



High Ground Organics

Community Supported Agriculture

Week 35, November 9th and 10th, 2016

Healthy Soils Initiative, from our friends at the California Climate and Agriculture Network (CalCAN)

Healthy soils not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase carbon sequestration, but also provide tangible benefits to farmers' bottom lines, their communities' health, and the wildlife around them. So wouldn't it be great if the farmer you get your share from could get paid to improve their soil's health? Thanks to new groundbreaking legislation, they can.

California is launching a first-of-its-kind program to pay farmers to adopt agricultural practices that enhance soil health and mitigate climate change. The state legislature established the Healthy Soils Program in late August and provided \$7.5 million in start-up funding. The program will provide grants to growers for on-farm demonstration projects and soil management practices that provide clear climate benefits such as applying compost, mulching, and planting hedgerows.

The CalCAN coalition and a wide network of partners were strong advocates for this funding, and though it's less than we asked for, it's a good start. We are also pleased that our efforts to ensure the program's long-term integrity succeeded. We strengthened the legislation's definition of "healthy soils" to recognize their function as a biological system and the importance of soil organic matter and water- and nutrient-holding capacity. CalCAN also ensured support for projects across all farming types. Furthermore, CalCAN won a provision that increases the number and diversity of members on the program's Science Advisory Panel. These members will be important in providing the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), which oversees the program, with balanced perspectives on how to implement the program.

So what's next? Now that the funds are available, CDFA will develop guidelines for the new grant program and then sometime in 2017 open a grant application period to farmers who want to implement climate-friendly practices on their land. At CalCAN, we will offer recommendations for how the program can support innovative farming practices with multiple ecological benefits and reach farmers across the state, including small- and mid-sized farms and under-resourced growers.

To stay in touch for updates on the Healthy Soils Program and other exciting developments in climate and agriculture, go to www.calclimateag.org to sign up for a monthly newsletter..

Veggie Notes, by Molly Jacobsen

Always rinse produce before use. Everything should be refrigerated except **winter squash, apples, and tomatoes.**

Mei Quin Choi is a great little green to add to stir fries or soups. I really enjoy adding the chopped leaves and stems to a ramen-like soup. Heat a tablespoon of sesame oil in a heavy-bottomed pan. Sauté a heaping TBS of grated fresh ginger and a few cloves of minced garlic until soft and fragrant. Add 4 cups of flavorful, organic broth (vegetable or chicken) and 4 cups of water, and bring to a boil. Add 1 oz of dried shiitake

mushrooms and simmer about 10 minutes, until mushrooms are tender. Add noodle-anything noodles; I've used dried ramen noodles (without the flavor packet), udon, or whatever I had in the cupboard and it's always worked out. Drop in chopped **mei quin choy** along with thinly sliced **carrots** and cook until noodles and veggies both are tender without getting mushy. If you want to get crazy and add more vegetables, do it! The **beet greens** would be good, or the **cauliflower** if you chop it up and add it a couple minutes before the noodles and other veggies. **Summer squash** is always a welcome addition here, too. I like to add fresh **cabbage** right at the end, sliced very thin, along with fresh herbs like cilantro or basil. If you have a last hot pepper laying around, slice it up and add it too, at the end, for a hit of heat. A splash of rice vinegar and sriracha and it ends up as kind of a faux pho-inspired, ramen-y, noodle bowl of goodness in a rich and tasty broth. Try it out!

Chantenay carrots are sturdy carrots with a great flavor. There are a thousand uses for **carrots** (salads, sautés, soups, stews, roasted, pickled, eaten raw!) but at this time of year I like to break out my juicer and get all the immunity-boosting goodness of a bunch of carrots in one fell swoop. Toss in a beet or two from your box, half a lemon and

a knob of ginger, and you have a tasty and healthful fresh juice, chock full of vitamins and nutrients, fiber, and important enzymes! For a sweet vegetable side, toss the whole **carrots** in melted coconut oil or butter and 3 TBS of maple syrup and 1/4 cup of orange juice, and put them in a baking dish in the oven at 400 degrees for 20 minutes or until tender. Sprinkle with fresh thyme and salt, and enjoy!

I recently rediscovered the magic of **spaghetti squash**. We ate it once in a while when I was a kid- just the noodle-like fibers of squash on a plate with some butter and salt. It was good, sure, but it wasn't as much fun as what I've been doing with these crazy winter squash lately. I like to halve the

IN THE BOX

Red Leaf Lettuce

Mei Quin Choi

Mixed Summer Squash

Spaghetti OR Carnival Squash

Chantenay Carrots

Red OR Gold Beets

Cauliflower OR Green Cabbage

Apples OR Tomatoes

Everything is certified organic. Apples are from Robin's Nest Farm. All other vegetables and fruit were grown by High Ground Organics. Note: last minute substitutions may be made.

squash length-wise, scoop out the seeds, and roast it face up in the oven at 350 for about 40 minutes or until the noodle-like fibers pull away from the flesh easily with a fork, but aren't at all mushy. Remove the squash from the oven and let it cool until it can be handled. Then, scoop all the squashy noodleness out of the skin (keeping the skin intact) and set it aside. From here, you can really get creative. Mix the squash "noodles" with sautéed onions and mushrooms, veggies and herbs, then put it back in the "shell" and top it with cheese. Bake it for another 15 minutes at 425, or until the cheese is melted and golden. I've made a "lasagne" type dish by layering a meat sauce with the squash noodles, mozzarella, spinach, ricotta, and parmesan cheese right in the empty squash "shell." The possibilities are endless and delicious, and make a statement served right out of the skin!

Chef's Notes, by Andrew Cohen

Spaghetti squash is a fun vegetable. Try tossing the cooked **squash** with squash croutons, pesto, and pine nuts. Twirl a fork in the **spaghetti squash** to form tennis ball sized mounds that you could scatter with **tomatoes**, basil, and cheese and then heat in a really hot oven or under a broiler for an elegant vegetable course. You could even add fried bits of **cauliflower** floret to the **squash**. These could be formed ahead of time and kept in a small roasting pan on the oven to be popped into the oven around 15-20 minutes before serving them.

The Simple **Carrot Sauce** will work on **cauliflower**, broccoli, steamed or roasted leeks, fish, chicken, or rabbit. **Mei-quin** can be sautéed with ribbons of **summer squash** and **carrots** with a little hoisin and ginger, or with white wine and plenty of garlic and herbs. Cook the **beets** wet and then add sugar, red wine vinegar, fennel, coriander, and black pepper and cook it all down to a "jam" as a side with pork, beef, or mushrooms. Serve with whipped goat cheese and toasted rye.

Roast Cabbage Wedges with Carrot Sauce, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

1 medium head cabbage, stem trimmed flush to base and cut into 8 or 10 1½ to 2 inch wedges, trimming the core so it is just large enough to hold each wedge intact	Neutral flavored oil such as grape seed or avocado oil, or light flavored olive oil, as needed
1 TBS fresh marjoram or oregano leaves, chopped, or 1 scant rosemary needles stripped from the branch	½ tsp. garlic powder if you wish
Salt and pepper to taste	1-2 cups Simple Carrot Sauce

Heat the oven to 425°F.

While oven heats, cut up the cabbage. Rub cabbage all over—including the rounded outer part of the head, with oil. Make sure you get a good amount on all over. Season with salt and pepper and dust with garlic powder.

Place cabbage wedges onto the lightly buttered or oiled sheet pan, scatter with half the herbs, and roast until tender, but showing browned spots on the edges and flats. Flip halfway through roasting the cabbage wedges and scatter the rest of the herbs onto the cabbage. After 30 minutes total cooking time the cabbage should be done-cooked through, tender but still retaining a little crispness, and golden and charred along the edges and on the flat "sides" of the wedges.

When done, remove from the oven and transfer to plates or a platter and pour the sauce over the wedges. Enjoy!

Serves: 4

Simple Carrot Sauce, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

3-4 Chantenay carrots, cleaned and sliced into ¼ inch rounds	¼ cup minced white or yellow onion
1 medium clove garlic, peeled, left whole	2 ounces white wine such as verdelho, grenache blanc, sauvignon blanc
2 sprigs fresh marjoram, left whole	1 small sprig fresh thyme, left whole
Salt and pepper to taste	1 tsp. sugar, or as needed
2-3 TBS butter (you can use a mild olive oil if you prefer, but butter really is better here), or as needed	

Heat a 2½ or 3 quart chef's pan or sauté pan over medium-low heat. When the pan is hot, add a tablespoon of butter to the pan and as soon as it stops foaming, add the onions. Cook, tossing often to prevent any browning, until the onions are translucent. Add wine and cook until wine reduces by 50%.

Add the carrots and toss to coat with butter/wine. Season with salt and pepper. Add a little butter if needed. Sauté, tossing frequently to keep anything from browning, just until you smell the carrots. Add water to just cover the carrots, and then add the herbs and garlic clove.

Reduce heat to low and gently simmer the carrots until very tender. You should be able to crush a slice between thumb and forefinger with little effort. Taste a carrot – if it is not sweet and tastes mineral-y, add ½ tsp. of sugar and swirl into the cooking liquid. Taste a little of the liquid and see if it tastes sweeter the carrot did. Adjust the flavor of the water to be just a little sweet as if the carrots you are using were sweeter than they are. Remove the carrots to a blender or food processor.

Reduce carrot cooking liquid to 1 cup. Discard herbs, keep liquid warm and bring to the blender. Add a ¼ cup of cooking liquid and the garlic clove to blender and put the lid on. Starting on low, blend carrots to a puree. If the carrots are not moving, add liquid until they do. Turn up the speed and puree carrots. Drizzle in a little liquid at a time until the carrots are moving freely. Puree, adding a little more liquid at a time as needed until the puree has reached a sauce-like consistency, but is light bodied.

When the carrots are a light sauce-like consistency, cut 1 tablespoon of butter into pea-sized bits. When carrots reach the above sauce-like state, and are still hot, add the butter bits to the blender while on and blend in. Taste sauce for balance—salt and pepper may need adjusting, or a little sugar may be wanting. A touch of a vinegar such as sherry or white balsamic may be what is called for to wake the sauce up. To tell, put a drop of vinegar on a spoonful of sauce and taste. If that seems to be just right, add a few drops at a time to the sauce and stir in and then taste until you get what you are looking for. Add more butter if you want a smoother flavor. The consistency of the sauce should be soft, but not runny. If you put a dollop on a plate it should remain as is, or perhaps slowly spread out. If you give the plate with the dollop of sauce on it a sharp tug, and the sauce will spread a bit but that is it, you have the perfect consistency. The sauce is ready to use.