



# High Ground Organics Community Supported Agriculture

Week 25, September 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2015

## Farm Update, by Jeanne Byrne

We've had an excellent response to the WorthWild campaign to fund the reusable crates. We're already a third of the way to our goal! We appreciate all your supportive comments as well. I think this is a good direction to go in.

We're excited this weekend to have guest chef Beverlie Terra doing a cooking demonstration at our new farmstand location next to Annieglass in Watsonville. Beverlie has worked as a professional chef for over 32 years, working at high end restaurants like Chaminade in Santa Cruz, teaching at Cabrillo College, and currently

working at Sweet Earth Foods in Moss Landing. She is a great supporter of local farmers and wants to help promote our farmstand, which provides local fresh organic vegetables to the Watsonville community.

Beverlie will be putting together a kale salad with a strawberry "salsa," using ingredients from the farmstand. Yum! She'll be at the farmstand from 1 pm to 4 pm Saturday, September 5th.

The water situation here at the home farm is still difficult, since the well that we were using from the neighboring farm is now also failing and is currently offline. We are back to using our home well which barely gives us enough water to keep things alive—nowhere near enough to plant out new crops with. And because we can only irrigate small blocks at a time with it, it requires a lot of micromanagement at the moment. In the greenhouse we have a lot of plants backing up, ready to be planted out. Some of them we can transfer over to our Lewis Road site, but the heavy feeding crops like brassicas and leeks really do much better on the heavy soils of our home ranch.

This isn't to say that we have been sitting by idly waiting for the situation to resolve itself. At our Lewis Road site, where the well is holding up just fine, we have been steadily planting for our fall and winter harvests. In the high tunnels we have new plantings of Tomatoes, Peppers, Basil, Filet Beans and Cucumbers. Out in the field we'll soon have Radishes, Arugula, Mei Quin Choi, and Tokyo Market Turnips along with Beets and lots of Carrots. The Winter Squash is maturing nicely and should start to appear in your boxes by the end of the month. It's also a good year for Pumpkins at the home ranch with the crop nearing maturity and coloring up already!

## Veggie Notes, by Sarah Brewer

*Storage:* Everything should be refrigerated, except **tomatoes**. Always rinse produce before use.

**Tomatoes** and **peppers**, raw or cooked, are a match made in heaven. Raw, they sit together nicely in a salad or gazpacho soup. Grilled with onions, they will make perfect fajitas or will liven up any Italian dish you have in mind.

**Rainbow carrots** in the house again. Each color of carrot may taste approximately the same, but, the colors themselves offer different health benefits. According to an article in *Time*:

*Orange:* Beta and alpha carotene pigment.

This promotes vitamin A production by the body, which is essential for healthy eyes.

*Purple:* Anthocyanin, beta and alpha carotene pigment. Purple carrots typically have an orange core, and their pigment-related nutrients may provide additional vitamin A and prevent heart disease.

*Red:* Lycopene and beta-carotene pigment. Lycopene is the same red pigment that gives tomatoes their deep color and is linked to a lower risk of certain cancers, such as prostate cancer.

*Yellow:* Xanthophylls and lutein. Both are linked to cancer prevention and better eye health.

*White:* The nutrients don't come from the pigment but from the fiber, which promotes healthy digestion.

This current batch of **carrots** has somewhat subtle colors, but has been particularly tasty.

**Red potatoes** could be nice roasted with some rosemary or presented in a picnic potato salad.

For a change, marinate those ruffled leaves of your **Scotch kale** in a nice vinaigrette and stick them on the BBQ for a brief minute! A visiting chef-friend demonstrated this trick last week with some beet greens and the result was a lovely, slightly crispy greens dish instead of the usual wilted style.

Your lettuce will be of the Green Oak or Green Butter varieties this week. These babies will take good care of your salad bowls and give a good chewy crunch in your sandwiches.

Last, but not least, we will surprise you with either strawberries or shelling beans. Don't forget, the shelling beans need to be removed from their pod and cooked. For newbies to this process, check out Basic Braised Shelling Beans on our Website.

## Cooking Notes, by Andrew Cohen

Hot humid weather brings out a craving for vinegar and spice for me, and the recipes reflect this penchant with quickles. Two of the dishes are cold also. One is a reboot of

### This Week

Mixed Tomatoes\*

Mixed Peppers\*

Scotch Kale

Rainbow Carrots

Red Potatoes

Green Oak OR Green Butter

Lettuce

Shelling Beans OR

Strawberries

*Everything is certified organic. Some tomatoes and peppers may be from Coke Farm. All other vegetables and fruit were grown by High Ground Organics. Note: last minute substitutions may be made.*

the now ubiquitous **kale** salad, but this one incorporates quickled **carrots** with a hint of lavender. This recipe has some variations if you are not a fan of lavender in your savory dishes, but it is quite nice with the lavender. Also, the recipe calls for squeezing the **kale**. This softens the **kale** and for some reason, seems to bring out the sweetness that hides in kale. Also, I am not a fan of chewing of raw **kale** all the time as some of it can be quite sturdy. This salad transports well, so is great for lunchboxes. Try it with cold shrimp or chicken from last night's dinner. The combo of the chewy **kale** and crunchy vegetables makes for a very satisfying salad. The cold poached salmon with **peppers** and **tomatoes** is versatile dish as far as variables for flavor and the fact that almost all the work can be done ahead of time. Makes for a great working late dinner or company coming over dinner as well. This dish would be a nice salad without the fish, or you could sub in shrimp in lieu of salmon. A **potato** salad with the red potatoes would be good, and you could drop in some diced tomatoes and chives, or blanch and fry **potato** coins until crisp and put them under a piece of hot poached salmon and top with salsa verde.

*Note: We can't print them all, but Chef Andrew's recipes are always available in full at [highgroundorganics.com](http://highgroundorganics.com).*

### Basic Roasted Peppers, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

This is not so much a recipe as it is a technique. Some recipes tell you to put the peppers into a plastic bag, but I am not sold on that idea, so I use a steel bowl and a pot lid, or find a plate or other bowl to fit. These peppers, once roasted, store well in the refrigerator for 4-5 days, or freeze beautifully for months. Use these as is for garnishing things, or use them as a base for other dishes. I have cooked these over an open gas burner (can be messy!), under the broiler, even in the sink with a propane torch, but my favorite way is on a grill.

#### STUFF YOU NEED:

- Peppers (however many you are doing in whatever colors you like)
- Some olive or grapeseed oil
- A heat source such as a grill, broiler, open burner, or propane torch
- A large heat resistant bowl (one large enough to contain your peppers), or a sturdy paper sack
- A lid for the above bowl or plastic wrap to cover

#### METHOD:

Rub peppers with a little oil-just enough to give them a sheen. I feel this helps with even blistering of the skin.

Subject the peppers to your heat source. You can just throw them on the grill, or use a long fork to hold them over a burner. I use long tongs for this, or when I use my propane torch on them. If using the broiler, put them in a sheet pan with a lip so they do not drip all over the stove floor. If grilling, just put them on the grill.

The peppers will begin to blacken and blister, and even make popping noises. These sounds are normal, don't fret. As the peppers blister and color be sure to turn them to prevent burning. You just want to char and blister the skin a little, not completely cook the flesh.

Turn them until they are cooked all over, and then put them into the bowl and cover them. If you are using a paper sack,

check it periodically for wet spots and leaks, especially if doing a large volume. Covering the peppers after searing them allows them to steam. This will loosen the skins making them easier to peel.

When they are cool enough to handle, pull a pepper from the bowl (re-covering the rest) and peel. If spicy, you might want wear gloves. Use your fingers and a sharp paring knife. Pull away what you can with fingers and then use the knife tip to flick or cut away the rest. If needed, just pare away skin with the edge of the blade of a sharp knife.

Sometimes the skin is resistant to easy peeling. In this case, cut around the stem and slit down the side of the pepper. Save the juices. Open out the pepper, use the knife to scrape out the seeds and the ribs. Flip the pepper and then use the knife to scrape away the remaining skin.

At this point the peppers are ready to use. Stored in a plastic tub in the refrigerator they should keep well for 4 days or so.

*Chef's Notes:* A light blistering will leave the flesh of the pepper more solid, longer roasting will cook them. Depending on what you will be doing with them in the end may help decide whether to long cook them or not. Peppers, once roasted, freeze really well. Prep them, and then lay them flat and stack them in a freezer bag, suck out the air, and freeze. They will last at least through the winter.

### Salad of Roasted Peppers, Tomatoes, and Mozzarella, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

4 ripe peppers, roasted and cut into 1/4 x 1 inch strips (see recipe to left)	3 medium tomatoes, ripe but firm, lightly charred*, seeded and cut into 1/4 inch dice
1/2 pound Buffalo mozzarella cheese, cut into 1/2 inch cubes	2 scallions, sliced finely
1 TBS fresh cilantro, sliced finely – OR – 1 TBS fresh basil, cut into chiffonade	1/4 cup pine nuts, lightly toasted
1 head green oak leaf or butter lettuce (around 6 cups), cleaned and torn into bite sized bits	1 cup dressing-if using basil use White Balsamic Vinaigrette or Basic Balsamic Vinaigrette, if using cilantro go with "Cumin Vinaigrette"
Olive oil as needed	Salt and Pepper to taste

Put the peppers and tomatoes in a bowl together. Drizzle with enough dressing to liberally coat and toss to combine. Add the cheese to the bowl and sprinkle a little salt onto the cheese, then drizzle the cheese with a little oil. Mix in with the peppers and tomatoes.

Put the lettuce in a bowl and drizzle with just enough dressing to moisten it. Distribute amongst 4 plates.

Scatter most of the herb you have chosen into the pepper cheese mixture and give the ingredients a toss to combine the herbs in. Distribute on top of the lettuce.

Scatter the nuts evenly over the salads, and scatter the remaining herbs over. Serve at once. Serves: 4

*Chef's Notes:* \*To char the tomatoes, lightly oil them, and when you are roasting the peppers on the grill just put the tomatoes on to a very hot part of the grill and cook just until the skins are charring, but the tomato is not "cooking" and getting softened from the heat. When ready to use, pull off any patches of skin that look like they might be unpleasant to eat, then proceed with the recipe.