



Big Ag

This time of year the spray planes are out flying whenever there is a break in the rain. They are a sad reminder of the world around me, one that fights nature, and relies on chemicals, loads of them. When you drive around you will find a few fields of wheat, or acres and acres of bare land. To keep those fields “clean”, they spray and kill everything; the plants and the life in the soil. This photo shows you what acres of sprayed land looks like. Many of the farmers with orchards spray under their trees too. The effect of killing everything under your trees becomes very obvious when it rains a lot, because the soil is not healthy and does not hold water well, so much of it spills out across the roads here. Fortunately, there are also quite a few orchards around here encouraging natural growth under their trees and the view of that is quite beautiful, nature abounds, as you can see in the photo below.



thinking about the full impact of my purchase. With that purchase I am supporting that barren land, and those poison spraying planes. Chemical based big ag in no way supports nature, it works against it and destroys anything in its path.

Besides killing soil live, “Clean” fields don’t offer any nourishment for all the critters who should be sharing the land with us. There is nothing for the birds to eat, or the insects. All the life in the soil is slowly destroyed. In the meantime, invasive plants/weeds are getting smarter and adapting to



the poisons. Of course the response to that is finding stronger/better poisons to apply to the land.

As supporters of organic, we have all heard these stories for years. Working in the natural foods world most of my life, I certainly heard and read much on the negative affects of chemical use, but it wasn’t until I lived here in the “country” and experienced the planes flying overhead, that I really felt, to my core, the gravity of our modern advancements. There are occasions when I have cravings for junk, and every once in a while, I give into them, but I can’t help

But I have really great news, we can make a difference by supporting farms like ours! Local, organic and diversified small farms provide food and shelter for countless migratory birds on their journeys, and loads of native bees, and support the pollinators. On our land you will find nests in our poplar trees that are the homes for owls and fat hawks. Many of you have been here for our over night events and have walked the farm in the evenings and early mornings, you have seen the diversity sharing this space with us. And even though big ag and its mono-crop farming is all around us, nature finds sanctuary here. That only happens because you all are a part of this important work. As heartbreaking as it is for me to drive around and see 100 acres of brown, dead fields, I know there is a solution and what we, and other farms like us, are doing is such important work. Your commitment to this work is as important as any of the work we do here on the land. Diverse farms can only survive with the support of their communities, there are no government subsidies for what we do:) Thank you for choosing this!

Warm Season Events

In normal years, I would have already been scheduling Strawberry Days, but this will be a very delayed season. It looks like we will have a good break in the rain, but the temps are still very cold for this time of year, especially at night. So be patient, I can’t plan anything just yet because I simply don’t know how things will look over the next few weeks. I know our tomatoes are going to be quite late, but I have order over 5,000 San Marazano plants this year, so we should be in good shape for saucing! Lavender harvest will most likely be a later in June and I’m not quite sure how I want to handle the harvest this year. If we do it this year, I am inclined to go back to the original style and get the help out in the field. And wanted to mention, there is a surprising amount of fat olives on the trees still, plump from all this rain, if anyone is interested in coming up to pick let me know, text me at 530-554-3971.

RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

Pasta E Fagioli

Recipe from Love and Lemons

2 TB Extra Virgin Olive Oil, plus more for drizzling
1 medium Yellow Onion, diced
1 small Fennel bulb, finely chopped
2 medium carrots, finely chopped
1 tsp Salt, plus more to taste
Freshly ground Black Pepper
3 Garlic Cloves, grated, OR use your bunch of Green
1 TB Tomato Paste
1 tsp chopped fresh Rosemary
1 14 oz can diced Tomatoes
3 cups cooked Cannellini Beans, drained and rinsed
4 cups Vege Broth
Parmesan Rind, optional
1 cup small pasta
2 large Chard OR Kale leaves, stemmed and torn, about 6 cups
1-2 pinches of Red Pepper Flakes

Heat the olive oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion, fennel, carrots, salt, and several grinds of pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 to 15 minutes, or until very soft. Add the garlic, tomato paste, and rosemary and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes and their juices, the beans, broth, and Parmesan rind, if using. Simmer for 20 minutes. Add the pasta and simmer for 10 more minutes, or until al dente. Stir in the kale and red pepper flakes and cook until the kale is wilted. Season to taste and serve.

White Bean and Fennel Dip

Recipe by Melissa Clark from NYT Cooking

1 tsp fennel seeds
2 - 15-ounce cans white beans, drained and rinsed
1 fat Garlic clove, finely chopped OR use your Green Garlic
1 tsp Lemon zest
2 tsp fresh Lemon Juice
1 tsp Salt

1 Fennel bulb, with fronds
1/3 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil, or more as needed
In a small skillet over medium heat, toast the fennel seeds until fragrant, 1 to 2 minutes. Lightly crush seeds in a mortar and pestle. In a food processor, combine fennel seed, beans, garlic, zest, juice and salt. Chop 3 tablespoons of the fennel fronds and add to the bowl. Process mixture until smooth; with the motor running, slowly drizzle in the oil until combined. Taste and adjust seasonings. Trim the fennel stalks and peel away the outer layer of the bulb; discard trims and outer layer. Cut bulb lengthwise into 1/2-inch-thick sticks. Serve alongside the dip.

Mandarin Orange Chiffon Cake

Recipe by Christopher Tan, NYT Cooking

For the Meringue:

3/4 cup/140 grams superfine (caster) sugar
1 TB/10 grams potato starch
9 large Egg whites (325 grams)
1 teaspoon Cream of Tartar

For The Cake Batter

1 3/4 cups/215 grams cake flour
2 tsp Double-Acting Baking Powder
2/3 cup/120 grams superfine Sugar
7 large Egg Yolks
1/2 cup/110 grams Sunflower oil
2 TB Grated Mandarin zest
3/4 cup/170 grams fresh Mandarin orange juice
1 TB /10 grams fresh Lime or Lemon juice
1 tsp Vanilla extract
1/2 tsp fine Salt

This Week's Box

*Chives
*Chard
*Frills Mustard
*Green Garlic
*Fennel
*Mandarins
*Tunrips OR Daikon
Dandelion
Cabbage
Cilantro OR Collards
Red Russian Kale
* = Items in Box for 2

Arrange one oven rack in the lower third of the oven and heat oven to 325 degrees. Have ready a 10-inch ungreased, unlined chiffon cake pan (a 2-piece tube pan). Make the meringue: Mix sugar with potato starch. In a clean bowl, whisk egg whites and cream of tartar with an electric stand or hand mixer on low speed, gradually increasing the speed to high, until the foam starts to pile up in floppy mounds. Gradually add sugar mixture while beating constantly, then beat until meringue is slightly glossy and stiff peaks just start to form. When you lift the whisk quickly and vertically out of the meringue, it should leave behind a pointed peak which curls over just slightly at the tip. Set meringue aside briefly while you proceed. Prepare batter: Sift cake flour and baking powder into a large mixing bowl. Add sugar and whisk very well to thoroughly combine everything. Set aside. Whisk egg yolks, oil, orange zest and juice,

lime juice, vanilla and salt together in another bowl until well blended. Scrape this mixture into the flour mixture and whisk gently just until batter is smooth. Briefly re-beat meringue for 10 seconds or so to redistribute any moisture which may have settled out. Add one-third of meringue to the cake batter and fold gently until almost blended. Add half of the remaining meringue to the batter and fold in likewise. Lastly, scrape the batter into the meringue mixing bowl and fold it into the remaining meringue until incorporated. Pour finished mixture gently into the pan. Bake on a low oven rack for 55 to 65 minutes. When the cake is done, a cake tester inserted into it midway between the pan side and the central tube will emerge damp but clean, with no gooey batter clinging to it. Remove the cake from the oven and immediately turn it upside down. Stand it on the cake pan's feet, or, if the pan has no feet or if the cake has risen higher than the feet, balance the central column on a narrow jar or bottle neck. Let cake cool completely. To unmold, turn cake right side up, then run a long, thin, sharp knife around the cake's edge and around the central tube. Lift tube and pan base insert out of the pan, and the cake with it. Run the knife around the base of the cake to free it from the insert, then invert it onto a serving plate and remove the insert. Slice cake with a very sharp plain or serrated knife to serve. Once fully cool, the cake can be refrigerated in an airtight container for 5 to 6 days.