



WEEK OF NOVEMBER 1ST, 2021 #44/52



Life Will Out

If you are a Gray's Anatomy fan like me, you might recognize that quote. Life really, really wants to happen, everywhere we look. This past week, every time I went outside and looked around, those words came running through my brain. Just a couple of weeks ago it was over 100 degrees here, and the grassy landscape all around us was dry, looking as if all life had been sucked out of it, along with the moisture. But one epic day of rain and wow, verdancy abounds! The field adjacent to the house is green with freshly sprouted grass. The walnut orchard across the street from us, that recently had been mowed to the ground for harvest, has literally exploded into a carpet of green. Our broccoli has kicked into gear, and so has the cabbage. It is so obvious that plants love rain, Mother Nature's irrigation system. Looking west from our farm to the burned out Berryessa Mountains, you can see, even from this distance, the color is changing, and the life in those hills is waking. When I walk around the front end of the farm I find baby fig trees everywhere, outside the office, in the greenhouse, even on the side of the dock; life from animal droppings! Last week I read an exciting story about a California Condor flying around Mt Diablo, the first one in over 100 years! Life wants to thrive, if only we could get out of the way and let it.



let what grows, grow. However, when you look at the fields and many of the orchards around us, it is easy to see what happens when the land is heavily disced and sprayed, keeping the ground dead, void of life. The soil is sad, lacking life, and is compacted. When it rains, the water just runs off,

flooding across the road. Compared to the orchards that grow beautiful grasses under their trees, which almost never flood the road, the difference is pretty clear. The amount of life that happens in that soil, all around the roots, aerates the soil. An entire universe of bacteria, mycorrhizae, and a bazillion critters keep it from compacting. There is space to take in water, holding it for the future in little tiny pockets. More importantly, it is holding the topsoil in place. They say the average amount of topsoil on the planet is 8", yes inches. When we did the perc test for the house, they found we have 11 feet of topsoil! Topsoil is one of the most precious commodities on the planet, combined with water and air, they are the source of life. The area where our farm is, is renowned for some of the deepest, most fertile soil anywhere on earth, and yet, farmers all around us harvest their summer crops, disk up their fields, and let them sit empty, blowing in the wind and washing away with the rain. It is beyond tragic. We need to shift away from that old paradigm, and stop poisoning the fields, so they too could explode with life, because you know, Life Will Out.

After last week's massive rains people asked how we survived and honestly we were just fine. We got a lot of water, I believe, quite a bit more than what had been reported, judging by the fill level of the various troughs, buckets and other things that caught water. But when I walked the farm Monday, just the morning after, our fields looked great. The rain came down hard, but our



land took it all in. And that right there is exactly why this "be kind to the land" style of farming is so important. We cultivate lightly, no deep tilling/discing, always trying to protect the soil with cover crops or just

A Couple of Mentions

First, an apology; I forgot to write about the change in price of the eggs, they have gone back to \$9.00. Summer egg production is behind us and the girls have slowed down for winter. Shorter days means less work for them and fewer eggs, but it doesn't mean they eat less, or require less labor. And the price of feed, like everything else, is going up! So, we are back to the \$9.00 per dozen price. The second thing I wanted to bring up is actually a question for y'all. As we have been living with COVID for so long now, I am wondering how are you all feeling about the trade box? We took the trade box away at the start of COVID because we had no idea how the virus was spreading and we all were freaking out and trying to be as cautious as possible. But we know so much more now, do we feel a trade box is acceptable? Should we bring it back? Please let me know how you are feeling about it, by texting me 530-554-3971.

Hey this is Zach, just a holiday reminder that the week of Thanksgiving Thursday boxes will be delivered on Tuesday. Also, Wednesday stays the same. If you need to put your box on hold please consider donating it to our care share program instead.

RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

Victorian Rose Geranium Cake

Recipe found on Foodnetwork.com courtesy of Anne Burrell

It is a tricky thing figuring out what to do with Rose Geranium, but it is such a gorgeous scent and flavor, I really encourage you to find ways to use it. And to help you out, I am including this recipe for you, but let me also suggest scented cream, sugar, or tea.

16 to 18 Rose Geranium leaves, rinsed and patted dry
2 sticks Unsalted Butter, plus more for the pan
3 cups All-Purpose Flour, plus more for dusting
1 TB Baking Powder
1/2 tsp Salt

3/4 cup Whole Milk

1 tsp Vanilla Extract

1 3/4 cups Sugar

6 large Egg Whites

For the Frosting:

4 Rose Geranium leaves, rinsed and patted dry

1 1/2 cups Sugar

2 large Egg whites

1/4 teaspoon Cream of Tartar

Pinch of Salt

5 drops Red Food Coloring

Infuse the butter for the cake: Rub 6 rose geranium leaves to release the oils. Wrap the leaves around the

butter. Wrap in plastic wrap and

refrigerate overnight. Infuse the

sugar for the frosting: Rub 4 rose

geranium leaves, then combine

with 1 1/2 cups sugar in an

airtight container and let stand at

room temperature overnight.

Make the cake: Preheat the oven

to 350 degrees F. Butter and flour

a 9-by-13-inch baking pan. Rub

the remaining 10 to 12 leaves and

arrange in the pan. Whisk the

flour, baking powder and salt in a

bowl. In a separate bowl, mix the

milk, 3/4 cup water and the

vanilla. Unwrap the butter and

remove the leaves. Beat the butter

and 1 3/4 cups sugar in a large

bowl with a mixer on medium

speed until fluffy. Beat in the egg

whites, two at a time. Add the

flour mixture in three parts,

alternating with the milk mixture, beginning and

ending with flour. Pour the batter into the pan; bake

until golden, 30 to 35 minutes. Cool 10 minutes; invert

the cake onto a rack and remove the leaves. Make the

frosting: Remove the leaves from the sugar. Put the

sugar, egg whites, cream of tartar, salt and 1/3 cup cold

water in a large heatproof bowl and beat with a mixer,

1 minute. Place the bowl over a pot of barely

simmering water. Beat until the mixture holds stiff

peaks, about 7 minutes. Remove from the heat, add the

food coloring and beat until spreadable, about 2

minutes. Spread the frosting over the cake.

Warm Lentil Salad With Balsamic Roast Squash

Recipe by Martha Rose Shulman

One of our CSA members, Ginny, sent this recipe to me last week, after I had expressed having hit a recipe wall. She highly recommends it, maybe serve it with steamed broccoli?

2 lbs Butternut squash, peeled and cut in small dice (about 3 cups peeled and diced, weighing 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 pounds)

Salt, to taste

1 TB Balsamic Vinegar

1 TB Extra Virgin Olive Oil

FOR THE LENTILS

1 cup Green Le Puy lentils, hope you have a bag of Rancho Gordo's

1 tsp minced Ginger

1 tsp Turmeric

1/2 Onion (intact)

1 quart Water

Salt, to taste

FOR THE SALAD

1 TB Sherry Vinegar or Red Wine Vinegar

1 tsp Balsamic Vinegar

1 tsp Dijon mustard

1/2 tsp Cumin Seeds, ground

Salt and freshly ground Pepper to taste

3 TB Extra Virgin Olive Oil

1 TB Walnut Oil

1/4 cup chopped or slivered Flat Leaf Parsley

Combine the lentils, ginger, turmeric, onion, water, and salt to taste in a medium saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium and cook at a

moderate bubble until the lentils have softened and produced a flavorful broth, about 35 to 40 minutes. Remove from the heat. Remove the onion and discard. Place a strainer over a bowl and drain the lentils. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Line a baking sheet with foil. If using cut up squash, place in a bowl or directly on the baking sheet and toss with salt to taste, the balsamic vinegar and 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Spread on the baking sheet in an even layer and make sure to tip all of the liquid remaining in the bowl over the squash. Roast for 20 to 30 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes so that the squash browns evenly. The squash should be tender all the way

through. Remove from the heat. If using acorn squash, spoon a tablespoon of the balsamic vinegar into both cavities, season with salt, brush with olive oil, and place cut side up on a foil-lined baking sheet. Bake 40 to 50 minutes, basting every 10 minutes, until thoroughly tender. Remove from the heat and when cool enough to handle remove the skin and cut the squash into dice. In a small bowl or measuring cup whisk together the vinegars, mustard, salt and pepper, olive oil, and walnut oil. Toss with the lentils and return to the saucepan. Add a few tablespoons of the lentil broth, stir in the parsley and heat through. Place the squash in the middle of a wide bowl or serving platter, surround with the lentil salad and serve.

This Week's Box List

*Parsley

*Fennel

*Broccoli

*Lettuce

*Butternut Squash

*Beets

*Persimmons

Chard

Leeks

Spinach

Rose Geranium

* = Items in Box for 2