the holidays?



Around the Farm

On Monday morning I took a walk out into the new pasture where Jose moved the chickens last Saturday. I wanted to take a fresh look at the girls to discover why they were just not laying the usual number of eggs. In all the 30 plus years of my farming career I have learned to trust my first gut reaction. In this case, I believe they are not getting enough feed. Later this week I will sit down and do all the calculations and check my theory. So I have put them on double rations for the next week. We will feed 50% at dawn, 25% at lunchtime and 25% at teatime. If there is any feed left over at the end of the day we will cut back. I checked all the water, and it is clean and they are drinking well. The pasture is great, the girls look great.



Next week our chicken consultant is in town for a conference so I will ask him for a second opinion. There are enough eggs for all our members this week. You should hear the cries at the market when we say we have run out.

CSA members come first. Daisy (pictured above) was caught on camera asleep on Monday. We have to remember that her job is to protect the chickens from coyotes who are nocturnal, so Daisy has to be too. She did wake up after I had been walking about with the chickens for at least half an hour.



We have a great crop of pomelos for February picking. They love it when the chicken tractors pass by as the fertilizer boost really greens up their leaves. In the field many of the fall and winter crops are looking great.



It has been hot until last week which is why the broccoli looks a little pale, too much sun. Lettuce will be here soon. Have a great week... Nigel

Mexiganic Threatens Our Farms

There is trouble on the horizon, or where I come from you would say "trouble at Mill." Organic farmers in our area who produce vegetables and fruit like we do are all having the same problems. Here's an example: Last year we were supplying very ripe strawberries to a famous vegan restaurant chain in LA. They would pick up at the farm, drive the berries to Hollywood, and make them into juice for their smoothies overnight for the next day's orders. They raved about the flavor, and only we could pick them like that. They had been getting berries from Mexico but the quality and flavor was not good. All went well for a while then they said we had to match the Mexican organic price which was just above half what we were being paid. I said "no" as we were making very little on the deal as it was. I was happy to get the very ripe fruit out of the field and make a few bucks on a box. In the end I learned that the produce buyer was paid a bonus to keep the food cost below 22% of sales; if they went over this they lost serious money from their pay packet. In the end they stopped ordering because I would not reduce our price. We cannot sell anything at below our cost of production/ picking costs. Lorraine and I have no other source of income. Ninety one percent of farmers who file a tax return have another income from a spouse or a part time job. We are part of the 9% who do not and who have to make a profit every year. Speaking with my farming compatriots, they are under great pressure in the wholesale trade to match Mexican organic prices. Here I am talking Whole Foods, groovy stores in San Francisco and Restaurants who claim they fare wonderful farm to table goods supporting local farmers. There are exceptions who pay what the farmers needs, note the word "exceptions."
 Let's look at a few facts: As an example, a guy picking tomatoes gets paid \$10 per hour on one of our farms. Payroll taxes, etc add up to another \$2.50, and then factor in workers' compensation which is at least another 12% or much more depending on your accident history. By my calculations, when all is said and done, that person costs \$15 per hour. Yes I know that is nothing to be proud of but let's compare to Mexico. Jose, our foreman, says no one gets paid even \$15 a day in the Mexican fields. A large strawberry grower was exposed for paying \$7 a day recently. Workers comp? Safety equipment? No chance.
 Free trade agreements, in my humble opinion, just make the rich richer, and in the case of NAFTA, they are putting some small farms like ours in a precarious position. We are constantly looking for ways to adapt, and you all are amazing and supportive; but small farms, particularly those that depend on wholesale are really hurting. We all know you have a choice where to buy your produce, and that choice really does matter. We need your support. Lorraine and Nigel



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

Recipes and Menu Suggestions

Steph's Collards - Serve with Pork Chops and Mashed Potatoes

Uses: Collards

Chicken, Broccoli, Bok Choy, & Pepper Stir Fry - Serve with Rice or Asian Noodles

Uses: Broccoli, Bok Choy, Lunchbox Peppers, Onion

Big Fall Salad - Serve with good bread

Uses: Radishes, Arugula, Fennel, Kale, Apples, Pomegranates

Simple Pumpkin Soup with Sesame Garlic Kale Topping

Uses: Pumpkin, Kale

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

Update on Eatwell Farm Meat Birds

I have been cooking a lot of our meat birds. They are quite different from the over hybridized chickens you buy in the store. What we have learned so far is it is important to process them sooner than later. They have incredibly long legs and long breast bones, and the breast meat is not short and plump like we are used to. The most important thing I have learned is the Eatwell Farm Chicken has FANTASTIC flavor; the meat is incredible, and the leftover bones make the craziest stock I have ever seen! Last night I tried to roast one, my earlier attempts with slightly larger/older Eatwell chicken did not turn out so great. Roast chicken is one of my all time favorite dinners, so I am determined to figure out how to make a truly delicious roast chicken with one of our pastured birds. I would have to say I had great success last night, roasting on a rack, pre-rubbed with butter and good sprinkling of Eatwell Farm Rosemary Salt, temp set at 325 F for 1 3/4 hours. Remove from the oven, tent for 10 to 15 minutes, then enjoy! We need to find a reliable way to get chickens to you with your CSA shares, but until then, they are available at the Ferry Plaza Farmers Market on Saturdays. Might be good to call either Emily on the office line at 707-999-1150 or myself at 530-554-3971 to make sure we have chickens available for the Saturday you are planning to come down.

Stir Fry with Chicken, Broccoli, Bok Choy & Peppers

Found on Allrecipes.com - Recipe by Unieng

12 oz boneless, skinless Chicken, cut into bite-sized pieces

1 TB Oyster Sauce

2 TB Dark Soy Sauce

3 TB good Vegetable Oil

2 cloves Garlic, chopped

1 large Onion, cut into rings

1/2 cup Water

1 tsp ground Black Pepper

1 tsp Sugar

1 Bok Choy, chopped

1 head Broccoli, chopped

1/2 pack of Lunchbox Peppers, tops removed and chopped

1 TB Cornstarch, mixed with equal parts water

In a large bowl, combine chicken, oyster sauce and soy sauce. Set aside for 15 minutes. Heat oil in a wok or large heavy skillet over medium heat. Saute garlic and onion until light golden brown, about 10 minutes. Stir in water, pepper and sugar. Add bok choy, peppers, and broccoli, and cook stirring until soft, about 10 minutes. Pour in the cornstarch mixture and cook until sauce is thickened, about 5 minutes.

Friends and Family Discount Code

Spread the news about Eatwell Farm to your friends, family and co-workers. If they use the code: **3YQYWUQ** to sign up, they'll receive their first 4 CSA box subscription for \$99 (a \$17 discount).

If they mention your name when they sign up, we'll send you thank you gift with a future delivery!

Big Fall Salad

When radishes, fennel, arugula, kale, apples and pomegranates are all on the same list, I can't help but think of a big hearty salad. I think a nice citrus - orange or lemon, dressing would be well suited here.

First make your favorite dressing or use your favorite store bought, and massage some of that into the kale. To the kale add arugula and toss well. Top with thinly sliced radish and fennel, chunks of apple, and pomegranate seeds. If you save your pumpkin seeds and toast them they would be a perfect topper for this Fall Salad, along with a little blue cheese!

Simple Pumpkin Soup

From The Minimalist Baker

2 1/4 cups Pumpkin

2 Shallots, diced or 1/2 Onion

3 cloves Garlic, minced

2 cups Veggie Stock

1 cup Light Coconut Milk

2 TB Maple Syrup

1/4 tsp each Sea Salt, Black Pepper, Cinnamon, Nutmeg

Garlic, Kale, Sesame Topping

1 cup roughly chopped Kale

1 large Garlic clove, minced

2 TB raw Sesame Seeds

1 TB Olive Oil

Pinch of Salt

Preheat oven to 350 F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Using a sharp knife, cut off the tops of sugar pumpkin and then halve. Use a sharp spoon to scrape out all of the seeds and stings. Brush the flesh with oil and place face down on the baking sheet. Bake for 45-50 minutes or until fork tender. Remove from the oven, let cool for 10 minutes, then peel away skin and set pumpkin aside. To a large saucepan over medium heat add 1 TB olive oil, shallot and garlic. Cook for 2-3 minutes, or until slightly browned and translucent. Turn down heat if cooking too quickly. Add remaining ingredients, including the pumpkin, and bring to a simmer. Transfer soup mixture to a blender or use an immersion blender to

puree the soup. Pour mixture back into pot. Continue cooking over medium-low heat for 5-10 minutes, and taste and adjust seasonings as needed. Serve as is or with Kale-Sesame topping.

FOR THE TOPPING: In a small skillet over medium heat, dry toast sesame seeds for 2-3 minutes, stirring frequently until slightly golden brown. Be careful as they can burn quickly. Remove from pan and set aside. To the still hot pan, add olive oil and garlic and saute until golden brown - about 2 minutes. Add kale and toss, then add a pinch of salt and cover to steam. Cook for another few minutes until kale is wilted and then add sesame seeds back in. Toss to coat and set aside for topping soup.

Get a Jump on Holiday Gifts

With the holiday season approaching, it's time to start stocking up on stocking stuffers and hostess gifts. You can order Eatwell Farm salts, sugars, essential oils and bath products with your CSA box. Just log into your account and click on one of the many categories listed. Our CSA manager, Emily, recommends the Lavender Sugar Scrub and Lavender Sachets. Be sure to place your order by 4pm the Sunday before your next delivery if you want your extras with that box.

Please Return Your Empty Boxes

Each waxed cardboard box costs over \$2, and we simply cannot spend \$1,000 to replace the boxes each week. Help us keep costs low by returning your flattened cardboard boxes when you pick up your next delivery. You can also load your veggies straight into a bag at pick-up, leaving the flattened box stacked nicely at your site. If you store them at home, please ensure the boxes are safe from weather. Thank you!