



Kiva Orchard Community Supported Agriculture

"Where I'm from we don't trust paper. Wealth is what's here on the premisis. If I open a cupboard and see, say, 30 cans of tomato sauce and a five-pound bag of rice, I get a little thrill of well-being-much more so than if I take a look at the quarterly dividend report from my mutual fund."

Garrison Keillor

Well, here we are again and still no frost to speak of...

The heavy rains and hail that passed through our neck of the fields last week gave everybody (pickers & plants alike) a good frigid soak, and coat of mud (pickers of course choosing to opt out of the hail, but are today braving rain to get you your shares...) The cukes and tomatoes that live to tell the tale have the battle scars to prove it— both taking a good hit but continuing to develop in spite of it. Needless to say, if your shares this week and next are a bit pock marked— be thankful that that's the extent of it. Some of our neighbors weren't so lucky...

To answer several questions at once, I'd like to remind you all as well, that we come up with your share size each week by doing the following: **1.)** Harvesting what's available in the field. **2.)** Dividing it up equally among our 110 shares. **3.)** We aim for a weekly share size of \$25 for medium shares and \$30 for large shares. This # is arrived at by taking the wholesale cost of each share of fruit or veggies in your allotment, and adding 30% . The standard for retail sales is generally a 60% markup, but we are striving to provide you as a supporter of CSA, the best share size possible, at less than market price. **4.)** If our shares fall short of the \$25&\$30 range, we attempt to supplement them with produce from other growers. Although the season started out a bit rocky this year, and will inevitably taper off again in the not-too -distant future, every attempt has been made to maintain this standard, as will continue to be the case. I hope that answers any questions you may

have. Enjoy and have a great week!



Photo: Keena Kimmel

Some of our heirlooms at market last year...

Orchard News & Happenings - By Keena Kimmel

Many of you have had questions regarding the heirloom tomatoes in your shares— of which we've planted 40 varieties this year. I read this article the other day, and decided to pass it on, as it explains all kinds of great stuff on the subject...

What's in your Box this week:

- Grapes!
- Apples
- Plums
- Tomatoes
- Tomatillos
- Chili Peppers
- Bell Peppers
- Pimientos
- Cucumbers
- Winter Squash

So Little Time, So Many Tomatoes Frances and Nigel Walker Can't Resist Growing More Than 100 Varieties By Diana L. Meredith

In the fertile flatland between Vacaville and Sacramento, Calif., tucked among the trees a few miles from the bland interstate freeway, Frances and Nigel Walker survey their creation in progress. As the sun sets on the pale pink buildings of Eatwell Farms, the pink deepens to warmer, vaguely Tuscan shades. The farm looks more like an estate garden than a modern farm, with rows of herbs here, a riot of sunflowers there, a field of lavender and on just a couple of acres, 140 varieties of tomatoes. The Walkers did not intend to grow so many types of tomatoes. They told themselves they would cut back.

But on those cold winter evenings spent looking through seed catalogs illustrated with full-color pictures of luscious and exotic varieties, their eyes grew wide and their mouths started to water. "We just can't resist, there are so many tomatoes out there," Frances Walker says. One of her favorites is the Tangerine tomato, so named because of its color and slightly citrus flavor. But she cannot name just one favorite. "It depends on the mood," she says. An increasing number of small-scale farmers like the Walkers are participating in the renaissance of the tomato, in all of its splendid diversity. Purple, green, yellow, orange and multicolored; berry-shaped, flat and long; sweet and tart--chances are there is a tomato to fit every fancy.

Every year, seed companies devoted to agricultural diversity offer an increasing number of obscure "heirloom" varieties: tasty breeds often passed down through families or developed by farmers to meet unique local growing conditions. Many heirlooms have been rescued from the brink of extinction by farmers and backyard gardeners who want more from a tomato than roundness and redness. Heirloom varieties of tomatoes and other fruits and vegetables fell victim to the modern system of food production and distribution, which emphasizes transportability and storability over taste. Seed Savers Exchange, a nonprofit organization devoted to preserving agricultural diversity, has documented more than 3,000 varieties of vegetables that have disappeared from

seed catalogs in North America since 1984, an annual loss rate of about 6 percent. Offsetting those losses, however, is the emergence of newly available varieties. Seed Savers publishes Garden Seed Inventory, a catalog that tracks the availability of every vegetable variety offered by North American mail-order seed companies. The inventory listed 4,949 varieties in 1984 and 6,483 in 1994, most of which are offered by only one or two suppliers.

Growing heirloom tomatoes is a labor of love for farmers like the Walkers, who call their tomato acreage "Tomato Wonderland," and Jim Eldon, managing partner of Fiddler's Green, a farm in Yolo County. The Walkers and Eldon are certified organic farmers. "The yield sometimes can be atrocious," Nigel Walker says of heirloom tomatoes. "There's a reason they're not grown." Heirloom tomatoes often were bred for flavor, not resistance to disease, pests, heat, cold or the rigors of transport. They fetch a good price at the market, "but sometimes a variety is so unproductive, why pick it?" Eldon says. He could put months of tender care into a plant and do everything right, but a scorching hot day can cause all the blossoms to fall off.

"The biggest challenge is having nice varieties, but having ones that are productive enough so that it is as economically rewarding as it is fun," says Eldon, a former chef and a farmer of 10 years who keeps about 25 varieties of tomatoes in regular cultivation and another 30 as trial crops. The joy of exploring "nature's diversity" is what makes growing heirlooms fun, Eldon says. "It's an incredible gene pool of variability and diversity that a lot of people just don't think about," he says. But people are starting to think about it, thanks to an increasingly visible supply of unusual tomatoes, as well as stories in the media singing their praises.

"I think it's a situation where increased availability continues to stimulate demand" for heirloom tomatoes, says Eldon, who sells his produce at farmers markets in Berkeley, Menlo Park, Marin County and Davis. "I'm hoping it will generate increased demand for all heirloom vegetables," he says, because the rich diversity is not unique to tomatoes. It is up to farmers to determine whether heirloom tomatoes reach their full market potential, says Eldon, who has experimented using different breeds for sun-dried tomatoes. If farmers think of all of the possible things to do with heirlooms to make them better known and more commercially viable, "it's as open as your imagination," he says. Consider ketchup made from yellow tomatoes, for instance.

The popularity of farmers markets has contributed significantly to the retail revival of heirloom tomatoes, for practical reasons. Heirlooms generally have thinner skins than common commercial varieties, are more vulnerable to cracking and bruising and cannot take much handling, Nigel Walker says. Commercial breeds have to put up with a lot of handling. After being harvested by machine, they are taken to a central warehouse, distributed to trucks, hauled for hundreds or thousands of miles, dropped off at grocery stores and placed onto produce shelves. Growers of heirloom varieties have no choice but to operate differently. At Eatwell Farms, workers pick the ripe tomatoes by hand and place them directly into trays. The trays are loaded into the truck and taken to the San Francisco Ferry Plaza farmers market on Saturdays. The only person to handle the tomato besides the picker is the consumer, Walker says. There is another reason heirloom varieties are economically viable for growers who sell at farmers markets as opposed to supermarkets: a different clientele. The Walkers say their customers at the Ferry Plaza market--the only market at which they sell--understand and appreciate quality and are willing to pay the extra cost of providing it.

The Walkers have a close relationship with their customers, many of whom have become year-round regulars. Nigel Walker calls them the "hell or high water" customers; they show up week after week, rain or shine, to buy whatever is in season at Eatwell. The Walkers' customers also influence production decisions at the farm. Of those 140 tomato varieties in cultivation, only 25 are regular production crops. The rest are trial tomatoes, a result of customer requests as well as those winter days spent staring wide-eyed at seed catalogs. Some varieties take to the particular microclimate and growing conditions of the area between Winters and Davis where Eatwell is located, others fail to thrive. The Walkers take the viable ones to market and, if the customers like them, they go into regular cultivation.

As he looks around their fledgling 17-acre farm, Walker waxes poetic about what it means to grow things and sell directly to those who consume them. "It gives us great pleasure when people come back and tell us how wonderful something tasted," he says. "It's such a joyous thing." The market is a special place for many who shop there, Walker says. "One lady says it's like church for her," a place to connect and achieve understanding, he says. Walker fondly remembers another customer who picked up a tomato and said, "Ah, I can still feel the sun on them."

"I think in this business, you've got to be prepared to make a fool out of yourself," Nigel Walker says. After all, sometimes crazy ideas do work. For the Walkers, farming is a philosophical exercise as well as a livelihood. But Nigel Walker is quick to remind you that first and foremost, farming is endless hard work. "The romance soon wears off," he says. "What keeps me going is the customers." Walker has one word to describe those hardy customers who come out in the rain to buy produce: "Incredible."



Baked Cucumbers

2 lg Cucumbers, sliced
 2 Spanish onions
 1 c Chili sauce
 1 ts Salt
 1/4 ts Pepper
 1 tb Flour
 Margarine
 Arrange cucumbers and onions in layers, adding to each layer, salt, pepper and flour. Cover with chili sauce and dot with butter. Bake at 350 degrees until tender, about 30 minutes.



Cucumber Casserole

6 lg Cucumbers; peeled and diced
 2 c Water
 6 slices Bacon
 1 med Onion; chopped
 2 med Green peppers; chopped
 6 med Tomatoes; peeled and chopped
 1 c Breadcrumbs
 1 tsp Salt
 1/8 tsp Pepper
 1 c Cheddar cheese; shredded
 Rice; hot, cooked (opt.)
 Combine cucumber and water in a saucepan; bring to a boil. Cover and simmer 15 minutes or until tender. Drain well.
 Cook bacon until crisp, and drain well on paper towels; reserve 3 tablespoons bacon drippings. Crumble bacon, and set aside.
 Sauté onion and green pepper in reserved bacon drippings 5 minutes; drain well on paper towels. Combine vegetables, bacon, breadcrumbs, salt, and pepper; spoon into a 2 quart casserole. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Serve over rice, if desired.



Sweet Peppers Soup

1 cup chopped onion
 1 1/2 teaspoons butter or vegetable oil
 3 cups chopped red and green bell peppers
 1 cup water or vegetable stock
 1/2 cup sour cream
 2 to 3 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
 Salt and black pepper
 Seasoned croutons (optional)

Cook onions in covered pot over medium heat in butter or oil until barely softened, 3 to 4 minutes. Add peppers, cover and cook just until soft, stirring occasionally. Blend with water or stock, sour cream, dill and lemon juice in a food processor or blender. (Don't over-process; small pieces of peppers should remain.) Return soup to pot and gently reheat, adding salt and pepper to taste. Serve topped with croutons, if desired.

Rapid Ratatouille

This is not a ratatouille for purists, but it is wonderful spooned over pasta or polenta and sprinkled with a spoonful of shredded mozzarella or crumbled feta cheese. It's also a great side dish with grilled chicken, fish or lamb.

1 small onion
 1/2 medium sweet pepper
 2 small zucchini
 1 tablespoon olive oil
 2 cloves garlic, crushed
 2 cups fresh or canned diced tomatoes
 1/2 teaspoon dried basil (or 1 1/2 teaspoons fresh basil)
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 Black pepper, to taste
 Cut the onion into 1/4-inch slices. Dice the pepper. Cut the zucchini into 1/4-inch slices. Set the vegetables aside. Heat the oil in a heavy, non-stick skillet over medium heat. Stir in the onions and peppers. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until the onions are tender but not brown. Stir in the garlic, then the zucchini, tomatoes, basil, salt and pepper. Raise the heat to high and bring the mixture quickly to a boil; reduce the heat to low. Cover and cook for 10 minutes or until zucchini is just tender. Remove the cover and rapidly cook down the mixture until almost all the liquid has been absorbed.

Roasted Delicata Squash with Rosemary, Sage & Cider Glaze

2 medium delicata squash (about 2 pounds)
 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
 1/4 cup fresh sage, very coarsely chopped
 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, very coarsely chopped
 1 1/2 cups fresh unfiltered apple cider or juice
 1 cup water
 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar
 1 teaspoon salt
 Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Peel squash with a vegetable peeler, cut it in half lengthwise, and scrape out the seeds with a spoon. Cut each piece lengthwise in half again, then crosswise into 1/2-inch thick slices. Melt the butter in a large skillet over low heat. Add the sage and rosemary and cook, stirring, until the butter just begins to turn golden brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Do not brown the herbs. Add the squash to the skillet, then the apple cider, water, vinegar and salt. Cook over medium heat at an even boil, stirring occasionally, until the cider has boiled down to a glaze and the squash is tender, 20 to 30 minutes. Taste and season with pepper and additional salt, if needed. Serves 6.



Butternut Squash Pie

1 butternut squash
 2 beaten eggs
 1/2 cup flour
 1/3 stick margarine
 1/4 cup sugar
 Honey
 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1 pie crust
 Nutmeg and/or cinnamon

Cut squash vertically in half. Scoop out seeds. Set skin side up on lightly greased cookie sheet and roast for 45 minutes at 350 degrees F. Scoop out flesh and let cool in mixing bowl. Mix squash with 2 eggs, flour, margarine, sugar, a squirt or two of honey, and vanilla extract. Pour into pie crust and sprinkle with nutmeg and/or cinnamon. Bake at 350 degrees for about 45 minutes.

Acorn Squash & Apple Soup

2 medium acorn squash (1 pound each), halved and seeded
 3 cups chicken stock
 2 tart green apples, cored, peeled and chopped (about 2 cups)
 1/2 cup chopped onion
 1 cup unsweetened apple juice
 2 teaspoons grated fresh ginger
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
 Freshly ground white pepper
 Plain non-fat or low-fat yogurt
 Snipped fresh chives or shredded basil

Place squash cut side down on rack set over gently simmering water in saucepan. Cover and steam until tender, about 10 minutes. Cool slightly; scoop pulp from shells. Combine 1/4 cup chicken stock, apples and onion in heavy medium saucepan. Cover and cook over low heat 10 minutes. Add squash, remaining chicken stock, apple juice, ginger and salt. Cover and simmer until ingredients are very tender, about 20 minutes. Puree in batches in processor or blender. Strain through sieve into clean pan, pressing puree with back of spoon. Reheat gently. Add lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper. Ladle into bowls and garnish with yogurt and chives. Serves 4.

From "Bon Appetite," October 1988.

Honey Thyme Squash

1 1/2 pound butternut squash, peeled, seeded, cut into 1 1/2 inch chunks
 1/3 cup butter
 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon thyme leaves
 1/8 teaspoon pepper
 1 tablespoon honey
 In a 3-quart saucepan bring 2 cups water to a boil. Add squash. Cover; cook over medium heat until squash is fork tender. Drain, mash; set aside. In same saucepan melt butter. Stir in squash and remaining ingredients. Cover; cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until heated through. Serves 4.

Apple Graham Cracker Pudding

6 med Apples
3 Tbsp Butter
12 Graham crackers
3 Tbsp Lemon juice
1/2 c Brown sugar or maple syrup
1 c Water
1 c Walnuts, chopped
1/4 tsp Nutmeg
Crush graham crackers to make fine crumbs. Mix crumbs with brown sugar and chopped walnuts; set aside. Peel, core and slice apples. Arrange in buttered 8-inch baking dish in alternate layers with crumb mixture. Dot top with butter and pour lemon juice and water over all. Sprinkle with nutmeg. Cover and bake in slow oven at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes, until apples are cooked to a jelly. Serve hot or cold with cream or whipped cream.

Amish Apple Brownies

1 c Butter, softened
1 3/4 c Sugar
2 Eggs, well beaten
1 tsp Vanilla
2 c All-purpose flour
1 tsp Baking powder
1 tsp Baking soda
1 tsp Cinnamon
1/2 tsp Salt
2 c Baking apples, peeled, chopped
1/2 c Pecans or walnuts
In a large mixing bowl, cream butter, sugar, eggs and vanilla with electric mixer. Combine dry ingredients and add to butter mixture. Mix until flour is moistened. Fold in apples and nuts. Spread in a greased 9 x 9 inch baking pan and bake in 350 degree oven 45 minutes or until done. Serve warm with frozen vanilla yogurt or drizzle with vanilla glaze using 1/2 cup powdered sugar, 1 tablespoon hot water and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla.

Glazed Chicken and Grapes

Provided by Better Homes and Gardens
2 large boneless, skinless chicken breast halves or turkey tenderloin steaks (8 ounces total) 1 tablespoon margarine or butter 1/2 cup seedless grapes 1/4 cup apple or currant jelly 1 tablespoon dry sherry or dry white wine 1 teaspoon lemon juice 1/8 teaspoon salt 1 tablespoon snipped parsley
1 Rinse chicken or turkey and pat dry. In a medium skillet cook chicken or turkey in hot margarine over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until

Apple and Grape Salad

2 c Apples; cubed
1 c Grapes; halved
1/2 c Celery; chopped
1/4 c Walnuts; chopped
1 tsp Lemon juice
1/3 c Sour cream
1/3 c Plain yogurt
In large bowl, combine apples, grapes, celery, walnuts and lemon juice. Mix yogurt and sour cream. Mix lightly into fruit mix. Refrigerate. If desired, serve on lettuce lined plates.



Apple and Cheese Grills

2 Red dessert apples
4 Thick slices whole grain bread
150 g Cheddar; Cheshire or Emmentaler cheese, grated (5 oz)
25 g Butter; softened (1 oz)
1 tsp Paprika
8 Sage leaves; finely chopped
Preheat the grill to the highest setting. Cut the apples into quarters, core and slice finely.
Toast the bread on one side under the grill.
Butter the untoasted side of bread and arrange the apple slices on top then sprinkle with cheese and a pinch of paprika.
Grill for 2-3 minutes until the cheese melts and the apple cooks through. Sprinkle with sage before serving.

tender and no pink remains, turning once. Transfer the chicken or turkey to individual plates, reserving drippings in skillet. Cover chicken or turkey to keep warm. 2 Cut the grapes in half. Set aside. 3 For glaze, add the apple or currant jelly, dry sherry or white wine, lemon juice, and salt to the skillet. Cook and stir until the jelly is melted. Stir in grapes and parsley. Heat through. To serve, spoon glaze over chicken or turkey. Makes 2 servings. 4 **Menu Idea:** Serve flowering kale and hot cooked rice. 1 Rinse chicken or turkey and pat dry. In a medium skillet cook chicken or turkey in hot margarine over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until tender and no pink remains, turning once. Transfer the chicken or turkey to individual plates, reserving drippings in skillet.

Grilled Rack of Lamb with Plum Glaze and Oven Dried Plums

1 lb. plums
1 T Honey
1 Jalapeno pepper, thinly sliced, including seeds
2 T Sugar
1 1/2 t Red-wine vinegar
2 t Lime juice
2 Racks of lamb (about 3 1/2 lb total)
Salt & freshly ground pepper
Oven Dried Plums (separate recipe)
Thyme sprigs, for garnish
Quarter plums; remove pits.
Combine plums, honey, jalapeno, sugar, vinegar, and lime juice in a small non-reactive saucepan. Cook over low heat until plums are very soft and juice is slightly thickened, about 30 minutes. If plums are not juicy, add water a little at a time during cooking to avoid scorching. Remove from heat, strain, and discard solids.
Heat grill or cast-iron grill pan. Season lamb well with salt and pepper and wrap bones with foil to prevent burning. Grill lamb fat side down for 5 minutes, brush with plum glaze, and turn over. Repeat glazing every minute or so thereafter. For rare lamb, cook until it reaches an internal temperature of 135°, 10 to 12 minutes; cook longer for medium or well. Let the meat rest for 10 minutes after grilling. Toss Oven Dried Plums with some of the remaining glaze.
Carve racks into chops. Serve 2 chops per person with the glazed plums; Garnish with sprigs of thyme.

Cover chicken or turkey to keep warm. 2 Cut the grapes in half. Set aside. 3 For glaze, add the apple or currant jelly, dry sherry or white wine, lemon juice, and salt to the skillet. Cook and stir until the jelly is melted. Stir in grapes and parsley. Heat through. To serve, spoon glaze over chicken or turkey. Makes 2 servings. 4 **Menu Idea:** Serve flowering kale and hot cooked rice.

We welcome your comments, input, photos, recipes, questions and suggestions. Please direct any of the above to :keena@highdesertfoods.com

Oven Dried Plums

1 lb. plums
1/4 T Sugar
1/4 t Kosher Salt
Freshly ground pepper to taste
1/4 T Balsamic vinegar
1/4T Olive oil
3/4 T Fresh thyme leaves

Heat oven to 250°. Cut plums in half lengthwise and remove pits. Cut halves into 2-inch wedges. Place in a large mixing bowl and sprinkle with sugar, salt, pepper, vinegar, and oil. Toss to coat well.
Arrange plums on a parchment-lined baking sheet, cut sides up, about an inch apart. Sprinkle liberally with fresh thyme. Leave to dry in oven 3 hours. Turn off oven, and allow plums to remain inside at least 2 more hours or overnight. Plums will be wrinkled but still quite juicy when done.

Red and Green Grapes with Crème Fraiche

Provided by Better Homes and Gardens
Crème Fraiche is often used with fresh fruit in French cooking. Its tangy flavor blends delightfully with sweet grapes in this easy dessert.
Crème Fraiche (see below)
3 tablespoons brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
2 cups seedless red grapes
1 cup seedless green grapes

1 In a large mixing bowl stir together Crème Fraiche, brown sugar, and vanilla; set aside. 2 Toss together red and green grapes. Spoon grapes into dessert dishes. Drizzle with Crème Fraiche mixture. Makes 6 servings. 3 **Crème Fraiche:** In a small mixing bowl stir together 1/4 cup whipping cream (not ultra pasteurized) and 1/4 cup dairy sour cream. Cover with plastic wrap. Let stand at room temperature for 2 to 5 hours or until mixture thickens. When thickened, cover and chill in the refrigerator until serving time. Stir before serving. 4 **Make-Ahead Tip:** Prepare Crème Fraiche mixture and let stand at room temperature for 2 to 5 hours or until mixture thickens. Cover and chill up to 2

