



Walking the Orchard

Beau and I had a lovely walk this morning, while it lightly rained on us. That boy loves running around in the wet! Let's keep our fingers crossed we only have gentle rains from here on out. Much of our orchard is in bloom or about to, and heavy rains will really do a number. Last year we lost ALL of our stone fruit! I mean there was literally NOTHING on the trees, not even ugly fruit. Those persistent storms simply took out all of the blossoms and left us with no fruit.



might have been, because the trucks were out last week taking the bees away, so maybe the timing was ok for them.

With regard to citrus, we were fortunate with last year's rains and storms. This year has been a remarkable year for citrus for us, like I haven't seen in a long time! The pomelos are now done, but we have loads of mandarins and oranges on trees still. I think we even have a lot of Valencias, not quite

ready yet, but almost there.

I am a smoothie lover, so most mornings I blend up some fresh juice, and fruit from the freezer, with some yogurt and a few other yummy ingredients to power up my morning. I think I could drink a ridiculous amount of smoothies so I really have to limit myself, and I am really enjoying all this fresh juice.

Our cherry trees have a lot of blossoms on them too. Last year, unlike all the other stone fruit, the cherries were amazing! They were some of the best I have ever eaten, AND we had loads of them. We do not really have bing cherries, so if you are looking for that typical bing cherry flavor, you probably won't get that from us. But



we did get loads of Royal Ann Cherries, which are yellow with a blush or red or orange. They were pretty spectacular. For all of the trees that bloom in the orchard, timing of storms and what happens the days after the storm, is really critical. As an example, we could have a fairly heavy rain, but after if there are several days of sun with a light breeze, the fruit could be



safe. But often storms bring heavy wind, not just rain, which can blow the blossoms right off. The last big storm we had up here did quite the number on the blooming almonds trees in our area. The ground looked like it was covered in snow! I feel for those almond growers, because there is not much one can do about the weather. And if it is too stormy the bees don't go out to pollinate as much. I am hoping, for their sake, most of that work was done. Thinking it

Update on Bags for 2

We moved on to phase two of our **Bags For 2** roll out. Last week we sent them to all of our Thursday folks. Next week I plan on switching over all the SF Wednesday deliveries. I am doing this rather slowly because it is a big deal, and I am trying very hard not to mess anything up. As I mentioned previously, there are a lot of logistics, like how to pack bags, they will not roll down our roller table, so we put 4 bags into large boxes and fill 4 at a time as they go down the line. Then there is the issue of how the driver handles them. I want to make sure it works well for everyone. So far the feedback has been 100% positive. If you are a Family Box member, nothing is changing for you. The new bags are ONLY for the Box for 2. Just like the boxes, PLEASE RETURN the bags so we can re-use them. And as always, look at the sign in sheet to make sure you take the correct size and any extras you may have. One last thing to mention, only take eggs if you see them listed under your name, and please read the labels before grabbing extras so you don't take someone else's, it happens more than you would think.:

Chard Tzatziki

Recipe from Martha Stewart's website

I am actually making this recipe today, but I am using homemade Creme Fraiche and a bit of cream cheese. I am also using a full bunch of green garlic, some chives I had left in the fridge, and adding some parsley too. If I can grab a bunch of spring onion, I will probably add a little of that too.

1 cup Chard, stemmed and finely chopped

1 Garlic Clove

¼ teaspoon coarse Salt

1 cup Greek Yogurt

1 TB Extra-Virgin Olive Oil

1 TB fresh Lemon Juice

⅛ tsp Cayenne Pepper

2 Whole-Wheat pitas, cut into wedges and toasted

Prepare an ice bath; set aside. Bring a large saucepan of water to a boil. Add chard; cook until just tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Drain. Immediately plunge into ice bath to stop the cooking. Drain. Using a mortar and pestle, grind garlic and salt into a paste. Stir chard, yogurt, garlic paste, oil, lemon juice, and cayenne pepper in a medium bowl. Serve with pita wedges.

Last night I chopped up a fennel bulb and cooked it slowly with oil on the stove over medium heat. I gave it quite a bit of time because I wanted it to get very soft and not burn. I added some green garlic to that pan as well. I happened to have a bunch of collards leftover from the market, so I chopped those up pretty small and once the fennel was quite soft I added the collard greens. Chard and or mustard, really any greens you have on hand, would be great in this simple dish. I added about a cup and a half of water, a few spritzes of vinegar, a bit of soy sauce and a sprinkling of our Smoked Chili salt for a bit of kick, then let it all cook until the collards were done. Absolutely delicious! Some greens cook faster than others, for instance the mustard greens will cook much faster than collards, and probably a bit faster than chard too. So just keep an eye on it. And of course, you can also throw in some cabbage, cause cabbage and fennel are delicious together.

Green Garlic

A sure sign that spring is close. These tender, tasty stalks come just in time, when my stash of clove garlic is either too sad to use or all gone. Now I use mostly green garlic, since much of it can be used, from the white bottoms to the green tops.



Cut off the little
Root Ends

A Little Lesson On Fennel

Some folks struggle with this vegetable, but it is really versatile and so good for you. AND all parts can be used. The stalks and fronds make a delicious tea. Here is a [link](#) to a recipe from University of Ari-



FRONDS

Bulb
this is
the part
you
want to
slice thin

Bottom of
bulb cut &
compost

This Week's Bag

*Savoy Cabbage

*Lemons

*Mandarins

*Chives

*Chard

*Green Garlic

*Fennel

Spring Onions

Parsley

Mustard

zona's website. You can also use the fronds to make pesto. Now I have never tried this, but I did find several recipes. The one below is a vegan version, but here is a link to a recipe from [Serious Eats](#), that includes anchovies. Whether you want to make this particular recipe or not, I do recommend reading the article because he gives some great tips for making a wide range of pestos and chimichurris and the concept of "component" cooking,

where you prepare a bunch of things to have on hand rather than making specific dishes. This method works really well with CSA boxes because you can pre-prep and then use items as you choose during the week.

Fennel Frond Pesto

Recipe found on HolyCow.com

4 packed cups chopped Fennel Fronds (from two bulbs)

2 cloves Garlic (crushed and chopped)

½ to 1 tsp ground Black Pepper

¼ cup unsalted Pumpkin Seeds (you can use salted, but dial down the added salt in that case. You can also use nuts like walnuts, pecans, cashews or pine nuts)

4-8 TB Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

Place all the ingredients except the oil in a food processor. With the blade running, drizzle in the olive oil until you have a coarse paste. Check for salt and pepper and add more if needed.



Chopped
Green Garlic