

Should never have opened my mouth about the still clement weather.....

Our sheltered patch is as all right as it can be and we've been using the storm time to do some last minute propagation in hope of better times later. Despite their image perhaps, farmers have to be optimists or we'd never raise a seedling.

We were optimistic last week about Catherine and Rob from Wild Rover who turned up to get veg supplies which they tucked into a nook and cranny of their loaded Land Rover on the way to London where they had made the final of the British Street Food Awards. They turn out amazing grub from their ex army Field Kitchen so keep an eye out for the. They didn't win competing often against serious restaurant setups but were commended and had an amazing time..



It is conference season too with Nourish at QMU on Friday and Saturday. This is a gov'nt funded initiative to join up the dots of a Scottish local food economy linking all those interested professionally or passionately or both. There is still room for attendees. We are providing some food and the days lunch menus seem pretty good! www.nourishscotland.org.uk

So what have you been having in your boxes...

All those on the cusp items with **Sweetcorn** and **Beans** still featuring but also the first true **Pumpkins** rather than **Summer Squash** and slim first go **Leeks** quite delicate compared with their February cousins, some coloured **Caulis** and **Romanesco**.. little lime **Green Cauli** being our favourite for flavour and appearance. If you get one you might find Earthy Will's Cauliflower Couscous Recipe interesting.. see www.earthy.co.uk
Cavolo Nero should, fingers crossed, be featuring in next weeks boxes – recipes overleaf.

Next week is the first of the East Lothian **Carrots** and **Onions** that sustain us through the winter, though some of you will have the chance of ratatouille or peperonata as uk **Aubergines**, and **Courgettes** etc are still going. **Pattypans** or **Scallopini** (to Italians) go slightly longer than **Courgette** and don't damp off so much. There are **Shallots** about for those of you wanting to pickle.. better than small **Onions** maybe so do ask.

Its also Edinburgh and Haddington Farmers Markets on Saturday and the September veg is always pretty wonderful..

Oh, we also have new Damson Jam to go with the Apricot and Nectarine and also Rose Currant Vinegar...

Kale pesto pasta

This is a brilliant way of sneaking kale past fussy eaters.

The garlic helps reduce the bitterness of the kale and the pine nuts add a sweet, nutty flavour.

It's quick to make and is packed with vital winter nutrients

Ingredients:

Pasta for 4 people

200g kale (curly or Russian - either are ok. If you don't have kale, you can substitute spinach, chard or black nero cabbage)

2 cloves garlic, peeled & crushed

handful pine nuts

3 tablespoons double cream

30g parmesan, grated (optional)

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1/2 teaspoon grated nutmeg (optional)

Pinch of salt

Method

Heat the oil in a pan and gently saute the garlic for 2 minutes. Wash the kale well and chop roughly. Add to the garlic pan.

Cover and cook for 2 minutes, until the kale starts to wilt. Put the pine nuts in a food processor / blender and blitz until smooth.

Add the double cream and nutmeg, if using. Blitz again. Add the kale and garlic. Process until smooth. Season with the salt and grated parmesan (if using). Mix well. Cook the pasta according to the packet instructions. Drain well. Add the kale pesto to the pasta in the pan and mix well. Serve warm.

Cavolo Nero and bean soup

In a large soup pot, heat 4 tbsp of extra virgin olive oil and lightly fry a finely chopped mixture of 2 carrots, 2 onions, a celery heart and 3 garlic cloves for 2-3 minutes. Clean and wash 250g of cavolo nero and roughly chop the leaves. Add them to the vegetables with 350g of sliced, peeled potatoes and lightly fry for a further 5 minutes. Drain a 400g tin each of cooked borlotti and cannellini beans and add to the vegetables, along with a tin of chopped tomatoes, 4-5 sprigs of fresh thyme and 150g of chopped Savoy cabbage. Season with a few good pinches of salt, mix well, turn up the heat and add enough water to just cover. Once it boils, turn to a simmer for 30 min. Drain another can of borlotti and mash them roughly with a fork. Add to the soup and simmer for a further 15 min. Season with salt and pepper and serve with toasted bread and a good drizzle of the best extra virgin olive oil available. Serves 10.

Slow Cooked Cavolo Nero

1 lb cavolo nero, washed, center ribs removed

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 sprig rosemary

1/4 teaspoon dried hot red pepper flakes

1 large sweet onion, sliced

5 large garlic cloves, sliced

Sea salt

Freshly ground pepper

Prepare an ice bath in a large bowl. Bring a half-filled large stockpot of water to boil. Add several spoonfuls of salt. Blanch the cavolo nero in rapidly boiling water for 1-2 minutes, until limp. Plunge into the ice bath and drain on towels.

Heat a large saucepan over medium flame. Pour in 1/4 cup olive oil, rosemary, and pepper flakes. Sizzle for a minute. Lower flame to low and add the onion. Season with a few pinches of salt and ground pepper. Allow to cook a few minutes undisturbed, then add garlic and stir, cooking for another several minutes until the onion is just turning golden brown.

Stir in cavolo nero, a few more pinches of salt, and cook for about 30 minutes, checking and stirring often, keeping the color even. Cavolo nero should turn a deep green color. Allow edges to crisp toward the end of cooking.

Remove the rosemary and serve with a sprinkling of sea salt and freshly cracked pepper, to taste.

Kale with Panfried Walnuts*

* 3 pounds kale, stems and center ribs discarded

* 1 cup chopped walnuts (3 1/2 ounces)

* 3 tablespoons vegetable oil

* 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

Tear kale into large pieces, then cook in a large pot of well-salted boiling water, uncovered, until tender, about 6 minutes. Drain kale, and, when cool enough to handle, press out excess liquid.

Cook walnuts in oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until pale golden, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook, stirring, until very fragrant, about 1 minute. Add kale and salt and pepper to taste and cook, tossing, until heated through.

Serve kale warm or at room temperature.