



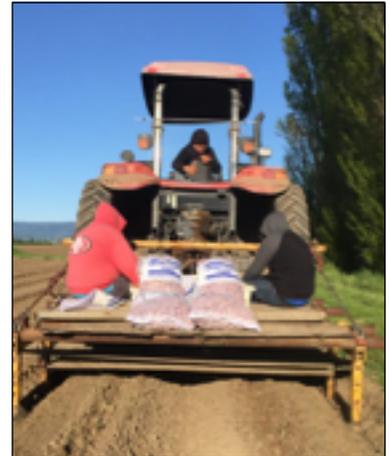
WEEK OF APRIL 15TH, 2019 #16/52

Slim Pickins'

After living on our farm for a few years I realized there are so many expressions I have heard and used my whole life that clearly come from farming. That became crystal clear one day after milking our cow, and I knocked over the milk can. Believe me, you really do cry over spilt milk. And the last couple of weeks I have been telling our CSA members it is slim pickings on the farm these days, and I realized I now fully understand the true meaning that expression. This long rainy season has made it impossible for farms to follow a good planting schedule, so we are all squeaking by, "reaping what we sowed" months ago.

Here at Eatwell Farm this year has been beyond challenging, but I know it isn't just us, it's all of the farms. My late husband Nigel, would refer to the season transition between winter and spring as the hungry gap. In colder parts of the country the third month of winter was even called The Hungry Month of March. Food that had been put-up to get you through the winter was running low or out. And if you could get out to plant, it would be a while before you have a crop ready for harvest.

When the soil is wet, you can't run your equipment to mow, or till or prepare beds for planting. And you certainly can't plant. No plants, no crops, no food. And so here we are with very little ready to harvest for our CSA shares. This is the time of year I like to refer to our loyal CSA members as CSA Warriors, because this is what it is all about. Our members are directly supporting the farm, through the bountiful months as well as the lean or hungry times.



This much rain can do a lot of damage in the orchard too. The wind and rain can knock blossoms off the trees or they get wet and rot. In both organic and conventional farming, you can go into the orchard and spray with fungicides. Even though what is used in an organic orchard is different to what you can use on conventionally grown trees, to prevent damage you still have to spray often. We don't spray, so our fruit is typically pretty "ugly" and therefore really challenging to sell. Most of us like pretty things and that includes the fruits and vegetables we put on our plates.



I was reminded of how far off we are this year when I saw a blog post Nigel wrote back in 2014 from this time of year. He was boasting about how gorgeous the potato crop was looking. Then I read another post a few after, and we were actually harvesting potatoes. Today, April 13th, our crew planted this years potato crop. It's the first chance they have had to get them in the ground. Fortunately, the ground has dried up and we have been busy planting, not just potatoes, but broccoli, cauliflower, cabbages, kale and chard, collard greens and pretty soon the first tomato plants will arrive.

The race is on for us, mow, till, shape, plant. If the next few weeks stay mild and we don't just straight into hot summer temperatures, the plants will be very grateful, and so will we. But as slim as the pickins' are right now, before you know it the bounty will be overflowing and we'll be knee deep in abundant farm fresh goodness.

Strawberries!

There are red berries out in the field. I ate a bunch of them yesterday, and to be honest the flavor is definitely not there yet. They just aren't quite sweet enough. With the exception of Monday when they say we have a 100% chance of rain (oye!), the forecast is looking really lovely. I suspect we should have a good amount of delicious berries ready for you all the first two weekends of May for the Strawberry Days. I would like to schedule one more but am holding off for another week or so, but thinking it will either be Memorial Day weekend or the first Sunday of June. Will keep you posted. Go here to purchase tickets: <https://strawberry2019.bpt.me>

RECIPES AND IDEAS FROM LORRAINE

Radicchio

One of our newer members came up this past weekend to visit the farm. We were going over the box list for this week and she mentioned she struggles with the bitterness of radicchio, to which I immediately replied you have to balance the bitter with a bit of sweet, a little tang and some mellowing fat. Citrus vinaigrette with a nice buttery olive oil is perfect. Garnish with some garlic chives and Bob's your uncle! Here is an article with more recipes and some great suggestions for using vinaigrettes beyond a simple salad: <https://www.epicurious.com/expert-advice/use-vinaigrette-for-more-than-salad-article>. Utilizing more of what is in this weeks share you could marinate the carrots and beets and roast them.

Spaghetti With Swiss chard, Pine Nuts, Raisins and Chiles

Recipe from Six Seasons by Joshua McFadden
Perfect for this week's box you can use the chard and the raisins.

1/2 cup Raisins
Red Wine Vinegar
Kosher Salt and freshly ground Black Pepper
8 oz Spaghetti, Tagliatelle, or Angel Hair
Extra Virgin Olive Oil
2 Garlic cloves, thinly sliced
1/2 cup Pine Nuts
1/2 tsp dried Chile Flakes
1 bunch Swiss chard, ends trimmed, stems thinly sliced leaves torn into strips
3 TB unsalted Butter
Parmigiano-Reggiano Cheese, for grating

Combine the raisins, a splash of vinegar and warm water just to cover in a bowl and plump for 20 minutes. Drain. Bring a large pot of water to a boil and add salt until it tastes like the sea. Add the spaghetti and cook according to the package directions. Start tasting a minute or so ahead of time so you don't overcook it. With a ladle or a measuring cup, scoop out about 1/2 cup of the cooking water and drain the pasta. Meanwhile, pour a healthy glug of olive oil into a large skillet over medium-low heat. Add the garlic and pine nuts and let them toast very slowly until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Add the chile flakes and cook for another 10 seconds so they can bloom, then add the drained raisins. Increase the heat to medium, add the chard stems, season with a bit of salt and black pepper and cook slowly until the stems are slightly tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Add the torn chard leaves and a splash of water, use pasta water if the timing works, cover the pan, and cook until the leaves are wilted, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the drained pasta and the butter to the chard and toss well. Taste and adjust the seasoning with more salt, black pepper or Chile flakes. Grate a bit of Parmigiano over everything, drizzle with more olive oil and pile into bowls. Serve with more grated cheese.

Radish Greens Chimichurri

Recipe by Kristen Rasmussen from Bon Appetit Management Company

One of our CSA members shared this recipe to the Eatweller's Slack Group. Using tops is such a great way to stretch what is in the box. Last summer, my goddaughter Sabrina made a truly delicious pesto out of carrot tops. The greens from the bunched root vegetables are really useful.

2 to 3 cups Radish Greens (loosely packed)
1 medium Shallot, chopped
1 clove Garlic, chopped
3 TB Rice Vinegar
Pinch Salt
2 tsp Olive Oil

Heat about 1/2 cup water in a small saucepan until simmering. Add radish greens, toss to coat and cook until softened and dark green - about 30 seconds. Remove greens and squeeze out excess water. Using an immersion blender or food processor, blend greens with shallots, garlic, rice vinegar, salt, and olive oil until combined, but still coarse. Drain excess liquid if needed and keep chilled up to 4 days until use.

Garlic, Oregano, and Lemon Vinaigrette

Recipe from Bon Appetit Test Kitchen
Because we have oregano in the box and it

isn't that easy to use up, I thought this would be helpful. You could use this on radishes, or a salad, as a marinade for chicken.
Makes about 1 cup

2 Garlic cloves
2 Anchovy Fillets packed in oil (drained)
1/2 tsp crushed Red Pepper Flakes
Kosher Salt
1/2 seeded, finely chopped Lemon (with peel)
1/4 cup (loosely packed) fresh Oregano leaves
1/4 cup Extra Virgin Olive Oil
Fresh Lemon Juice

Finely chop 2 garlic cloves, 2 anchovy fillets packed in oil (drained), 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes, and a pinch of kosher salt in a mini-processor. Add 1/2 seeded, finely chopped lemon (with peel) and 1/4 cup (loosely packed) fresh oregano leaves; pulse a few times to coarsely chop. Add 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil; process until a coarse purée forms. Season with more salt and fresh lemon juice, if desired.

DO AHEAD: Can be made 2 days ahead. Cover and chill.

This Week's Box List

*Beets (From Terra Firma Farm)

Carrots (From Terra Firma Farm)

*Chard

Garlic Chives

Green Garlic

*Oranges

*Oregano

*Radicchio

*Radishes

Raisins (From Capay Canyon Ranch)

Spinach (From Terra Firma Farm)

*Stir Fry Mix

*Bonus: Flowers (Ornamental)

* = Items in Box for 2