



WEEK OF NOVEMBER 23RD 2015 #48/52



More Chicken Tractors
Agustin has spent most of his extra time on the farm this summer and fall building chicken tractors. We need a total of 40 to accommodate all the chicks from hatching until they go to the laying flock or on ice as in the case of the males.

Each tractor is 16 foot long and 8 feet wide. It is made with 16 foot hog panels bent in a U shape and tied together with hog rings on a wooden base. They are working great and cost us about \$200 each for the materials. So far we have made 17.



Around the Farm

Spinach, we are happy that we have been able to germinate some beds. It has been tough this fall. I think it was a little too warm and maybe I should have bought fresh seed. We used some we bought in the spring. At \$400 a bag you can imagine I was keen to use what we had. The seed may still germinate well, but what matters after that is vigor. How strong it is in coping with heat or other adverse conditions, so that it emerges through the soil surface. This picture is using fresh seed and even then, we have only about 80%

germination.

Coming soon to your boxes, Spinach!
Our lettuce beds are looking good. We plant three varieties on each bed, four rows of Red in the middle with romaine and a green crisp



UC Davis Chicken House

About five years ago I got a call from the State Poultry Veterinarian. He wanted to come and see what we are doing. We are inspected by the California Department of Food and Ag, so I wondered what was up? As it turned out, Dr Pitesky said on seeing our chickens in the field that they were the healthiest chickens he had seen in a long time! I was expecting trouble, and here was a poultry specialist liking what we do. From that day on we have kept in touch. In the last couple of years we have worked together with other farmers on a pastured poultry project at UC Davis where he now lectures. The team of students working on this project includes those from poultry science and engineering. The engineers are seen in the photo above

with the house that they built. It has been slow to get off of the ground but now they have a house, some land on campus, and chickens. Dr Pitesky now is ready to address the challenges that farms like ours have with chickens that live out doors. All the research is done on birds that live 25,000+ in a climate controlled warehouse where they do not know if it is winter and 25F or summer and 105F. It is a credit to UC Davis and Dr Pitesky that they are taking on this important work that will benefit small farms such as ours.



lettuce in the other eight rows. We know how much you enjoy the lettuce and hope to have that in the box in the next couple of weeks.

Our bulb onion crop is coming to an end and then we will move onto fresh green onions planted in August. We plant onions at three different times; in the spring for the bulb onions in your box today, in August to have fresh green onions through the winter, and then in late October to have fresh green onions in the spring and a few bulbs in May to June. In this way, we can have onions all year round.

We have a bed in the field with six rows of Bok Choy and six of Mei Qing Bok choy, pictured on the right. It seems that the birds prefer the Mei Qing as those rows have been decimated leaving the regular Bok Choy untouched. We have very little damage on our crops from birds. They love the mulberries and when they are finished, move on to the table grapes, which is a real problem. I have been talking to other farmers about how to deter them from the grapes. Most use propane guns to scare them away. That would freak out our laying chickens, so we cannot use them. This is one of those challenges that we are working on. Have a great Thanksgiving. Nigel, Lorraine and everyone at Eatwell.



WE WELCOME YOUR COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS!

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Suggestions for your Thanksgiving Feast

Roast Turkey Or Roast Stuffed Butternut Squash
Roasted Broccoli/Cauliflower or Romanesco with Carrots & Leeks
A light Napa Cabbage Slaw
Sweet Potato Pie

All recipes can be found at: www.eatwell.com under the "CSA Farm Box" tab. Just click "Recipes."

So it's the big week, my favorite holiday, feast extraordinaire! Gathering around the table with family and friends, enjoying a truly special meal and hopefully all of us feeling very grateful. Our Thanksgiving Feast will be even more special with all the goodies in this week's share. I recently saw a recipe posted by Katherine Sacks on Epicurious for a stuffed butternut squash, Turducken style; however it was squash stuffed with an eggplant stuffed with zucchini, and that just isn't seasonal. I was thinking of a great alternative that would be more of a stuffed Turkey style. So I am trying out a recipe of my own tonight to include in the newsletter. I am really excited to create a stuffed squash that would have so much of the yummy flavors we all love with turkey, but a perfect main dish for vegetarians. And if you use oil instead of butter it is perfect for vegans! I hope, if you try it, you will enjoy it. I wish you all a wonderful Thanksgiving, enjoy family and friends, or a quiet evening doing exactly what you want.

- Lorraine

Stuffing

Many of you, I am sure, have your favorite recipe. I typically cheat and buy the organic bags of stuffing, but then dress that up a lot! I love some sweetness in my stuffing, so typically I include some chopped apple or persimmon (or a bit of both) or a little dried fruit like dried cherries or cranberries. I sauté a good amount of celery, leeks and maybe even a little carrot and a good amount of parsley and sage of course. Rosemary would also make a great addition. I also love some chopped nuts, especially toasted pecans. If you have any fennel leftover from a previous box, chop that up and add it in. Fennel is really delicious in stuffing. Hope you have some Farm Chicken Stock because that will really add great flavor!

Roasted Broccoli/Cauliflower/ Romanesco

Eatwell Farmhouse Kitchen

It is always hard to do a recipe when there is an option of three items that will go into the box. Fortunately these three have somewhat similar flavors and all are delicious roasted with leeks and carrots.

Preheat the oven to 375 F. No matter which of the three you have, cut it apart into small floret size. Wash 1 or 2 leeks, really well, and chop into about 1/2" pieces (you can include a bit of the green if you like). Dice a few carrots. Keep the dice on the bigger size, if they are too small they will cook much faster than the rest of the veg. Finely chop about 1 TB Parsley. Put everything into a mixing bowl and toss with a good amount of olive oil, (walnut or hazelnut oil would be really delicious) a good sprinkling of salt (Eatwell Smoked Chili is really yummy on these roasted veggies) and mix really well. Spread out on to a baking sheet, then cover with aluminum foil. Bake for 30 minutes. Remove the foil, and with a long spoon toss the vegetables around and bake for another 30 to 40 minutes.

Stuffed Butternut Squash

Eatwell Farmhouse recipe inspired by Katherine Sacks' recipe for Vegeucken

1 Butternut Squash
2 cups dried bread cubes
2 - 3 TB Butter or good Oil
2 Leeks, chopped
1/4 cup chopped Fennel
2 cloves Garlic, minced
1/4 cup chopped Celery
1 cup Veggie Stock
2 TB chopped Parsley
Fresh Sage, chopped to taste
Salt and Pepper, to taste
1/3 cup Pecans or Walnuts, chopped - optional
1 Apple, chopped - optional
1 Persimmon, chopped - optional
4 good sized leaves of Chard

Preheat oven to 350 F. Cut the squash in half, remove the seeds. Rub with a bit of olive oil, place on a baking sheet and pop into the oven. Bake until it is just becoming a bit soft, about 20 minutes. While the squash is doing its thing, heat the butter or oil in a large skillet, then add the leeks, fennel, garlic, celery and parsley. Cook on medium heat until somewhat soft. Then add nuts and fruit, if using, then mix well and cook another 2 minutes on medium high. Add the cubed bread and 1 cup vegetable stock, mix well and cook on low until the bread absorbs most of the liquid. While this is happening you can put the chard leaves over the top of the skillet to soften them. Every few minutes turn them over and switch them around so they all get a chance to be close to the heat. You don't want to cook the chard, just soften the leaves. Alternatively you can bring a skillet of water to simmer and put the whole leaves in the hot water and swish around to soften, using the stem to hold on to. When the squash is somewhat softened, remove from the oven. Once you can handle it (I used paper towel to hold on) scoop out some of the meat so you have a nice channel

to set your stuffed chard leaves into. Use the scooped out squash meat in another dish. Put two of the chard leaves (stacked on top of one another) on a work surface and spoon half the stuffing onto one side, running the stuffing length wise down the leaves. You are going to chop off the stems but for now they make it easier to work with the leaves. Roll as tight as you can and place into the channel of the squash. Repeat with the remaining two leaves and stuffing. Put the two halves of stuffed squash back together and tie tightly with cooking twine. Cut the stems off; scissors make this quite easy. Place on a parchment lined baking sheet and pop back into the oven. Bake until the squash is completely cooked, about 50 minutes (depending on how much you cooked your squash in the beginning).

* A Few Notes. I made this for dinner tonight and it was really delicious. Clearly I don't have time to make it again before this needs to get into the newsletter, but one thing I would do differently is wrap the entire stuffed squash in foil and bake for 30 minutes wrapped, then 30 minutes unwrapped. I think it would be an improvement as the chard got a little crispy in a few spots (although I enjoyed that). I would trim the stuffed chard bits that stick out of the ends AFTER baking. Because I was focusing on this recipe I didn't make anything else; Nigel and I ate it with butter melting over the top. A hearty mushroom gravy, mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables and cranberry sauce would make this a truly wonderful vegetarian Thanksgiving Feast.

This Week's Box List

Sweet Potatoes
Broccoli or Cauliflower or
Romanesco
Butternut Squash
Sage and Rosemary
Persimmons
Apples (Hidden Star Orchards)
Carrots (Terra Firma Farm)
Onions
Leeks
Napa Cabbage
Celery
Rainbow Chard
Bonus Item: Italian Parsley

Traveling this Holiday Season? Place your delivery on hold. Login to your account, click My Account, and click Place Box on Hold for a Week. Repeat for each delivery you need to hold.

Sweet Potato Pie

Find the recipe at: www.eatwell.com under the "CSA Farm Box" tab. Just click "Recipes."