



Let's Talk About The Weather

People assume we are all thrilled with all this water, and like most things in life, it is not a simple yay or nay. There are many positives, for example Lake Berryessa has risen over 25' since December 1, and is now 20' below the Glory Hole. Beyond our region, reservoirs and lakes are looking pretty good for the time of year, and we still have all that snow melt coming. Another potential tick for the plus column is hopefully this much rain will delay fire season. And, heavy rain years tend to reduce squirrel population. All great things.

But on the other hand..... it is raining agin this morning, and the guys are out in there right now picking veggies for the boxes. I am so grateful for their dedication to get the job done. Because we are not a large farm, we harvest everything by hand. Bigger farms, like Terra Firma have equipment to do specific jobs, like harvest carrots. (They do grow some of the best carrots.) With the ground so wet they can't get their machine out to harvest, so the carrots are in the field, growing and waiting. If you were wondering why we haven't had any for a while now, it is because it is literally too wet for them to harvest.

The storms have brought down many of our poplar trees. Last Friday when we had a break in the rain, the guys were cutting, moving and stacking. Some of the tress had come down on our main irrigation pipe, so it was important to get it moved.

Our farm roads are a mess, and it is pretty hard getting out to the fields. Last week we had a delivery of chicken feed, which is stored in 3 grain silos that are out in one of the fields. When



the delivery truck tried to get out there, he couldn't get close enough and had to come back. Thankfully, farmers never throw anything away, so the guys pulled out the grain totes we used years ago to store our wheat. You can see them loading the feed into the bags, right out of the truck.

Beyond our little Eatwell Oasis, our region is heavy in almond orchards, which are blooming. Sadly, the storms have knocked off the blossoms early, and there is great risk of damage with this much moisture. And land that isn't planted in orchard is mostly bare fields right now; weeds will sprout up quickly. Amazing how they can grow when other things seem to struggle so much. Between the blooming orchards and bare fields crop dusters are out flying every time there is a break in the rain, even if it is just a few hours break. In the picture below you can see one of the planes flying right over the farm house. A couple of weeks ago, one was fly too close to our property so I was out there recording him on my phone, I suspect he saw me because after his third fly over he changed his route. I mention this because it is important to know what it takes to get beautiful fruits, a lot of spraying. All the fruit growers, organic and conventional will be spraying a lot this year. Their businesses rely on good yields, so they will do what they have to to ensure that. Nigel gave up spraying years ago, even though we do have organic approved options available. He didn't like to use them, so our fruit is pretty ugly and our yields are not great. Later this summer, when our ugly peaches and nectarines are in the box, think back to the photo of that plane and rest assured your fruit is clean.

RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

Last night made Spinach Ricotta Gnocchi. The gnocchi were really good, but I stupidly forgot the parmesan, and so the flavor was not as perfect as it could have been. Also, I was hungry and got lazy with chopping and drying spinach, which would have made the texture much better. But even with my silly mistakes and laziness, they were still satisfying and made for a great one dish meal. Of course, I pulled out some tomato sauce that I stock piled last summer.

Spinach Ricotta Gnocchi

Recipe by Celia Brooks Brown

1 bag Spinach, wash well

Handfull of parsley leaves, finely chopped

1 or 2 stalks for Green Garlic, finely chopped

5 oz Ricotta

3 oz All Purpose Flour

2 Eatwell Eggs

3 1/2 to 4 oz grated Parmesan

A good grating of Nutmeg

Salt and Pepper to taste

Boil the kettle. Place the spinach in a large bowl and pour boiling water over it. Leave for 2 mins until wilted, then drain thoroughly. Leave to cool, then wrap a clean tea towel around the spinach. Hold it over the sink and squeeze out as much water as possible. Finely chop. Place the spinach, parsley, garlic, ricotta, flour, eggs, cheese and a generous grating of nutmeg into a large bowl and season with salt and pepper. Use a fork to stir very thoroughly until everything is completely mixed. Using wet hands, form the mixture into walnut-size balls. Place on a large plate or tray and refrigerate for at least 30 mins. When ready to cook, heat the oven to warm and bring a large pan of water to the boil. Reduce the heat to medium and drop in batches of about 8-10 gnocchi at a time. They will sink to the bottom, and when they rise to the top give them about 1 min more, then remove with a slotted spoon and keep warm while you cook the rest. Serve the gnocchi on warm plates drizzled with olive oil and scattered with rocket (arugula) and more cheese.

Alpine Daikon

Is the traditional Korean Daikon. We grew this variety last year and it did so well for us I wanted to grow them again. They didn't get too enormous like the daikon we grew in the past, so they work well in the boxes. You can use the leaves and stems too. To get you jump started on using daikon in a non-traditional way here is a recipe for French Fry Daikon.

Recipe found on [Cooking On The Weekends](#)

5 cups (about 1 3/4-pounds) Daikon radish, peeled & sliced - see instruction no. 2. for instructions

3 1/2 TB Grapeseed Oil

1 1/2 tsp Chili paste, like Sambal Oelek

1 tsp Tamari or Soy Sauce

1/2 tsp Ginger pulp, freshly grated

1/2 tsp Sugar

1/2 tsp Salt

Preheat the oven to 475°F, and adjust a rack to the center. Cut the Daikon into sections approximately 3-inches long, then cut about 1/4-inch slices off the side of each one, to make a base. Stand the sections on their bases, and cut them, vertically into slices about 1/4-inch thick. Stand these slices on top of each

other, and then cut them into sticks about 1/4-inch thick. Add all of the Daikon slices to a baking sheet and set aside. In a small bowl, combine the oil, chili paste, Tamari or soy sauce, ginger, sugar and salt. Drizzle this over the Daikon slices and then use your hands to toss them until they're all evenly coated and in a single layer. Place the baking sheet in the preheated 475°F oven and roast until they are golden brown on all sides, about 30 minutes. (You should gently toss/flip them about halfway through the cooking time.) Add a double layer of paper towels to another baking sheet, and when the fries are done, add them on top of the towels to drain and cool. Serve!

This Week's Box

*Beets Terra Firm

*Red Russian Kale

*Mustard

*Green Garlic

*Spinach

*Mandarins

*Alpine Daikon

Collards

Broccoli

Chard

Lettuce

* = Items in Box for 2

Roasted Beets and Mustard Salad

Recipe by Amy Chaplin on FoodNetwork

4 small Beets, thinly sliced, no need to peel

1 TB Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Sea Salt

FOR DRESSING: 1/4 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil

2 TB Red Wine Vinegar

2 TB White Balsamic Vinegar

Hefty pinch of Salt

SALAD: 4 cups bite size Mustard Greens

4 cups Spinach leaves, well washed and torn

1 cup Dill

1/2 cup shaved aged Goat Cheese

1/4 cup toasted Pistachios, roughly chopped

Roast the beets: Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and add beets. Drizzle with olive oil and salt and toss to combine.

Spread out over tray (it's okay if they overlap a little) to prevent them from overcooking and becoming too crisp.

Roast for 16 to 20 minutes or until tender and lightly browning. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.

Combine all dressing ingredients in a small bowl, whisk to combine and set aside. Place mustard, spinach, dill and shaved goat cheese in a bowl. Add the cooled beets, drizzle with dressing and toss to combine. Top with pistachios and serve.