



High Ground Organics Community Supported Agriculture

July 13th and 14th, 2011

Flower Notes, by Jeanne and Chrissi

The “Remember that children, marriages, and flower gardens reflect the kind of care they get.”

H. Jackson Brown Jr.

For the past few years, we have been getting flowers for the CSA from Steve’s cousin, Josh, at the Thomas Farm in Corralitos. Josh’s parents, Jean and Jerry, started Thomas Farm back in 1971. Jerry Thomas was there for the beginning of CCOF (California Certified Organic Farmers), and was delighted -- and relieved -- when Josh and his wife Kari decided to continue the family farm when he retired several years ago. It’s fair to say that without Jerry Thomas, we would not be successfully farming today either.

Steve would come up from Southern California and work on his uncle’s farm during summers as a kid. When Steve decided to transition from the cooking business (he cooked for 8 years both in LA and San Francisco), he came back to Uncle Jerry’s farm as an intern and took classes in the agroecology department at UCSC. Jerry helped us find our first few acres of leased land in 1997 and passed on to us the Corralitos Connection CSA, originally a collaboration between three Corralitos farms -- Thomas Farm, Blue Heron, and New Natives Nursery. When our current home farm was on the market, Jerry told us about it, walked the property with us, discussed its potential and encouraged us to try for it. I could go on, but let’s get back to the flowers.

Flowers have been an optional part of the CSA from the beginning. Why do we feel compelled to offer organic flowers as part of our CSA? It’s true that they are not (usually) eaten. But locally grown, organic flowers offer many of the same health, safety, and environmental benefits as their edible counterparts. In recent years the majority of flower production for US markets has moved to central and south America, where land and labor are cheap and conditions are less well-regulated than in the United States. Flowers are grown there using pesticides that are so toxic they are outright banned in the US. In contrast, growing organic flowers for you here means safer conditions for farmworkers, no chemical residue exposure for your family, good stewardship of the land, no pesticide contamination of the environment, and lower fuel emissions from transportation. Plus, you get a truly beautiful variety of field grown flowers which changes by the season.

Chrissi has strong opinions about buying non-organic flowers. She writes “Several years ago I became aware of the horrible conditions that flora workers were exposed to and

Renew Now—New Session Next Week

This is the last delivery of the 2nd 9-week session. If you haven’t yet sent in your payment, contact Chrissi so she knows you’re continuing. (Prices: 9 weeks veggies/fruits = \$198; 9 weeks veggies/fruits plus flowers = \$270; Raw Honey 1 lb jar = \$8.00; Pollen 4 oz = \$5.40.) Make checks out to High Ground Organics and send to the address along the bottom.

wanted to commit to supporting local, chemical free flowers. Now I don’t often get on the old soapbox, but when it comes to encouraging health for the body, mind and spirit, I’m going to stand on whatever box I can find. Regulations aren’t as strict for a non edible product, but the effects of chemicals in

this industry continue to propagate devastating results. This is an excerpt from an article called Deceptive Beauty...

Many flower workers ... are subject to drastic temperature changes, a polluted environment, a heavy work-load and psychological stress. The most common health complaints are respiratory illness, skin diseases, varicose veins and ulcers. Since floriculture requires people to spend long periods of time working in awkward and uncomfortable positions, many suffer chronic back and muscle pain. Kneeling for hours on damp ground causes a variety of leg and knee problems. Most flower workers are not given protective clothing or masks, and companies provide little or no training on how to decrease risk when handling and applying pesticides. One-fifth of the chemicals used in flower production in the countries of the South have been proven to produce cancer and have been restricted or banned in Europe and North America ... Dust from fumigation causes dizziness, headaches, cramps and other long-term symptoms. Workers are also vulnerable to

severe respiratory infections due to exposure to temperature changes and high humidity levels in the greenhouses.

[Victoria International Development Education Association]

Who would guess that something of such beauty, an object that is given as a token of friendship, a sign of appreciation and a symbol of love, could come from a place of such sadness?”

Fortunately, we have the option of choosing flowers that are produced in our own community with all the love, care, and attention to health, safety, and the environment that we could ask for.

This Week

Cipollini Onions

Strawberries

Orange OR White Cauliflower

Desiree Potatoes

Basil

Romaine or Red Leaf Lettuce

Bunched Spinach OR Mustard

Greens

Mystery

Flowers: Gladiolus and Sweet William

Everything in your box and the flowers are certified organic. All veggies and fruits were grown by High Ground Organics. Organic flowers are from the Thomas Farm.

Tell a Friend Campaign!

We now have our fields in full production (and we have almost twice as much acreage as last year!) That means that we need more members to eat it all. You'll find a CSA brochure or flier in your box this week. If you can find a friend to sign up for a 4-week trial to our CSA, we'll give you a free flower bouquet. If they sign up for a full 9-week session, you get 3 weeks of flowers free! Just write "Referred by: your name" on the sign-up form, or tell your friend to mention you if they call in to sign up.

Veggie Notes

Mustard greens may be new to you. They are a delightfully spicy green, somewhat similar to arugula but more substantial. These stand alone very well, so you can just sauté them with the onions or garlic and you have a delightful zesty side dish.

Notes from Chef Andrew Cohen

Cipollini are one of my favorite onions. I love the flavor and I love the shape. The disk shape allows for them to be stuffed and baked without them tipping over. One thing about them that can frustrate some people is the skin tends to be difficult to get off. To make this easy, just dunk them into boiling water for a few seconds, then rinse with cold water, and you will find them much easier to peel. Trim the root away, then use a melon baller to scoop out the top center. Use the onion you scooped out, and mix with some mushroom, carrot, maybe zucchini or celery, and mince it all together and sauté to soften. Season with some wine and herbs, and then sauté the hollowed out cipollini to color them up. Add the stuffing into the onions and bake them covered with a little stock to finish them. They look nice on the plate and taste great. I also like cipollini for braises due to size and shape. Cut into quarters, they are the perfect size when you want onion flavor but not necessarily lots of bits of onion throughout the dish. They are also small enough to cut into wedges and roast, where they would be a fine accompaniment to roast florets of cauliflower. I love roasting cauliflower as you can cook it minimally so it is crunchy, cook it more so it caramelizes and is tender, or let it go a little longer at lower heat so it caramelizes and gets a little chewy. Just don't crowd it or it steams and gets mushy and swampy tasting, which is why many people say they don't like cauliflower. This week I will try the Iberian influenced version with the smoked paprika, and serve it with little meatballs with a garlic mayo dip, and the roast zucchini with basil gremolata. Both cauliflower and summer squash share a tendency to get mushy easily when immersed in water, so I tend to like to roast, sauté, or grill them. The potatoes will likely go into a gratin this week. I like gratins for ease of preparation and the fact they cook without fussing over them. I also like Desiree potatoes for cubing, blanching, and then sautéing. Diced finely and treated like this, they are great with French lentils. Basil would brighten up this dish of earthy flavors, as it will many other dishes. I love pesto, but I enjoy adding the basil into dishes to give them a lift. Shreds of basil elevate scrambled eggs, just as they do scattered into a vegetable soup at the last minute, or scattered across a salad. If you get basil with the beginnings of the flower spike, break it off and add it to some warmed olive oil and infuse it for a couple hours. Use the basil scented oil to finish dishes. If I get spinach, I will sauté it with some mushrooms, onions, and a little pancetta, and then hit it with a little cream to go with

simple grilled pork chops or a steak. If I have blueberries, I might go with a salad of red leaf lettuce and berries with a cool yogurt dressing scented with basil or mint.

CSA Cooking Demos – Williams Sonoma, Los Gatos

Learn how to cook *outside the box* with what is delivered to your door.

Saturday, July 16th, from 10 to 11:30am, \$10

Thursday, July 21st, from 6:30 to 8pm, \$10

Join Joni Sare, Therapeutic Chef, at Williams-Sonoma, in Los Gatos, for an improv cooking demo. Learn how to create healthy and tasty recipes – on the spot, using the ingredients from the box, in your pantry and spice drawer. Joni will share info on: the anatomy of food, nutritional information, biochemistry of the body, the alchemy of cooking, tips and tricks for healthy cooking, and so much more. Sign up at www.jonisare.com/cooking-outside-the-box/ or just show up.

Crumby Greens, adapted from *The New Laurel's Kitchen*

Something about the crunch and consistency of this recipe, plus the ginger, makes this recipe appealing to kids--Jeanne

1 bunch kale, chard, or other greens (1 1/2 cup cooked)	1 leek or med. onion, chopped
1 cup lightly toasted bread crumbs	1/2" slice of fresh ginger, minced fine
1 TBS oil	salt and pepper to taste

Wash and chop the greens and steam them until soft. Sauté the leek or onion in the oil until soft. Remove from heat and stir in remaining ingredients.

Cauliflower Potato Curry, adapted from *Great Vegetarian Cooking Under Pressure*, by Lorna Sass

1 head cauliflower	1 1/2 lb potatoes, scrubbed and cut into 1/2 inch dice
1/2 cup diced red bell pepper (optional)	2 tsp safflower or canola oil
2 tsp whole cumin seeds	1 1/2 cups coconut milk
2 TBS tomato paste	2 TBS mild curry powder
1 tsp. ground coriander seeds	1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. salt	pinch of cayenne
1/4 cup minced cilantro (optional)	

Cut the cauliflower into florets about 2 inches wide across the top. Set aside. Heat the oil in a pressure cooker. Sizzle the cumin seeds over medium-high heat just until they begin to pop, 5 to 10 seconds. Turn off the heat and add the coconut milk (stand back to avoid sputtering oil) and tomato paste. While stirring with a fork, sprinkle in the curry powder, coriander, cinnamon, salt, and cayenne. Bring to a boil. Set the potatoes and bell pepper in the liquid and place the cauliflower florets on top. Lock the lid in place. Over high heat, bring to high pressure. Lower the heat as far as you can but still keep high pressure and cook for 3 minutes. Reduce the pressure with a quick-release method. Remove the lid, tilting it away from you to allow steam to escape. If the potatoes need more time, replace but do not lock the lid and let them cook for a few more minutes in the residual heat. Stir well to combine the cauliflower and potatoes. While stirring, the cauliflower will break up into small pieces and combine with the cooking liquid to create a thick sauce. Mix in the cilantro, if using, before serving.

Full text of all recipes at highgroundorganics.com/recipes