



High Ground Organics Community Supported Agriculture

Week 16, June 28th and 29th, 2017

The "Lion" in the Oak Tree, by Jeanne Byrne and Amelia Pedersen

As farmers we have to notice the little things—especially little things with voracious appetites like aphids, rust flies, and mites. When Steve comes in with a discolored leaf and gets out the magnifying glass, there's always a little bit of dread while I wait for him to decide what tiny, tiny critter is wreaking havoc with the crop this time. But, some tiny critters are good for the farm. One of the purposes of our hedgerows is to attract beneficial insects – the ones that prey on the pests. Recently our daughter's attention to the little things led her to make a fascinating discovery about one of those critters on our farm. Here's Amelia:

While I was climbing one of the numerous oak trees that populate the slopes of our farm and hedgerows, I noticed what looked like an ordinary small piece of moss on a branch. But before I moved on I was forced to take a closer look—this moss was moving! I watched intently as the insect (about the size of a lady bug) crawled along the bark blindly poking around with its two large pinchers to grab bits of moss and place them on its back to disguise itself. After some time the insect settled down into a crevice, looking unrecognizable as an insect. Curious as to what this creature was I looked it up and realized, to my surprise, that it was the larvae of a lacewing fly. This little blind camouflage artist was a beneficial insect enticed to our farm by our hedgerows and working hard to keep our farm pest free.

Lacewing larvae are voracious predators. This led to the nickname "aphid lion," but they also eat other soft-bodied insects like spider mites, whiteflies, thrips, and other insect larvae. The oak was just one of the many habitats lacewing larvae can inhabit. Adult lacewings feed mainly on nectar and pollen, which is why the flowering plants in our hedgerows are so important. An interesting fact about adult lacewings is that tympanal organs on the base of their forewings give them very good hearing. Using this structure they can sense a bat's echolocative clicks, and respond by closing their wings and falling to the ground. We know from the researchers who have done studies on our farm that we have a lot of bats on the property, so it's good that the lacewings have a way to avoid being eaten. Let the bats eat the pest insects instead!

These insects are not only beneficial to our farm, but also pretty cute, and have fascinating ways to stay hidden from their predators.

Veggie Notes, by Jason Johnson

Always rinse produce before use. Everything should be refrigerated.

July 4th is right around the corner and for those of you staying in town, this week's box will undoubtedly be featured in the festivities. It's not like anyone needs an excuse to move their kitchen outside and invite all their friends to come stand in their yard, but it's nice when it's a national effort. While you are standing out by the grill, you might as well cook some of these veggies.

Everything lined up just right the day that **romanesco** popped into existence. I would venture to say that Fibonacci found it very tasty, as it is essentially edible math. My recommendation is to chop this equation of vegetable lengthwise into 1 inch thick steaks, brush with oil and a generous amount of salt and pepper, the lay them on the grill for about 5 minutes, turning after the first side is charred to your liking. The result is a beautiful and rustic chunk of geometry that sits well beside the heartiest of outside dishes.

The same is true with the **summer squash**, though admittedly not as awe inspiring in shape. Cut these a little thinner and cook them for a shorter time on a hot grill. You want to char the outside without letting it get all floppy.

For a new take on a summer classic, chop your **cabbage** into wedges, brush it with oil, salt and pepper, then grill it before using it for slaw. The key to this one is making sure you don't overcook it. Nobody wants soft slaw! Grill it on high heat for just a couple minutes per side, then remove and let cool. When you are ready, chop the **cabbage** into slaw-sized pieces, and add to a bowl with shredded **carrots** and roughly chopped **cilantro**.

Slowly incorporate the juice of one lime and enough olive oil to coat. Salt and pepper to taste. The smokiness of the charred **cabbage** will pair very well with the freshness of the lime and **cilantro**. You may find yourself wanting to add a bit of chili powder.

With the **kale**, you should try a simple salad that uses the saltiness of Bragg's Liquid Aminos to cut the harshness of raw onion. I first tried this salad at the New Leaf Community Market in Santa Cruz, and my partner, Hayley, was sure she could recreate it. And recreate it, she did. Rip the **kale** into salad-sized pieces, then massage with a little oil and a pinch of salt to break down the fibers. Then add the juice of one lemon, ¼ - ½ an onion thinly sliced, sesame seeds, and liquid aminos to taste. The whole salad comes together in about five minutes and it is fantastic with fish or chicken.

In The Box

Strawberries

Cilantro

Purple Carrots

Savoy Cabbage

Red Oak Lettuce

Red Russian OR Lacinato
Kale

Mixed Summer Squash
Cauliflower OR Romanesco

All produce is certified organic. All vegetables and fruit were grown by High Ground Organics. Note: last minute substitutions may be made.

South West Cilantro Pesto, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

1 bunch of cilantro, mostly just leaves (some stems are okay)	1 largish cloves garlic, peeled and chopped
¼ cup pepitas	¼ cup pine nuts
Juice of 1 lemon	1 generous pinch salt
Pepper to taste	¼ tsp. fresh ground coriander seed, or as needed
Olive oil as needed (around 4-6 tablespoons)	3-4 TBS Romano. Dry Jack, or Cotija cheese, finely grated

Fit the processor with the blade.

Toss the garlic into the processor. Add a tablespoon or two of the lemon juice. Process finely.

Add the pepitas and pulse to just break up. Then add the pine nuts and pulse to break up.

Add the cilantro and a little lemon juice and pulse to shred. Sprinkle with the coriander seed.

Add 2 tablespoons olive oil, then puree briefly (30 seconds). If the cilantro does not seem to be breaking up, add more oil. Check the contents of the bowl to see if the pesto is fine enough. If not, puree just long enough to achieve the correct consistency. Add oil as necessary to achieve a texture like a chunky mayonnaise.

When the nuts and cilantro have reached the right consistency, add the cheese, another tablespoon of oil and pulse to combine all the ingredients. Check for consistency and flavor. If the pesto seems too oily, add a little lemon juice to brighten the flavors and loosen the texture. If it seems too stiff, add a little oil. Season with pepper, pulse a couple times to mix in, and the pesto is ready to use. The finished pesto should still be a bit chunky, but it should pour.

Chef's Notes: If you wish, you could use lime juice instead of lemon juice, and you could make it spicy by adding in some jalapeño or serrano chili. You can add a tablespoon or two of the pesto to ¼ cup of mayonnaise for a nice spread for sandwiches and fish tacos also.

Yield: Around 1 cup

Slaw of Red Cabbage, Carrot, and Summer Squash with a South West Bent, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

This was made to go on a fried chicken sandwich, but is great as is. Using a Ben-Riner or other fixed blade slicer (or even a food processor) makes this a quick-fix dish.

½ head (6-8 cups) red cabbage, sliced finely with a Ben-Riner	4 large, sweet carrots (2 scant cups), cut into 1½-inch matchsticks (use the middle comb of the slicer)
1 cup heaping summer squash (2-4 squash) cut into 1½-inch matchsticks (use the middle comb of the slicer)	¼ cup heaping, or more if preferred, pine nuts or roasted almonds, coarsely chopped
1 cup, or as needed, Creamy South West Dressing (recipe follows)	Salt and pepper to taste

Put the cabbage and carrots into a bowl, and drizzle with enough dressing to evenly coat the ingredients. The cabbage

will shrink down some, so be a little conservative with the dressing at first. Using your hands or tongs, vigorously toss the cabbage to mix with the carrots and evenly dress everything. Let rest 10 minutes in the refrigerator, then assess the dressing. Add more if you think it needs it. Add the summer squash threads and gently toss to combine. Season with salt and pepper. Wait a few minutes for flavors to merge. Test for flavor and adjust dressing or seasoning and adjust as needed. Scatter the nuts over the slaw and gently mix in. Refrigerate until ready to use.

Chef's Notes: If you want something sweet in there, like raisins, try dried tart cherries, or dried apricots cut into small bits. Diced firm apples could also fill the bill.

Yield: Around 6-7 cups

Creamy South West Dressing, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

¼ cup white balsamic vinegar	1/3rd cup cilantro stems
¼ tsp. each coriander seed and cumin seed, powdered	¼ tsp. dried thyme, powdered
Salt and pepper to taste	1 tsp. agave syrup, or to taste
¼ cup olive oil	¾ cup plain yogurt (not Greek)

Place the vinegar and the herbs and spices into a blender with the agave and wait ten minutes for the flavors to marry. Add the cilantro stems, and starting on low, work up to high and purée the stems, blending on high for 2 minutes (unless you are using a Vita-Mix, then just blend until smooth.)

Turn off the blender and remove the top. Add the yogurt, re-cap the blender and blend until yogurt is smooth.

Remove the center plug from the cap, and with the motor running on high, drizzle in the oil in a thin steady stream until the oil is used up or the “whirlpool” in the center of the dressing fills in.

Turn off the machine and taste the dressing. Adjust the seasonings as needed. If there are still chunks in the dressing, pour through a fine mesh strainer. Keep refrigerated until ready to use. Flavor will start to fall off after 3-4 days.

Yield: Around 1 cup

Basic Roasted Cauliflower or Romanesco, from Chrissi Brewer

1 head of cauliflower or Romanesco	2-3 cloves of garlic, peeled and coarsely minced
Lemon juice from half a lemon	Olive oil
Coarse salt and freshly ground black pepper	Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 400°F. Cut cauliflower into florets and put in a single layer in an oven-proof baking dish. Toss in the garlic. Sprinkle lemon juice over cauliflower and drizzle each piece with olive oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

Place casserole in the hot oven, uncovered, for 25-30 minutes, or until the top is lightly brown. Test with a fork for desired doneness. Fork tines should be able to easily pierce the cauliflower. Remove from oven and sprinkle generously with Parmesan cheese. Serve immediately.

Serves: 4