



Winter Work

Winter is a good time to work on cleanup projects, of which we have many. Projects have to be scheduled around harvesting and packing CSA boxes, and that leaves us with Thursdays and Saturdays to get that kind of work done. So far this winter, it seems like Mother Nature has decided those are also the best days to rain.

A yearly project is pruning the fruit trees in the orchard. And over the years we have built up a massive pile of trimmings. This year I am borrowing our neighbor's chipper to start "chipping away" at those piles. In this photo you see Beau inspecting the project. He is not happy about the water puddle in front of that massive pile:). Looking at this week's forecast, I see we are expecting rain Friday through next Monday, another weekend lost.



On the clear days, walking out on the farm is so refreshing. Even though it is really wet and slippery in certain spots, it is fun watching Beau avoid the puddles. I have to look down a lot, paying close attention to my footing, so I don't end up feet over head. But looking down at our feet sometimes we make some interesting discoveries. This time it was clear we have quite a few coyotes wandering the farm. These paw prints were actually very close to our chicken houses. Many nights you can hear them yipping and howling, and if it is foggy they sound like they are just outside the house.

Coyotes are a part of the landscape here. And yes, they do get a chicken every once in a while. They need to eat too, and as long as it doesn't get out of control, I can accept that as the natural process of things.

Out in fields 8 & 9 the wheat that David from Capay Mills planted last month, is looking fantastic! The Italians are growing nicely and the Ooland has popped out of the ground and quickly catching up. David said that Ooland is a fast growing wheat, and apparently a pretty rare grain. So planting this precious wheat made for a couple of nervous week waiting for germination. When I texted him yesterday with the update, he told me that was the best news he had had all day.

This year, Jose and I plan to finally get these very old chicken tractors broken down and removed. We built them many years ago the first time we experimented raising chickens for meat. I believe that time around it was a French breed, the Poulet Rouge. We have tried raising meat birds twice, Nigel was always so adventurous. As much as we both loved the idea of making it happen, it is highly impractical. Heritage breeds take a very long time to grow to a good size, our Black Australorps took almost 18 weeks. The cheap chicken at the super market is ready for harvesting in under 6 weeks! We had an extra 12 weeks of feeding and care to pay for, so the numbers could never pencil out. Adding to the financial hurdles, processing has become quite the ordeal. Over the years local processors have closed, consolidated or retired, leaving us with almost nowhere to take them. So all that's left of those projects are these old chicken tractors. In the summer the ground squirrels run in and out of them; they do make a perfect hiding spot. Definitely a project long overdue!

Seville, Bitter Or Sour Orange

Our Sevilles are ready now, and it looks like we have a pretty good crop this year. It is believed that the Seville Orange is a cross between a Pomelo and a Mandarin, originating in Southeast Asia. Brought to Spain by the Moors back in the 10th century, the trees line the streets of Seville which is how it got that name. We are familiar with them, primarily

because of Paddington and his insatiable love of marmalade. But Seville oranges are also featured in the Cuban marinade/sauce "Mojo". One of our SF members looks forward to making pollo pibil or cochinita pibil. He uses the juice and zest in the sauce. If you are like Paddington, a lover of Marmalade, BBC Good Food has a great [recipe](#). Our 3 lb bag is just about



the right amount for one batch. I also found a recipe by [Rosebud Preserves](#) that explains how you can freeze Sevilles and make marmalade later in the year.

Wakefield Cabbage is a particularly good variety for Kraut. I already shared information for making kraut a while back, but if you would like a quick refresher here you go: finely chop (after coring) then weigh the cabbage. I add 2% salt and massage to make sure the salt is well mixed in. Then I put my cabbage into a mason jar and start to pound it with the stick end of a wooden spoon. If all of the cabbage doesn't fit into your jar, don't worry, it will break down and you will have more room to add a bit more in. Keep pounding until you have enough juice to cover the cabbage. You might need to put it into a smaller jar, you don't want a lot of air space. I like to use a wide mouth so I can use the disc of a regular mouth jar right on top of the cabbage with something heavy on top of that to keep the cabbage submerged under the juice. Loosely top with the lid and let it sit for several days. Depending on how warm the environment it could ferment quickly if warmer or more slowly if colder. Check it every day to make sure the cabbage stays under the juice. I find our cabbages ferment quickly. This is a great way to use up a cabbage, it is easy, healthy, and it stores for months in the fridge.

Roasted Broccoli & Fennel Soup

Recipe found on [Playful Cooking](#)

It is dark, cold, and kind of damp, perfect soup weather. Here is a great recipe for this week's Broccoli and Fennel and it can easily be made vegetarian/vegan.

2 cups Broccoli florets
 1 Fennel bulb (sliced)
 5 Garlic cloves (peeled)
 2 tsp Olive Oil
 1 tsp Salt
 ½ tsp freshly cracked Pepper
 1 tsp Butter
 ½ cup diced White Onion
 1 cup diced Potato
 2 cups Vegetable/chicken stock
 1 tsp dried Thyme, use the fresh if you have it
 Grated Parmesan Cheese

Preheat oven to 400 F. Layer the broccoli florets, sliced fennel, and garlic cloves in a baking sheet. Drizzle 1 teaspoon of oil, salt and pepper. Mix it all together and place on the middle rack of the oven. Roast for 30 minutes. In the meantime, place a heavy bottom saucepan on medium heat and drop the butter. Once the butter melts, drop the onion along with the dried thyme. Sauté for 2 minutes and then, drop the diced potato along with the stock. (If the stock doesn't have salt, sprinkle 1 teaspoon of salt into the pan) Crank up the heat and bring the stock to a boil. Then, lower the heat to medium and let it simmer for 20 minutes or until the potatoes are softened. Once the broccoli and fennel are roasted and the potatoes are softened, put everything in a blender and blend until smooth. Check for salt and add any, if required. Ladle the hot soup in the bowls. Garnish with fennel leaves, drizzle the remaining olive oil and sprinkle the parmesan cheese on top.

Did you know you can roast citrus? It is quite simple, wash, cut into quarters or slices, toss with olive oil, salt and pepper, and a few herbs if you like. Put onto a sheet pan and roast until it browns and caramelizes. Then you can chop it up and add to many dishes, and salads, especially a hearty grains and greens salad like this one from Food52. If you would like more complete directions and a lot of suggestions for how to use roasted citrus, click this [link for Food52](#).

Chard Wild Rice Salad w/Orange Vinaigrette

Recipe by Elizabeth Stark found on Food52

This recipe calls for Blood Oranges, but I would roast up some of my oranges to chop into the salad and use Pomelo Juice in the dressing.

For the Dressing:

1 TB Blood Orange Zest plus 3 TB Juice
 2 TB minced Shallot
 1 TB Dijon mustard
 1/4 tsp Sea Salt
 1/2 cup Olive Oil

For the Salad:

Sea salt, to taste
 1/4 cup raw, hulled Pepitas
 2 TB Extra-Virgin Olive Oil
 1 Shallot, sliced
 1 bunch Chard, chopped
 1/4 cup dried Tart Cherries
 3 medium Blood oranges, peeled and sliced into rounds
 2 TB minced Chives

Ground black pepper, to taste

In a small bowl, whisk the blood orange zest and juice, shallot, Dijon, and sea salt to combine. Slowly whisk in the olive oil until the oil is well-combined and the dressing is thick and emulsified. Cook wild rice according to instructions or bring 3 1/2 cups water to a boil over high heat. Add rice and a generous pinch of sea salt, allow mixture to bubble up, then cover, turn heat to low, and simmer for 45 minutes or until rice is cooked through but still has some bite. Strain, place rice back into saucepan, and toss with 1/4 cup of the blood orange vinaigrette. Place a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the pepitas and cook, shaking pan often, just until the first few pop. Remove pepitas, set aside, and replace skillet over medium heat. Add the olive oil and shallots, and sauté for 2 minutes, or until edges begin to brown. Toss in the chard, along with a pinch or two of sea salt, and sauté for 4 minutes or just until chard begins to wilt. Toss the warm shallots and chard with the rice. Add the cherries and more dressing. Adjust salt levels as needed.

Plate salad, tucking blood orange slices throughout. Finish with a drizzle of dressing, black pepper, toasted pepitas, and minced chives.

This Week's Box

*Broccoli
 *Fennel
 *Wakefield Cabbage
 *Butternut
 *Orange OR Mandarin
 Spring Raab
 *Pomelo
 *Chard Or Kale
 Napa Bunches
 Thyme
 Bok Choy/Tatsoi
 * = Items in Box for 2