



High Ground Organics

Community Supported Agriculture

Week 28, September 21st and 22nd, 2016

Winter Squash, by Stephen Pedersen

It's starting to feel like fall around here—warm and sunny. At times the sun is filtered through smoke from the Sobrantes fire, casting things in an orange glow. As with past Big Sur fires, because of the rough terrain, it will probably burn until the rains start later in fall, and our air quality will suffer as a result.

We are entering the period when the work intensifies here on the farm but it fortunately corresponds with a fall “second wind”—when I feel reinvigorated by the impending change of season. By late August, the summer routine can honestly start to drag on a bit. The native vegetation starts to dry out, and everything seems to be coated in a layer of dust from the trucks and farm equipment. Soon we will be busy getting the farm ready to withstand the winter rains, but the promise of change somehow makes the work easier.

We've cut off the water to the hard squash and pumpkin blocks and will let them cure thoroughly before cutting them off the vine and packing them up in crates for winter storage. Powdery mildew almost always becomes a problem with squash late in the season. With hard squash the trick is to plant early enough so that they reach full maturity before this foliar disease takes its toll, and this year, for the most part, we succeeded. When the squash are out of the field we will pull up the drip lines, disc in the vines and plant cover crops.

The butternut squash and delicata have done well this year. We've also got Hubbard squash, green and orange kabocha, spaghetti squash, marina di chiodia squash, carnival squash, and a good crop of the small winter luxury pie pumpkins. We'll hold our annual CSA pumpkin patch on Saturday, October 15, so you can come get your Halloween and Thanksgiving pumpkins from the farm.

We'll have Jack-o-Lantern style pumpkins, Cinderellas (rouge vif d-etampes), and the winter luxuries. We look forward to the chance to connect with you here at the farm!

Veggie Notes, by Jason Johnson

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

There is nothing in this world quite like fresh **tomato** sauce. With my plethora of **tomatoes** this season, I have been peeling (roasting first helps), coring (just chop into quarters and scrape out the seed goop), then crushing them thoroughly in a pot (oddly satisfying). The whole process takes about fifteen

minutes of concentration, but after that, you just let the **tomatoes** (about three per person) simmer until you like the consistency. Use salt, pepper, garlic, and basil as you see fit for a rustic and impressing spaghetti sauce. I like to add just a splash of balsamic vinegar to round out the sweetness of the **tomatoes**.

Speaking of balsamic, it also makes a nice addition to cooked **kale**. The technique is one I learned growing up in Appalachia and is as simple as adding a splash of balsamic to your **kale** as you sauté it in olive oil. Of course, back home it was collards, bacon fat, and apple cider vinegar, but the switch in ingredients makes for a cleaner tasting and feeling dish. Vinegar fares the same as salt in breaking down fibers in the kale, but has a low flashpoint, so evaporates quickly, leaving a subtle sweetness. I also must add this: anyone who does not regularly make a basic reduction by simmering ¼ cup of balsamic vinegar, should. The process only takes about five minutes and the product is a semi-sweet, semi-tart glaze that is perfect for brassicas, root veggies, salads, and bread. It pairs particularly well with **golden beets**, which as luck would have it, you will soon have lying around. Just roast those guys at about 375 degrees, peel the skin off (let them cool first), slice 'em up, and drizzle them with the glaze. They taste great alone and even better in a salad (hello **red leaf lettuce**, hello **escarole**).

Padrons won't be around forever, and for those who haven't mastered their preparation, the secret is in the salt. Sauté them in butter until they are lightly charred without adding any spices. Place them immediately in a bowl and toss them with as much salt as you are comfortable with, then add a pinch more. The salt counteracts the natural bitterness of the **Padron**, so in this case, more really is better. As far as the **wax peppers** go, I have been combining equal parts ricotta and cream cheese with a little parmesan and stuffing those bad boys to the brim. Just throw them on the grill or in the skillet long enough to blister the skin and char the outside. The cheese should hold its shape, but be warm throughout. These little concoctions are certain crowd pleasers and go great with a little, you guessed it, balsamic glaze.

Enjoy your veggies!

Chef's Notes, by Andrew Cohen

Thinking of **tomatoes**, there is a recipe for a very simple tomato sauce that is Spanish/Moorish in origin, at least in my mind. It consists of garlic, tomato, a little herb, and some cinnamon. Use this for fish, or chicken as a sauce, or braise with it. Sauté the vegetables for a ratatouille to brown them

Golden Beets
Strawberries
Tomatoes
Cucumbers OR
Padron Peppers
AND Hungarian Hot
Wax Peppers
Escarole
Red Leaf Lettuce
Lacinato Kale
Mystery*

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

and soften, then toss for a few minutes with this sauce. Brown and lightly blister **Padron peppers**, then pour in some of the sauce and heat up. Place on a platter and sauté bread crumbs or almonds and scatter over the **peppers**. You could grate some Spanish cheese over the lot such as a Manchego or Mahon.

Sauté **lacinato kale** with onions and finish with the sauce. Adding some grappa or wine plumped gold raisins and some pine nuts to the **kale** would certainly enhance the Moorish feeling of the dish. Chop up some **escarole** and lightly sauté with garlic, and then add the **tomato** sauce and simmer the **escarole** in it a few minutes for another dish. If you don't think you'll have time to eat all your **strawberries**, while making dinner one night, hull the berries, wash well, and simmer over low heat. Add some good quality balsamic vinegar and some black pepper. If you dry fry the peppercorns first they will lose heat but gain fruitiness. Simmer for a while until you get a soupy syrupy potful. Strain through a fine mesh strainer, then taste. Adjust seasoning with more vinegar, a little cracked pepper, and possibly a touch of sugar. Chill. Use for drizzling on French toast, waffles pancakes, toast, etc.

Note: We can't print them all, but Chef Andrew's recipes are always available in full at highgroundorganics.com

Gold Beets and Escarole Sauté, Chef Andrew E Cohen

Silky slightly bitter escarole contrasts with slightly sweet and toothsome beets. It is also a pretty dish.

1 bunch gold beets, roasted, cut into ¾ inch pieces, finished with white balsamic vinegar	1 bunch escarole, green tinged leaves removed (save for a dish that is longer cooked), white leaves cut into 2 inch bits or 1 inch strips, well washed and drained
Neutral flavored oil as needed	½ TBS unsalted butter if you desire (The butter will add a nutty flavor to the dish which will add depth)
Salt and white pepper to taste*	1 clove garlic, peeled
¼ tsp. fresh thyme, chopped	A drizzle of white balsamic vinegar if needed
Optional-2 TBS pine nuts	

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, film with oil. When oil is hot, put the clove of garlic into the oil and cook until it is golden all over. Remove from pan and discard or use for something else.

Add the beets to the pan along with the thyme and cook until getting hot all the way through, but try not to color them at all.

Push beets to the edge of pan, and add butter if using. If not using the butter, make sure there is at least a little oil on pan floor, but just a little. Add the escarole, and turn in the butter/oil. Season with a little salt and pepper.

Use tongs to get the beets onto the top of the mess of escarole. Sauté, shaking pan every 30 seconds, until escarole is wilting. Use tongs to stir the uncooked escarole under. Cook until escarole is wilted and silky. As soon as it is tender, drizzle the lot with a little white balsamic vinegar and toss to combine. Taste for seasoning and adjust if needed. When flavor is right, transfer to a platter or plates, and top with pine nuts. Serve hot.

Chef's Notes: * The white pepper has an earthier flavor that goes well here, but if all you have is some old powdered white pepper, give it a pass and go with fresh ground black pepper. Another reason for white pepper is the dish is a lovely pale dish and the white pepper will not show up as much.

Serves: 4

Simple, Slightly Sweet Tomato Sauce with Caramelized Garlic and Cinnamon, Chef Andrew E Cohen

1 to 1¼ pounds ripe, sweet tomatoes, peeled and seeded, chopped finely	4-6 cloves garlic, de-germed, sliced very thinly
Salt and pepper	¼ tsp. Mexican or Korintje cinnamon, or as needed
Sugar as needed (based on sweetness of tomatoes), not more than a teaspoon probably	Olive oil as needed-use a mild one so the tomato and garlic flavors get a chance to sing. I like Arbosana oil, of Spanish origin and buttery without being very peppery at all, for this dish
Optional: If desired-½ tsp. minced marjoram or oregano	

Heat a large sauté or sauteuse pan (10-12 inches) over medium-low heat. When the pan is hot, add enough oil to liberally cover the pan bottom, around 4-5 tablespoons.

When the oil starts to shimmer, scatter the garlic over the oil, being sure to get each slice separated from one another. Cook garlic slowly so it colors and caramelizes, but does not get very dark nor scorched. The aroma should be sweetly garlicky without a hint of scorch or burn.

Add tomatoes to the pan, and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle the cinnamon evenly over the dish and toss to combine. If using the herbs, add half of them with the cinnamon, reserving the rest for finishing at the end. Cook over medium heat, stirring and tossing, chopping the tomatoes with the end of the wooden spatula you are using to stir with, until most of the liquid is gone and the tomatoes are becoming homogenous. Taste for balance. The flavor should be tomatoey without being bitter or aggressively tomatoey. It should be redolent of garlic without being hot or sharp, and the whole should be lightly sweet, enough to remind you that tomatoes are fruits. The sauce should be a little runny still, and not so thick it is mistaken for tomato paste. Taste for balance. Adjust if needed. If the sauce has turned to paste, add water a tablespoon at a time and stir in, cooking a minute or two before trying it. Taste again and adjust flavors. If the sauce is lumpy, and you prefer it smooth (as I do), use a stick blender or stand blender to purée the sauce. The sauce is now ready to use.

Serves: 4

Web Store Orders

Flats of **tomatoes** available for next week's delivery are added to the web store on Friday and can be ordered until Monday at 6:00 pm. **Strawberry flats** and **half-flats, flower bouquets**, and **honey** orders can be made until Monday night for Wednesday deliveries and Tuesday night for Thursday deliveries. csa.farmigo.com/store/highgroundorganics