



High Ground Organics Community Supported Agriculture

Week 32, October 21st and 22nd, 2015

Farm Notes, by Jeanne and Steve

The drilling for our new well went along super smoothly—Jim and Jose from Chappell pump said it was one of the easiest wells they have ever installed. After the test well was finished they brought in an outside contractor who did an “e-log” which measures the resistance of the substrate the well passes through. From that they determine at what depth the water-bearing formations are at. In our case they found water-bearing sand almost the whole way down. The only drawback is that water moves much more slowly through sand that is does through gravel, so they ended up having to go 100 feet deeper than we initially expected and putting perforations on a much larger area of the casing. Once the test well was complete and they knew how deep to go, they effectively re-drilled the hole with a special bit that widened it to a much larger diameter. The casing was installed next—in our case it is 8-inch PVC. They then used a course sand to fill the space around the casing below and then installed a sanitary seal and filled the last 120 feet with concrete.

The last step was to “develop” the well which involved cleaning the screens by pumping large quantities of water out.

That water needed a place to go. They had initially dug a settlement basin for the water and mud so it wouldn’t run down the hill to the slough. That basin filled up during the drilling and has a couple feet of clay and mud in it. For this stage, they needed a larger area to run the water into. We’ve begun taking out the smaller block of strawberries, so they started pumping the water into the long furrows between the rows. It looked like we were furrow-irrigating the strawberries! Furrow irrigating used to be widely used. In fact, when we bought the Lewis Road ranch, the previous owner explained how he had helped with furrow irrigating strawberries they were growing on that property when he was a kid. It’s hard to imagine anyone using furrow irrigation in the current drought. The drip irrigation we use now is much more water-efficient!

We’ve also been busy preparing the ground for next year’s strawberry patch. With some uncertainty about what kind of El Nino year this will turn out to be, it’s good to have the ground worked into beds early in the fall. It is possible to miss the window for this task if the rains come early and hard. For the past couple years, we’ve been hiring a local company to

PUMPKIN PATCH

Saturday, October 24th, 10 AM to 2 PM
Location: 521 Harkins Slough Rd. in Watsonville

“list” up the beds. They have much larger tractors that are equipped with GPS so they can make much taller, straighter beds than we used to make ourselves. The tall beds make it easier to pick the berries because you don’t have to bend down as far.

The pumpkin patch was fun! We hope to see more of you next Saturday, which will be the last day we do it. The kids (and adults) especially seemed to enjoy lobbing pumpkins over the fence to the goats with the trebuchet, and the goats wisely learned to hide in the trees when the pumpkins were coming. They should be ready for more pumpkins by Saturday.

This Week

- Delicata Squash
- Green Chard
- Padron OR Shishito Peppers
- Summer Squash*
- Tomatoes OR Mystery
- Strawberries OR Fuji Apples*
- Green Oak Leaf Lettuce
- Mystery

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

Veggie Notes, by Sarah Brewer

Storage: Everything should be refrigerated except apples and winter squash. Always rinse produce before use.

Strawberries or **apples** will be your fruit portion this week. The Fuji apples will be from Fruitilicious Farm again. Their fall crispness is divine!

Delicata Squash is a wonderful little "single serving" winter squash with thin skins (as the "delicata" name implies) and a sweet, buttery flavor. Half a Delicata makes a perfect "stuffed squash" portion, or you can just do a simple roast. Bon Appetit magazine has some other creative ideas to put your winter squash to including dips, soups, etc.

The Spanish **Padron peppers** and the Japanese **Shishito** version can be used interchangeably in recipes. Of course, the lowest common denominator is to toss them in a hot pan until blistered, but you can move beyond that into something more creative. Why not pickle them? Stuff them with cheese or other filling? Cut them up and toss them in your stir-fry or scrambled eggs?

Squash, tomatoes and peppers all originate in the Americas, so it's like the home team is at the bat!

Looking for something different to do this week with your **chard**? Try a recipe for **Chard Stalk Hummus** or perhaps a minty **chard** smoothie with a twist of lime!

Green Oak lettuce will be awaiting your salad bowl this week. Cubed apples may make a nice compliment
Enjoy!

Cooking Notes, by Andrew Cohen

I like to add little surprise bits of sweetness to savory dishes, especially in dishes which have greens. This is fairly common in Spanish and southern Italian cuisine, both of which were under Moorish influence for a time, and this combination shows up in that cuisine as well. Usually it would be something like raisins, currants, or dried apricots, but here **apples** slide into a dish of farro laced with **chard**, mushrooms, and onions to act as a foil with sweetness and a little crunch. The **Delicata** Boats filled with lamb, **chard**, **tomatoes** and **zucchini** can be prepped ahead of time and assembled and fired at the last moment before dinner. The “carpaccio” of **zucchini** with the **tomato** salad could be broken into parts and uses in different ways. The salad of **tomatoes** and **lettuce** could be a topping for fish or just a side salad. The carpaccio could be used on its own as a side dish or used to pave a piece of meat and then cooked. Other thoughts—a dish of **Delicata** cut into 1½x½ batons that get sautéed or roasted and tossed with pan-fired **shishito peppers** glazed with a little sauce made of reduce soy, sake, sugar (1:2:2 ratio, simmered until reduced enough to coat a spoon back and leave a trail when you run your finger through it.), then scattered with sesame seeds. Switch it up if you get **padrons** and use smoked paprika from Spain on the **squash** with some dried thyme and oregano and garlic, then grill everything and coat with chopped pistachios or Marcona almonds, drizzle with olive oil and some pumpkin seed oil. For sprucing up breakfasts, we have been dicing **apples** and adding them to oatmeal or sautéing them in the pan with sausages. They pair really well with rosemary for savory foods, and vinegar reductions are a good way to make sauces that bring out the best of **apples**.

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

Delicata Boats Filled with Ground Lamb, Zucchini, Tomatoes, and Chard, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

2 large, 4 medium Delicata squash, split lengthwise and cleaned	½ pound lean ground lamb or beef
2 cups zucchini, cut into fine dice	¼ cup onion, cut into fine dice
1 cup chard stems, cut into fine dice, washed and dried	2-3 cups chard leaves, packed, chopped finely chopped
2 cups seeded tomatoes, finely diced	1 cup gruyere or feta cheese, grated or cut into fine cubes
1 TBS fresh oregano, finely chopped	10-12 fresh rosemary needles, minced
Salt and pepper to taste	1-2 TBS red wine vinegar
Olive oil as needed	

Heat the oven to 400°F. Oil the squash inside and out, and place on a foil covered sheet pan. Place in the center of the oven and cook around 15 minutes until the squash is becoming tender. While the squash cooks, heat a large sauté pan and get very hot. Film liberally with oil and add the mushrooms when hot. Cook until tender, adding water or a little red wine to prevent scorching. When tender, add the onions and chard stems, sautéing until translucent. Try to avoid browning. If needed, turn the heat down to medium to prevent burning.

Push everything to the perimeter of the pan and make sure there is a little oil on the pan bottom. Add the lamb or beef and season with salt and pepper. Toss to mix in seasoning and cook for a minute or two, then toss to combine with the other ingredients. As soon as the meat is cooked, transfer to a non-reactive bowl.

Heat pan to high and film with oil. When oil is just about to start smoking, add the zucchini dice. Cook, tossing constantly, until brown on the outside but only warmed inside. Transfer to the bowl with the other ingredients.

Toss the chopped chard leaves into the pan, season with salt and pepper and an extra shot of olive oil. Drizzle with vinegar and toss. Add the tomatoes and cook just enough to warm the tomatoes. Transfer pan contents to the bowl with all the other ingredients. Scatter the herbs over the surface of the bowl's contents, along with half the cheese, season liberally with salt and pepper, then gently toss to combine all the ingredients.

By now the squash should be ready to turn. Use a long flat spatula to turn them over so the cut surface faces up. Give the squash a few minutes to start browning on the surface.

When the squash is ready, pull the pan from the oven and use a spoon to transfer the contents of the bowl to the squash boats. Cover with the remaining cheese, give a drizzle of oil, and return to the oven. Cook until the cheese melts and the inside of the contents are hot. Serve right away it. Serves: 4

“Carpaccio” of Summer Squash, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

1 pound summer squash such as Cousa, zucchini, pattypan	1 TBS coarse salt or as needed
1-2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced	4 TBS chopped fresh mint or basil
2 TBS chopped fresh flat leaf parsley (or use more mint in lieu of parsley)	salt and pepper to taste
1/3 cup Meyer lemon juice or white wine vinegar	2/3 cup olive oil
-Optional Garnishes-	Red onion or shallots, (2-3 TBS) diced finely (opt.)
2-3 TBS drained, small capers or larger ones diced (opt.)	1 medium red onion, peeled and shaved paper thin and rinsed in cold water 10 minutes, then dried (opt.)

Cut the ends from the squash, and use a fixed blade slicer or sharp knife and slice the squash lengthwise (for pattypan type, slice parallel to the widest part and form discs.) into 1/8th inch slices. Put the squash into a large non-reactive vessel and scatter with salt, gently turning so the salt gets to all the squash. Let squash sit for 10 minutes, then test to see if the squash has become pliable. If it still is brittle, let sit 5 minutes more. Rinse the squash well to remove the salt, then pat dry and drain in a colander.

While the squash dries, make the dressing: Put the garlic, lemon juice or vinegar, a pinch of salt and pepper, and herbs into a blender and blend on high for 1 minute. Slowly stream in the oil until the dressing is emulsified.

When the squash is dry, arrange it on a platter and drizzle the dressing over it. Add the garnishes—sprinkle with the diced onion and capers, or if you are using the shaved onions, pave the surface of the squash with the onions.

Serve cold or room temperature. Serves: 4