



Down on the Farm Notes: November 4th, 2008

Hi everyone,

Right off the get-go, I want thank ALL of you who responded to our question about supplementing the Basket with greens through the Great Basin Co-Op. Our reason for supplementing was because of the harsh frost we received about a month ago that wiped out all the greens we grew for the fall basket. Your responses were so overwhelmingly kind and encouraging. Nearly all of you who responded supported the idea, so we plan to continue to supplement while waiting for things to grow back.

All of you are so committed and loyal to us. You don't know how much that means to us. In these difficult times, and through all the hardships that we are dealt throughout the year, your thoughtfulness makes it all worth it. We will continue to give you the best of our ability to grow and offer healthy food for you and your families.

Well, how did you like the little bit of moisture we received? I hope it is just the beginning of a wet winter!!! Today is so windy, cold and cozy that I have a pot of soup going on the stove. I love the fall and winter. I actually love the November skies.

As many of you have already heard me talk about before, this was the time all the cattle came home from their summer pastures up in the mountains. They would come home via a week long cattle drive. It was always blustery and cold and most of the time, snowflakes added to the cold air and winds.

It really is a time to slow down and cozy up. I am looking forward to the long evenings now. I have soooo many projects I have been putting off. I have included some great websites for you to check out when you have time. Some of these are monthly newsletters. If you are interested in recipes or you just want to keep up on the food movement, they will give you plenty of information.

This week in the basket—where do I begin??? RED potatoes (called All Red—how original, but pretty when mashed or baked or roasted), onions, "topless" beets, another Butternut squash, a Sugar Pie pumpkin (a great keeper), some lettuce (some of Ricks, some of the supplemented), another round of Sun chokes, cilantro, a nice surprise of a sunflower head (with seeds ☺). You can roast them to eat or share

with the birds. Tie a string and hang from the tree.), a little bit of thyme (the herb, that is), some outstandingly beautiful crunchy sweet red seedless grapes, and this week you get to try a jar of salsa made mostly from ingredients grown on Rick's farm. Isn't that exciting??? Hope you enjoy. And by the way, **yes we are recycling jars.** Thanks so much for asking. Just bring them back with the box. Hope you enjoy.

Some of my favorite food is roasted vegetables. It gives them such a deep rich flavor. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper. Cut into chunks; beets, the sun chokes, any root vegetable, potatoes, and even some of the butternut squash, throw in some onions and a little bit of garlic. Strip the leaves off of the thyme and sprinkle over the veggies. Toss everything in olive oil. Layer it all onto a cookie sheet and sprinkle with coarse salt, sea salt or just regular salt. Roast in at least a 400 oven until tender. I love how they get a little crispy around the edges. Yummy! I love cooking kale in soups which I have included a recipe for. But I think my favorite way to cook kale is to strip leaves from stems and slice greens into thin strips. Sauté some slivered garlic in olive oil and then add the greens. Cover and cook until tender. Can add a little broth to help cook. But the trick is to cook until tender. Otherwise it is dry and you may not like it as much. Kale has such a good flavor when the weather cools off. Enjoy the cilantro. It is a treat. (I guess it is any way for those of

you that like it. This happens to be the 1 thing that I completely and whole heartedly dislike. I feel about cilantro the way some of you feel about beets!!!)

Rick is very excited about his field corn this year and has come up with the greatest idea. For those of you who want to drive out to the farm, he will be hosting a "corn harvest" day on Dec. 13 from 11:00 to 3:00. We are talking about dry field corn that is great for grinding for cornmeal or for those of you who have chickens, you can crack some of it to make great chicken feed. The neat thing is that Rick has all the equipment, much of it antiques, which he will let everyone use. He has a machine that will take the corn right off the cob and then he has another machine to crack and grind the corn. For those of you who want corn for cornbread (which will make the very best corn bread you will have ever eaten), Rick says it is best to run it through a grain mill first to make it a little more fine. If you have a grain mill, bring it out to Fallon with you. If you don't, you can use one that day to grind corn right there so that you can take the cornmeal home ready to cook.

Take advantage of this great opportunity to come out to the farm. Rick has all of his hoop houses planted, so you can go peek inside to see the pretty greens growing, too. Bring a picnic lunch, dress in warm clothes and you will want to bring some gloves. Dried corn leaves are very, very sharp. They will cut you like a paper cut. You will also

want to bring bags to pack your corn in and a grain mill if you have one. You will get to go out in the morning and pick the corn, then come into Rick's heated barn to work it up. It will be a lot of fun. The corn will make a wonderful Christmas gift. All you have to do is add a cute little recipe (which B Ann will provide) and you have a very inexpensive but special and appreciated Christmas gift. We plan to give everyone a taste of it in the basket, too. By the way, Rick is letting you have the corn. He hates to see such beautiful corn all go to the animals that will be turned into it later in the winter to be the cleanup crew!! I will remind you later on when we get closer to December.

Here are some websites you might enjoy looking into when you have time.

1. localharvest.org Click on the newsletter. This past month there was some interesting information about the politics of food.

2. culinate.com has some great recipes, especially for winter squash and other winter favorites. sustainabletable.com

Click on recipes and tips on the right. They have some great recipes including kale and winter squash recipes. All of these are great sources for fresh vegetable recipes and just good all around information on local food too!

Some good reading for this winter.

1. *Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan
2. *In Defense of Food: An Eater's Manifesto* by Michael Pollan

Michael Pollan has done more for the food movement than any person or organization out there. He has brought some great attention to our food system and has actually been the cause of many people to have kind of a "food awakening" and really truly think about how our food is being produced and what is going into the food system. He doesn't take sides, just states the facts in *Omnivore's Dilemma*. I plan to read his new book *In Defense of Food* this winter. I can't tell you about it but I am familiar enough with Michael that he is very intelligent and is an excellent speaker. He has been a local food champion for local food and maybe even somewhat of a saving grace to the small farms.

Brenda Smith of Dayton, a fellow green thumb and grower has shared the cutest book with me titled *The Country Kitchen* by Della Lutes. The first copyright date is 1935. I absolutely love it. I so want to share the entire thing with you. But as I cannot do this, I will share wonderful bits and pieces of parts of the book. The author recalls her childhood, growing up in the early days, the different activities of the different seasons and the best part of all, the food they collected, grew and ate during these different seasons. If you love to grow, love the kitchen or just love reading old "antique" books, this is a very special cute book. I will share a little each week.

The dedication of the book inside reads: "To the memory of my father and my mother, of

Adelaide and Big Jim, of all those pleasant, homely days of childhood when there was a wealth of resource that created what all the wealth of to-day does not."

"We, you see, took the offerings of the season as they came.....The back of winter is now broken. And high time! The vegetable pit is pretty well depleted. What few cabbages are left must be used soon. The turnips are almost gone. Onions are on the verge of decay. Only potatoes, a few Hubbard squashes, and some apples are left in the pit. But the sun swings high and to the north. The snow is going. Crows caw. Grass shows faintly green on the south side. And my father takes a basket and spade into the garden. Presently he returns with a mess of parsnips and a few roots of horse-radish. Parsnips were never, in those days, gathered in the fall as other root vegetables were. There was a superstition to the effect that they were not fit to eat, in fact were poisonous until after they had been frozen in the ground. The fact is that they keep better frozen in than pulled. They are not a "keeping" vegetable. They wilt and wither, and if pulled in the fall must be buried in earth to keep at all fresh. Dug in early spring, however, after a long season monotonous in diet, they came to us with a sweet, earthy taste that was refreshing and good. We, you see, took the offering of the seasons as they came. We were obliged to, and while I would not forgo the present opportunity of adding a scallion to my supper in January, or a parsnip to my stew

in December, I doubt if we get the same titillation of the senses- taste, sight, and smell- from an everyday acquaintance with all the fruits of the varied season that we did when we had to wait for them."

"...on scalloped potatoes....Now a pan of scalloped potatoes, as it came from my mother's oven, was something that would have drawn a man of less epicurean tastes than my father from wherever he might be, so was his nose tickled by its aroma. For such purpose as this she used a four-quart milkpan. The potatoes were sliced almost precisely to an eighth of an inch in thickness, crisped in ice-cold water, and then drained on a clean thick cloth. Over a layer of these in the bottom of the pan, butter was thickly dotted, salt and pepper shaken, followed by a thin drift of flour. This was repeated until the pan was full. Then fully a quart of half milk, half cream was poured over the whole, and the pan set into the oven to cook slowly until the potatoes were done, and the top encrusted in golden brown and richer bronze. This was one of my father's best-loved dishes, but to whet, tease, and harry the poor man's sweating palate even further, she had at the same time made two luscious mince pies, unusually large in size, and seeming to excel all other in steaming savoriness."

Hope you enjoy these little excerpts. I don't know about you, but I'm going to try the scalloped potatoes. Have a good week.

Tina

Recipes

Portuguese Kale and Sausage Soup

1/4c. olive oil
2 onions, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, minced
3 potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
6c. chicken or vegetable broth
3/4lb. kielbasa or other cooked sausage, cut into slices
1 bunch kale, thick stems removed, thinly sliced
salt and pepper to taste

In a large soup pot over medium heat, heat the olive oil. Add the onions and sauté until lightly browned, 5–7 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute longer. Add the potatoes, toss to coat, and sauté for 2 minutes longer. Add the stock, cover, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to simmer and cook until the potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes.

Remove from heat and cool slightly. You can mash some of the vegetables in the soup by hand or puree it in a blender. Leave a little chunky if you like it that way. Add the sausage, return to medium heat, and simmer until the sausage is heated through, about 5 minutes. Add the kale and cook, uncovered, until it is wilted and tender, 3–5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Ladle the soup into warmed bowls, drizzle with olive oil, can sprinkle with parmesan if you choose.

Gingerbread Pumpkin Pie with Streusel Topping

For the pie:
2 eggs
1/2c. light brown sugar
1 tbl. molasses
2c. pumpkin puree
1 tbl. grated fresh ginger
1 tsp. pumpkin pie spice
1/2tsp. salt
1c. cream

For the Streusel Topping:
1/4c. crushed gingersnaps
2 tbl. chopped pecans
2 tbl. chopped crystallized ginger
2 tbl. butter, melted

Roll out pie dough. (one made from scratch or purchased) Bake crust until only golden. Meanwhile, whisk eggs, brown sugar, and molasses together in a bowl until combined. Add pumpkin puree, ginger, pumpkin pie spice, and salt, and stir until blended. Stir in cream until mixture is smooth; pour into prepared pie shell and bake until set about 40 minutes. Prepare streusel topping while pie is baking. Combine gingersnaps, pecans, crystallized ginger, and butter for the topping in a bowl until gingersnaps are saturated with butter. Scatter streusel generously over the center of the pie and return to oven. Bake until center is set, pie puffs in the center, and streusel is crisp, 15–20 minutes more. Cool and then serve.

Butternut Squash Tangerine Soup with
Pistachio Gremolata

For the soup:

- 1 lb. peeled, cubed butternut squash (about 4 cups)
- 2 tbl. chopped fresh ginger
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
- A pinch of saffron threads, optional (these are expensive to purchase and is only used for color)
- 2 tbl. butter
- 5c. water
- 1 1/2c. fresh tangerine juice or orange juice
- 1/4c. dried apricots
- 2 tbl. honey

For the Gremolata

- 1/4c. chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tbl. chopped pistachios
- 1 tbl. minced tangerine or orange zest
- 1/4c. plain yogurt

Sauté squash, ginger, garlic, cinnamon, and saffron for the soup in butter in a large pot over medium high heat. Cook until squash browns, about 5 minutes, stirring often. Add water, tangerine juice, apricots, and honey. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer, covered, until squash is tender, about 40 minutes. Let soup stand off heat for 10 minutes, then puree in a blender in batches until smooth. Return soup to pot and heat until warmed through.

Toss parsley, pistachios, and zest for gremolata together in a bowl. Spoon yogurt on each serving of soup, then garnish with parsley mixture.

*This recipe looks interesting. Many different flavors. I am going to give it a try! Hope it is good!!

Seen in the back of *Cuisine* magazine for this month.

"Families are like fudge, mostly sweet, with a few nuts."