



High Ground Organics Community Supported Agriculture

July 20th and 21st, 2011

Farm Notes, by Jeanne

The farm is in full summer swing now. There are yummy summer vegetables (beans, peppers, cucumbers, and eggplants) growing nicely. The apples (and even some pears this year) are formed on the trees and starting to size up. The blueberries have slowed down, but we're still able to put a few in the mystery shares each week. The strawberries are plugging along nicely. In this year of learning about our new Lewis Rd. farmland, we decided to not take a chance with the tomatoes. The Thomas Farm has been growing wonderful organic tomatoes for decades, so we asked Josh if he would plant enough to supply our CSA for this summer. Reports are good from the Thomas' fields—the tomatoes are running late for everybody in the area this year, but we expect to have some for you soon.

A photographer was out taking pictures of the farm last week for the NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service). We have worked with NRCS grants over the years to implement environmental improvements on the farm, including hedgerow plantings, irrigation water-saving techniques, planting an eroded gully to make a vegetative buffer strip for water run-off, and native seed plantings in our habitat restoration area. The photographer spent a couple hours walking around our home farm -- taking pictures of the rows of lettuces, spinach, beets, mustard greens, padron peppers, kale, chard, cilantro, arugula, and squash; walking through the pear orchard; checking out the strawberry field; heading over to the blueberry patch; hiking down to the apple orchard and the potato field. A trip to the Redman House field would have yielded more potatoes, greens, cabbages, cauliflowers, broccoli, celery, fennel, and romanesco. On to the Lewis Rd. ranch and he would have found more types of squashes, three kinds of beans, parsley, cipollini onions, leeks, green onions, cucumbers, eggplants, carrots, mei quin choy, and basil. The photographer was joking that he didn't need to go to any other farms now because we had some of everything. He asked if it was hard to grow so many different things.

Yes, it is hard to grow so many different things, and do all of them well. It's hard to keep track of the needs of all the different crops—all needing weeding, fertilizing, and water on varying schedules. It's hard to learn all the nuances of growing each type of crop (through research and experience). But a diverse farm also has great benefits. It guarantees that we can easily rotate crops to maintain good soil (and plant) health. It minimizes insect pest and fungal disease problems too. Pests love nothing more than 100 acres of their favorite food all in one place. Diversity in crops (and our abundant native plant hedgerows) allow for diversity in insect life, providing habitat

CSA Cooking Demos – Williams Sonoma, Los Gatos

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

Saturday, August 13th, from 10 am to 12 , \$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.

for predators who keep the pests in check. And if not every planting is successful, such as when we lost most of an early spring carrot crop to root-knot nematodes, our diversity means that such a loss doesn't result in losing the farm. The damage is limited to a small area and there are enough other crops growing that we can balance out that loss with a successful crop of another vegetable. Our CSA model of selling our vegetables means that our customers can wait for the next planting of carrots to come in, while enjoying the spring fava beans or onions instead.

One of the best things about a diverse farm is that it keeps life from ever getting boring, for us or for our crew. The field crew has a variety of tasks to do in any given day, instead of hoeing one field of greens for the entire day, or harvesting beets from dawn until dusk. So, while Steve could certainly use a *little* more "boring" in his life sometimes, diversity keeps things interesting for all of us, and we wouldn't want to farm any other way.

Veggie Notes

Store everything in the refrigerator, though potatoes should keep fine outside the fridge now that their skins have set. We'll continue to rotate potato types. This week are a white potato called Bintje. Mustard greens are delightfully spicy and make a delicious pasta accompaniment (see Andrew's recipe below). They are also easy and tasty to throw into soups and stews.

Notes from Chef Andrew Cohen

Cilantro fits right in with my craving for a chili verde, so a pot of this will get made. I might make the chili a day ahead so I have some free time the following day. Using the mustard greens to make a pasta dish is quick and easy, so that will be dinner while the chili cooks. If I don't do the pasta, the mustard greens will get a more traditional Southern approach (without the real long cooking time) with some bacon fat and onions sautéed with some garlic and chili flakes, and some vinegar. I have been grilling a fair amount, and I will revisit

This Week

Strawberries

Tokyo Market Turnips

Bintje Potatoes

**Romaine or Little Gem
Lettuce**

Mustard Greens

Cilantro

Scallions

Mystery

Flowers: Gladiolus

the grilled broccoli last week's box inspired. I might use my Ben-Riner slicer to cut zucchini (if I get it) lengthwise into ¼ inch slabs which I will season with garlic, oil, and oregano and grill. I could see topping the slabs with some bolognese sauce and using them in lieu of pasta. The trick with these is to oil them a little (put a little oil on a plate and then wipe the oil onto the slabs to avoid soaking them), and then get them onto the hottest part of the grill so they mark quickly, then flip them, cooking them just long enough to transform the from raw to barely cooked. The goal is to have the slabs still be a little crisp in the center. You could also use this technique to build a lasagna with squash instead of pasta. Build the dish with warm cooked onions, the squash, and a hot tomato or bolognese sauce with the cheese. Heat quickly in the oven to melt the cheese and serve. The romaine or Little Gem lettuce might just get shredded and made into a "salad" using the raw turnips grated or finely shredded and dressed with an orange vinaigrette and either the scallions or finely shredded red onion. The other route for the lettuce and scallions would be to split the leaves lengthwise, trim the scallions, and set them out with a dressing to dip them in. This would work with the turnips as well. Try one, and if the peel is tender enough, cut them into sixths, leaving the greens attached (wash the turnips, especially the greens, well) as a handle for dipping. Use a dressing like a ranch or just some premium olive oil with salt or za'atar to dip the vegetables in. I have been enjoying my berries with Greek yogurt with a drizzle of the Kimes apiary honey over the top, and then burying the lot under berries and a little granola for crunch.

Orecchiette with Mustard Greens and Tomato

The sweetness of ripe tomato and onion are a foil for the bite of the mustard greens. The shape of the pasta is just right for holding the ingredients and adds some texture to the dish.

1 bunch of mustard greens, leaves separated from any tough stems, and washed well	1 medium brown onion, peeled and cut into ¼ inch dice
2-3 cloves of garlic, peeled, de-germed, and minced	2 medium tomatoes, cored, seeded, and cut into ½ inch dice
1-2 TBS red wine vinegar	½ cup reserved pasta water
Olive oil as needed	Salt and pepper to taste
¾ pound orecchiette pasta	

Start water for pasta, being sure to salt the water well. In another pot, heat enough water to blanch the mustard greens in, being sure to salt it well also. While the water comes to a boil, heat a 10-inch sauté pan over medium heat. When hot, film the pan with oil and heat oil. Add the onions and sauté gently to soften onions. When the water for the mustard boils, blanch the greens in the water just long enough to wilt them, then remove from the water and drain. When cool enough to handle, squeeze out extra water and chop into roughly ½ inch bits. When the water for the pasta boils, cook the pasta according to instructions. Reserve ½ cup of cooking water for sauce. While the pasta is cooking, add a little oil to the pan with the onions, and when hot, add the garlic. Cook until garlic is soft and fragrant. Add the chopped greens to the pan and stir to mix with the garlic and the onions. Cook to heat through, adding oil if the pan seems dry. Turn up the heat to high and add the tomatoes to the pan. Toss to mix tomatoes in and cook to warm the tomatoes. Drizzle in the vinegar and cook to reduce by 80%. This will take only a moment. Make a

well in the center of the vegetables and add the pasta water. Drizzle a couple tablespoons of the oil into the well and stir to combine, yielding a "sauce. Toss with the vegetables, season with salt and pepper and add the pasta to the pan. Toss, mixing the pasta with the "sauce," and season if needed. Serve hot.

A Light Orange Vinaigrette, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

Use this to dress things like a slaw of sliced Romaine and raw turnips and red onions, or a salad of sturdy lettuces and spicy greens like mustard and arugula.

½ TBS sugar	1TBS water
1 TBS rice vinegar or white balsamic vinegar	2-3 TBS orange juice (fresh squeezed is best)
a pinch of cinnamon (around 1/8 tsp.)	a smaller pinch of ground cardamom
salt and pepper to taste	¾ cup neutral flavored oil

This can be done in a blender if you wish, or use a whisk or do this in a jar with a tight fitting lid. Add the spices to the vinegar and allow to sit for 10 minutes so the flavors permeate the vinegar. Add the water and mix, then add in the sugar and mix to dissolve the sugar. Mix until you do not see any sugar crystals once the mixture stops moving. Add 2 tablespoons of orange juice and taste for balance. Add more juice if you wish, remembering the oil will soften the flavors. Season with salt and pepper to taste. At this point, if you are using a jar, it is best to transfer to a bowl and whisk in the oil by hand. Start with a light stream and whisk in the oil until the dressing is emulsified. You might not need all the oil.

Grilled Broccoli, from Chef Andrew E Cohen

Note: You need a barbecue with closely spaced grill bars or one of the accessories for grills that allows you cook smaller items so they do not fall through the grating.

1 bunch broccoli, cut into florets with long stems attached, main stem peeled and cut into ½ inch by 2-3 inch batons.	2-3 TBS olive oil
Salt and pepper to taste	Juice of half a lemon
¼ cup loosely packed mint leaves or basil leaves, shredded	Big pinch chili flakes (optional)

Heat the grill very hot. Bring a pot of salted water just large enough to hold the broccoli to the boil over high heat. Make sure the stems of the florets are not more than ½ inch thick. If they are, split the floret. When the water boils, dump in the broccoli. As soon as the broccoli changes to a deep bright green, drain it and rinse in cold water. When the broccoli is well drained, put into a bowl and toss with olive oil to just coat. Season with salt and pepper. Use your hands to toss the broccoli onto the grill on the hottest part, leaving behind excess oil to avoid flare-ups. Spread the broccoli out so it chars a little rather than steams. Cook the broccoli so it picks up some grill marks and caramelizes. Turn it so it cooks all over. It will not need long on the grill, - this is just a way to flavor it and give it some texture-not more than 5 minutes.

Remove from the grill and put in a bowl. Pour the lemon juice over all, season with salt and pepper and toss. Add the mint and toss again, then serve.

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.