



WEEK OF DECEMBER 14TH 2015 #50/52



Bananas
 Ok so I am a little crazy for growing bananas. After you have tasted one that has ripened on the stem and not based with ethylene you know how they should be. I bought a plant at Lowes 18 months ago. Eric and Andrew planted it for me right outside our front door. Ever since I have tended to it with lots of loving care. It has the protection from the wind and cold. They taste great. I fear we will eat them all.



Road Rock Edwin and Others

Lorraine told me last week that I have 1,000 contacts on my phone. Not surprising since we have been farming here since 1993. So how do I remember who is who? Edwin is the guy I call if I need 24 tons of rock at a moments notice. So in my phone he is saved as Road Rock Edwin, easy to remember. Last week the feed truck for the chickens got a little stuck while loading our last delivery. Agustin called me over on Monday afternoon to see what we needed. I called Edwin, he was forty five minutes away and just happened to have a truck full of road grindings unsold so he just brought them over.

This reminds me that besides all of the great people who work on the farm, there are many people like Edwin, who really help make this farm happen. Yes he gets paid, but he goes out of his way to help.



When he gets a really good load of rock he always calls me to see if I need any. There are so many of our suppliers who make that extra effort for us. It makes me very happy to be part of such a community. The cuttings on the left are Artemisia and they are on their way to Takao Nursery

in Fresno, who propagates all the difficult plants for us.

Around the Farm

Peas and fava beans are germinating nicely. On these beds the two outside rows are fava beans. They will grow about 3 feet tall. The middle row is peas, which we will harvest in the new year as pea shoots. We will need the space they are in for walking through and picking the fava beans in the spring. There are other beds that just have three rows of peas. We will leave these to mature and pick as delicious sugar snap peas. All these beds needed hoeing with our finger weeder. Unfortunately on Saturday they were still too wet to cultivate, then it rained again. We are hoping to get another chance later this week. We like to get the weeds when they are small, it is much easier to remove them.



We have some beautiful beds of lettuce and spinach on the farm. About time I hear, yes. We had a hard time germinating the crop in September/October due to the above normal temperatures. As you can see we have a red oak leaf in the center of the bed

with romaine on the right and a green crips on the left. Our plan is to give you a mixed bag of all three. Please wash only what you are going to eat. The rest will keep so much better in the bag, unwashed in your crispier.

The oranges in your box today are from our orchard. The trees are growing and producing more each year. We need more citrus than we



can grow, which is why our good friends Cassie and Nacho from Twin Girls Farm help us out with their organic citrus.

In past years we have fertilized the citrus with spent coffee grounds from Blue Bottle Coffee. Those were no longer available so the chicken tractors were

sent down between the rows of citrus. The fertility left behind by the moving chickens has really greened up the leaves of the oranges. There are great crops of Pomelos and grapefruit for the New Year too. The Seville oranges are a little light than normal. We will let you know when they are ready so you can order them for marmalade making.

WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS!

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Recipes and Menu Suggestions

Roast Chicken served with Green Salad and fresh from the oven Biscuits* see note below

Uses: Onion, Lettuce, Spinach, Apple, Radish

Roasted Squash and Ginger Noodle Soup with Winter Vegetables

Uses: Butternut Squash, Daikon, Bok Choy, Savoy

Cabbage, Spinach, Romanesco or Broccoli

Lemony Pasta with Wilted Arugula, served with Green Salad or

Slaw made with Savoy Cabbage

Uses: Arugula, Lettuce and or Cabbage, Oranges and

Apples for Salads

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

Biscuits, Pastry Dough and Pizza

Over the years I have heard from so many members that you had no idea we sell Salts or Drinks, or any of the other items you can add on as extras with your box. On the flip side, a few of you have mentioned that we are constantly pushing our extras. Hard to win either way. But it is important for you, our CSA members, to know that we are constantly working on coming up with ways to make your lives better, and cooking and eating healthy easier.

Sooooo, I wanted to mention that we currently offer, as add on extra items, frozen pastry dough and jars of biscuit mix. Both use about 3/4's of Eatwell Heirloom Whole Wheat Flour. The Biscuit mix is wonderful to have around, because even I find that I will pop a batch into the oven, just because, the dry ingredients are measured and mixed for me. You can also use the biscuit dough as a topping for pot pie. Coming soon we hope to add Nigel's Pizza Dough (frozen) to the line up!

Bruce Update

We have our first chickens for CSA members going out this week. I have been cooking chicken like crazy the last few months to learn the best way to prepare these delicious birds. Tonight I am roasting one according to the method in a recent Cook's Illustrated. Since some of you are getting a Bruce this week here is the recipe.

According to the article, you use an oven proof skillet that fits the bird nicely, not too big, which you preheat in a 450 F oven*. With the thigh meat hitting the very hot skillet, it starts to cook immediately and gets a good head start on the breast, which usually dries out before the dark meat is all the way cooked. Our birds are extremely lean so I use a lot more than 1 TB oil, I would say I use probably 4. I also add some sauteed onion and garlic, along with a quartered lemon in the cavity. This adds moisture.

*I have done this twice now with our birds, and find it works better with the temp set to 400/410F.

1 TB Salt
1/2 tsp Pepper
1 3 1/2 to 4 lb Chicken
1 TB Olive Oil (I would use more or birds are much leaner than store bought)

Adjust oven rack to middle position, place 12" oven safe skillet on rack, and heat oven to 450 F. Combine salt and pepper in bowl. Pat chicken dry with paper towels. Rub entire surface with oil. Sprinkle salt mixture evenly over surface of chicken, then rub in mixture with hands to coat evenly. Tie legs together with twine and tuck wing tips behind back. Transfer chicken, breast side up, to preheated skillet in oven. Roast chicken until breast registers 120 F and thighs register 135 F, 25 to 35 minutes. Turn oven off and leave chicken in oven until breast registers 160 F and thighs register 175 F, 25 to 35 minute. Transfer chicken to carving board and let rest uncovered, for 20 minutes. Carve chicken and serve.

If you are an alternate week member this is you last box of 2015. All of us on the farm wish you a very Happy Festivus.

Roasted Squash and Ginger Noodle Soup with Winter Vegetables

Recipe by Julia Moskin NY Times sent by CSA member Alix W.
Serves 3 to 4

2 1/2 lb peeled Winter Squash
Vegetable Oil
1 medium sized knob of fresh Ginger (about 2")
5 Green Cardamom Pods
2 Star Anise
1 Cinnamon Stick, 3 to 4" long
1 1/2 tsp Coriander Seeds
Salt
3 to 4 cups mixed Winter Vegetables: Daikon, Romanesco/Broccoli, Cabbage, Spinach or Bok Choy
1 lb thin fresh Noodles, like lo mein or tagliarini
Sriracha or Chili Oil for serving

Cut 2 lbs of squash into large chunks. Cut remaining into 1/2 inch dice. Heat oven to 375 F. On a lightly oiled baking sheet, place ginger and diced squash. Bake until soft, about 20 minutes, turning ginger and squash pieces halfway through the cooking. Transfer ginger to a stockpot and reserve roasted squash. Add squash chunks to pot. Add cold water to cover by two inches, turn

heat to medium and heat to a bare simmer.

The surface of the liquid should steam but never boil. In a hot skillet, toast all spices until lightly browned and fragrant. Add to pot along with 1 TB salt. Cook slowly until squash is very soft, about 2 hours.

Meanwhile, prepare the winter vegetables, cut to bite-size, cook until just tender, blanching greens and radishes; roasting romanesco or broccoli. When broth is done, pour it through a strainer and lightly press on squash chunks to release all the liquid. Discard contents of strainer. Season broth to taste with salt. Boil noodles in plenty of salted water, then drain. Divide among 6 to 8 bowls. Divide roasted squash pieces and cooked vegetables on top of noodles. Ladle in broth just to cover noodles and serve immediately.

This Week's Box List

Oranges (Twin Girls Farm)
Savoy Cabbage
Broccoli or Romanesco
Apples (Hidden Star Orchards)
Purple Daikon
Spinach
Onions
Lettuce
Butternut Squash
Radish
Arugula
Bok Choy

Lemony Pasta with Wilted Arugula

Martha Stewart

This is a simple, delicious vegetarian dish, but if you are wanting a little meat you could easily add some prosciutto, good bacon or good ham.

Coarse Salt and ground Pepper
3/4 lb Short Tubular Pasta
3 oz Arugula (3 cups)
2 tsp Grated Lemon Zest, plus 1 TB Lemon Juice
2 Tbsp Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
3/4 cup grated Pecorino Cheese, plus more for serving (optional)

In a large pot of boiling salted water, cook pasta according to package instructions. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine arugula with lemon zest and juice; season with salt and pepper. Drain pasta and immediately add to arugula along with oil and cheese. Toss and season with salt and pepper. Serve topped with more cheese if desired.

**Traveling this Holiday Season?
Place your delivery on hold.
Login to your account, click My Account, and click Place Box on Hold for a Week. Repeat for each delivery you need to hold.**