



Chicken & The Egg

It has been a challenge finding the right number of laying hens to insure we have enough eggs throughout the winter, but not creating a ridiculous surplus in the summer. In our early egg selling days, we were one of only 2 farms at the market selling eggs, now there are many. Back then we always knew we could send surplus eggs to the market and sell them all, but those days are gone, too much competition, and the market simply isn't that busy. NOPA was our biggest egg account, taking anywhere from 135 to 195 dozens a week, but then COVID. And after COVID they chose not to bring back brunch service, that eliminated their need for eggs. And of course other restaurants who bought eggs from us closed altogether. Finding avenues to sell surplus eggs has been really tricky.

But there is another factor adding to the complications between the chicken and the egg, and that is simply what to do with the hens when they get too old. We can't go past 2,999 hens otherwise we fall under federal regulations, and we don't want that. Besides, we don't need anywhere close to that many hens, and feeding more than a thousand birds that are not laying is a killer. So for the past couple of years, I have brought in smaller flocks, hoping to squeak by in the low production months, but eventually we have too many old hens. This winter we found ourselves with well over 800 old hungry hens and no good place to send them.

In the past we worked with a vegan organization who would take hundred of girls and find homes for them. But the folks I worked with before COVID are no longer around. Thankfully, Missy Zinger, one of our CSA members, and the owner of Zinger Ranch Animal Refuge connected me to some folks who work to find good homes for older hens. A few weeks back they were able to take over 350 hens. The girls have been in quarantine, but all of our hens, plus 3 roosters, have new homes to go to.

And hopefully, by the end of this month they will be back for another 350. This is an enormous relief for

me. Having a conscientious organization to work with, I feel a lot more confident to bring in more chicks. We have a new flock coming May 1st and I will probably order another flock in August. Our "spring chickens" will start laying eggs in September and a flock coming in August would start laying in December or January. Our youngest flock is currently laying a few pullets and should be in good production in about 2 months, if not sooner. That will double our egg production by summer. And that's where the other issue comes in to play, with so many members on vacation over the summer, you all take less eggs, right at the time we have the most. It is a delicate balancing act to say the least.



I have been building a great relationship with Rosemary's Farm to fork, a fantastic restaurant here in Dixon. We are selling them as many dozens as I have to spare and hope

to be able to cover all of their eggs needs soon. This should help tremendously in the summer months. My goal is to have enough eggs year round to cover the CSA, the farmers market and wholesale and not have to short any of these sales avenues. For most of the winter we weren't able to bring any eggs to the market, which is a loss of over a few thousand dollars, which would cover much of their feed bill. So that hurts, and I really don't want that to happen again next year. If you have been holding off on ordering eggs, that shortage is over, order as many Eatwell Eggs as you like!

Adult Cooking Class

March 16th is our first Adult Cooking Class. I am pretty excited about this. My goal is to keep it pretty free-form, working from the current CSA box, to give you some inspiration and confidence to take home with you. And at the end we will sit down and enjoy the meal together. If you are interested you can get info & tickets here. This could be an excellent time to bring a friend who is interested in the CSA but nervous to dive into seasonal eating. And please let me know of any dietary restrictions. I hope to schedule another kids/family class soon.

Did you know you can make slaw using Savoy cabbage? This recipe I linked gives you a lot of options for co-ingredients and different dressing styles. It will be softer or more tender, less crunchy than red or green cabbage. But it would pair nicely with the radishes and/or fennel in this week's box.

Creamy Savoy Cabbage & Carrots

Recipe found on BBC Good Food

This is a dish you could add some of the finely chopped green garlic to for a little extra deliciousness.

1 Savoy cabbage
4 large Carrots
4 TB Butter
4 TB Heavy Cream
Pinch of Nutmeg
Salt & Pepper

Pull off any tough outer leaves from the cabbage and discard. Cut in half, then remove the hard inner core. Rinse the leaves, then shred as finely as you can. Cut the carrots into fine, thin strips or grate with a box grater. Bring a pan of water to the boil and add the cabbage and carrots. Boil for 6 mins until just tender, then drain. Return to the hot pan and add the butter and cream. Season with nutmeg, pepper, and salt if you like, and stir well to coat. Serve immediately.

Green Garlic Scrambled Eggs

Recipe from Farm Fresh To You

It might seem silly to include a recipe for scrambled eggs, but sometimes we forget how simple it should be, so here is a reminder.

1 TB Butter
2 Green Garlic stalks
4 Eggs
Salt and Pepper to taste

Wash the green garlic. Remove the root end. Thinly slice the green garlic, including the green part. In a large pan over medium-low heat, melt the butter. Add the green garlic and cook until softened, about 3 minutes. Scramble the eggs. Turn the heat down to the lowest setting and pour in the eggs. Stir constantly until the eggs are cooked through, about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper to taste. (Note: The eggs will be a little bit creamy, but not runny. If you like your eggs a little firmer, turn the heat up to medium for the last minute of cooking). Serve with toast.

Chickpea Stew With Orzo & Mustard Greens

Recipe from NYT Cooking by Melissa Clark

2 TB Extra-Virgin Olive Oil, more for drizzling
2 medium Carrots, peeled and chopped

1 small Fennel bulb, chopped
1 medium Onion, chopped
2 Garlic Cloves, minced
Pinch of red-pepper flakes
2 tsp minced fresh rosemary (optional)
2 cups Chicken or Vegetable broth (or water)
1 (15-ounce) can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
¾ cup roughly chopped cherry or grape tomatoes
½ cup Orzo
1 qt loosely packed Mustard greens or spinach (about 5 ounces) I would mix in Chard and Kale too
Salt and Black Pepper
Chopped Scallions, for garnish (optional)

¼ cup + finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

In a large pot, heat the olive oil over medium-high. Add the carrots, fennel or celery, and onion. Cook until tender, about 5 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic, red-pepper flakes and rosemary, if using, and cook for another 2 minutes. Pour in the broth, if using, or water, along with another 2 cups water, and bring to a boil. Once the mixture is boiling, add the chickpeas, tomatoes and orzo. Reduce to a simmer and cover with a lid. Simmer 10 minutes, or until the orzo is tender. Uncover and stir in the greens, letting them simmer until soft, about 2 minutes. Add more water if you want the mixture to be more souplike, and season with salt

and pepper. Ladle into bowls and top with chopped scallions (if desired), grated cheese and a drizzle of olive oil.

Roasted Radishes

Recipe by Stacie Hassing from Therealfooddietitians.com
These are surprisingly delicious.

1 lb Radishes
Butter, you can also use Avocado or Coconut Oil
Salt, flaky salt if you have it
Freshly ground Black Pepper
2 stalks Green Garlic, finely chopped
Fresh Parsley, finely chopped

Preheat oven to 425°F. In a bowl, combine the radishes, cooking fat (ghee, butter or oil), salt, and pepper; toss until the radishes are evenly coated. Spread radishes out in a single layer in a large enough baking dish. Bake for 20-25 minutes, tossing every 10 minutes. After the first 10 minutes of baking add the garlic and toss. Return to oven to bake an additional 10-15 minutes or until radishes are golden brown and easily pierced with a fork. If desired, serve with ranch dressing for dipping or drizzling on top and garnish with fresh parsley, dill, or chives.

This Week's Bag

*Savoy Cabbage
*Green Garlic
*Radishes
*Chard
*Oranges
*Pomelo
*Radicchio
*Parsley
Red Kale
Fennel
Mustard
*Box for 2