



High Ground Organics Community Supported Agriculture

Winter 1, December 7th and 8th, 2016

Eagle Update, by Jeanne Byrne

A new young eagle has fledged! In my last eagle report I noted that one of the bald eagles that had been nesting here on Harkins Slough since 2014 died, and that the remaining adult appeared to have found a new mate this spring. Until now, we didn't know if they raised any chicks this summer in their nest in the eucalyptus trees across the slough from our farm. Then our eagle-eyed daughter saw an adult flying with a fledgling just before Thanksgiving. The baby obliged by perching on a tree in our restoration area long enough for us to get a good picture. The young eagle is as big as his or her parents, but won't develop the white head and tail for a few years. This is now the fourth eagle to be born and survive to adulthood on Harkins Slough.

The eagles are a reminder that nature is resilient, and that human efforts to be a positive force in nature can pay off. We can't completely undo damage that has been done, but we can create conditions that are more favorable to letting nature resume its course. The efforts to restore bald eagle populations in the California Central Coast started in the 1986 when the Ventana Wilderness Society began its program to raise and release bald eagle chicks in Big Sur. They released 70 eagle chicks in the 1980s and 90s. Now there are enough eagles in the area that the widowed adult was able to find a new mate without even losing a breeding season.

In farm news, we are scrambling this week to get our strawberry plants in the ground before the next rain. We got the beds listed up, which required a stretch of dry weather, and have had to wait for the ground to dry out enough again to finish laying down our drip tape and mulch. We are really excited that we were able to get all organic strawberry crowns for planting this year. Now to get them in the ground!

Veggie Notes, by Molly Jacobsen

Fennel is a wonderful vegetable, with a sweet, anise-like flavor. The fronds are great added to salads, as are the bulbs when you slice them in thin slivers. The bulbs are delicious roasted, so check out our recipe for basic roasted **fennel** with onions. I like to combine the **fennel** with other sweet goodies, like this week's **butternut squash** or **apples**. This week I'm envisioning a **lacinato kale** salad topped with slivered **fennel**, sliced **granny smith apples** and small cubes of roasted

Winter Schedule:

Next Deliveries will be December 21 and 22.

In The Box

Fennel

Butternut Squash

Cilantro

Rainbow Chard

Purple Carrots

Lacinato Kale

Purple Top and Scarlet
Turnips*

Granny Smith Apples*

Everything is certified organic. Granny Smith Apples are from Robins Nest Farm. Turnips are from Coke Farm. All other vegetables and fruit were grown by High Ground Organics. Note: last minute substitutions may be made.

butternut squash. Peel the skin from the squash with a sharp knife, halve the squash and scoop out the seeds. Cut the flesh into bite-sized cubes and toss with just enough oil to coat. Roast on a parchment paper lined baking sheet in the oven at 400 degrees, tossing every 10-15 minutes until tender. I would dress this salad with a simple lemon dressing to keep those apples from browning- a ratio of 2 TBS olive oil to 1 TBS lemon juice, plus 1 tsp maple syrup, which can be doubled/tripled/quadrupled depending on the size of your salad. Be sure to give that **kale** a good rub before compiling the salad. Why massage **kale**, you ask? It tenderizes the leaves, breaking down some of those tough fibers into softer, almost silky greens, totally changing the texture of the finished dish.

Turnips are another one that many people shy away from, but these brassicas are a highly nutritious item to enjoy! Try this: Scrub the **turnips** well, and remove the skin. Slice into wedges about 1/2" thick. In a bowl, combine turnip wedges with 1 TBS olive oil, 1 tsp lemon juice, 1/2 tsp paprika, and salt. Toss to coat. Roast in the oven on a parchment-lined baking sheet at 450 degrees, for 20-25 minutes, turning halfway through.

The **purple carrots** are intriguing in salads, or roasted using the same method as the **butternut squash** described above. And don't throw out those **carrot tops**! Do remove them from the roots (the roots will store better that way), but instead of tossing them in the compost bin, remove the fronds from the stiffer stalks and toss them in the blender to make chlorophyll-rich pesto alternative! Add 1/4 cup of nuts, 3 TBS parmesan cheese, 2-3 cloves of garlic, and juice from half a lemon. Add olive oil in a thin stream

as you're running the blender, and don't be shy, 1/4-1/2 cup of oil may be necessary to get to the consistency that you like.

Rainbow chard is one of my favorite greens to eat with a warm buttery starch like polenta. Melt a knob of butter or ghee in a pan and sauté half an onion (diced) with 2 cloves of garlic (minced) and a generous cup of crimini mushrooms (sliced), over medium heat for 5-10 minutes or until onions are soft and mushrooms are tender. Remove the stalks from the leaves of the **rainbow chard** and dice them, and add them to the pan. Let cook for 5 minutes or so before adding the rest of the leaves, torn into bite-sized pieces. Cover the pan and let the chard leaves wilt. Season with salt and pepper, and serve over the top of hot polenta (made with plenty of butter, cream, or parmesan cheese!). Enjoy your veggies!

Chef's Notes, by Andrew Cohen

The **purple carrots** could be sautéed, roasted, or even mashed. **Butternut squash** can make it into soups, mash, sautéed in a hash, or roasted in chunks, cubes, or rounds. Use a purée for filling egg roll wrappers for quick raviolis, or make your own pasta to stuff. **Granny Smith apples** are great for cooking as they have some tartness, and being allowed to hang longer gives them a more developed flavor and sweetness. They also are nice and firm, and retain their body when cooked. The box is just right to launch a soup with the **carrots, fennel, chard** and/or **kale**.

For global versatility as an herb, it is hard to beat **cilantro**. Asian, Indian, Middle Eastern, African, Mediterranean, South American right up through the American South West, it seems integral to all these cuisines. It was brought to the American Colonies for cultivation in 1670. It was found in King Tut's tomb, even though it is not indigenous to the area. There is evidence of its cultivation going back to 2000 years BC in Greece and Macedonia. Some research has shown that the oils of coriander seed (dried cilantro seeds) inhibit the growth of E. coli and Staph, so perhaps this helped fuel early popularity for the plant? Some people find **cilantro** to be unpleasant, often claiming it tastes soapy. I find that using the stems rather than the leaves often mitigates that complaint, and the stems do not discolor dressings and sauces the way leaves do, so be sure to save the stems and use them. They also freeze beautifully and work well as dressing and sauce bases, and are perfect for oils or blending into yogurt or labne, as in the squash soup (right).

Sauté of Chard with Apple and Pine Nut, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

1 bunch rainbow chard, stemmed, stems cut into ¼ inch or smaller, leaves cut into 1½-inch bits or ¾-inch strips, washed and dried, kept separate	1 scant cup white or yellow onion, cut into ¼-inch dice
1½-cup Granny Smith apple, washed and cut into 3/8th-inch dice, tossed with a little lemon juice to prevent discoloration	½ tsp. fresh thyme or marjoram leaves, chopped
1 TBS apple cider vinegar	¼-cup apple cider
Grapeseed or avocado oil, as needed	½ + ½ TBS unsalted butter
Salt and pepper to taste	¼ cup pine nuts

Heat a large skillet or sauteuse over medium heat. When hot, add enough oil to generously coat the pan. When the oil is shivering, add the chard stems and onions, and toss to coat. Season lightly with salt and pepper, then cook, adjusting heat as needed, gently to soften the onion and chard. When the vegetables are starting to soften, add half the herbs and stir in.

Add a 1/2-tablespoon of butter, and as soon as it starts foaming, add the apples and stir gently to coat. Cook just until the apples heat through and take on a little color.

Push all the vegetables to the rim of the pan. Add the cider vinegar and cider and cook down by 80%. Add the last ½-tablespoon of butter, and as soon as it is done foaming, swirl to spread out and mix with the liquid, scatter with the rest of the herbs, then add the chard. Use tongs to turn the chard in the cidery butter, and cook gently until the chard has just wilted and is just cooked through. It should be just tender but not mushy.

Taste and season if needed. Scatter with half the untoasted pine nuts and mix in, transfer to a serving dish, and garnish with the rest of the nuts. Serve immediately. Serves: 4

Soup of Roasted Butternut Squash, Fennel, with Granny Smith Apple and Cilantro, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

4-5 heaping cups butternut squash, peeled and cut into ½ inch-dice	2 medium fennel bulbs, stalks removed, cut into ¼-inch dice
1 medium-large white or yellow onion, cut into ¼-inch dice	1/8th tsp. cinnamon powder (preferably Korintje or Mexican)
¼ tsp. coriander seed powder (freshly ground is best)	2 cups Granny Smith apples cut into ¼-inch dice
¼ cup cilantro leaves for garnish	½ cup loosely packed cilantro stems and leaves
1 cup labne or thick plain yogurt	6 cups low-sodium light vegetable stock or water
Salt and pepper to taste	Grapeseed or avocado oil
Cilantro oil as needed (See recipe on website)	

Heat the oven to 400°F. While oven heats, place the squash into a bowl and drizzle with a little oil and toss to entirely coat the squash cubes, and season with salt and pepper. Drift the cinnamon onto the squash, tossing as you do so all the squash gets cinnamon on it. Place on a sheet pan lined with foil and lightly oiled. Roast the squash until cooked through- a toothpick should be able to just pierce the cubes and the squash will be golden and a little crisped along the edges. Remove the pan to a cool place or tip into a bowl.

While the squash is cooking, heat a large pan or a 3 quart pot over medium heat. When hot, film well with oil and get the oil hot. Add the fennel and onion and stir to coat with oil. Season with salt and pepper and cook gently, reducing heat if needed, so the vegetables do not pick up any color, but are tender.

Add the coriander seed powder and the squash and toss to combine. Add 5 cups of stock or water, or a combination, and bring to a simmer. Cook until the vegetables are all soft.

Transfer contents to a blender (or use a stick blender) stopping at ¾ths full, and starting on low, blend ingredients until homogenized. Do this in batches if you must, transferring to a clean pot when done. When all the soup is pureed, taste for seasonings and adjust as needed. If the soup seems a little flat, add a few drops of cider vinegar and check for salt also. If the soup seems too thick or viscous, or just won't spin, add the last cup of water. When it is ready, set aside and keep warm.

While soup simmers, add ½ cup of apple dice and the ½ cup loose packed cilantro stems and leaves into a blender. Add a couple drops of water and a tablespoon of oil. Purée. Add half the yogurt and process until thoroughly puréed. Strain into the rest of the yogurt and gently whisk to combine. When combined place in a squeeze bottle and chill.

To serve: Ensure the soup is hot, then make a pile of apples in the centers of 4 wide shallow bowls or pile them up in a taller bowls. Using a ladle, drizzle the soup into the side of the bowl so it doesn't knock over the apples. Fill to just below the peaks of apples. Use cilantro oil going in one direction, then use the cilantro crema going the opposite direction. Scatter the cilantro leaves over and serve. Serves: 4