

\*\*\*\*\*From AllRecipes.com\*\*\*\*\*

## Eggplant and Tomato Casserole

### Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant, sliced into 1/4 inch rounds
- Salt to taste
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 small onion, halved and sliced
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 cup dried bread crumbs for topping
- 4 tomatoes sliced
- Salt and pepper to taste

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Season the eggplant slices with salt, and let stand for about 10 minutes. Drain off liquid.
2. Heat 3 tablespoons of olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Quickly brown the eggplant slices on each side.
3. Place a layer of the eggplant slices in an 8 inch square baking dish or casserole dish. Place some tomato slices over the eggplant, and then a few slices of onion. Repeat layers until you run out of eggplant. Pour balsamic vinegar over everything. In a small bowl, stir together the bread crumbs and remaining olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Spread in a layer over the vegetables.
4. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes in the preheated oven, until the top is golden brown and the eggplant is tender.

\*\*\*\*\*From EatingWell.com\*\*\*\*\*

## Red Pepper Soup

### Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 4 red bell peppers, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced
- 24 ounces chicken or vegetable broth
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

### Directions

1. Melt the butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Place the red bell pepper, onion and garlic in the saucepan and saute for 5 to 10 minutes, or until tender.
2. Pour in the chicken broth, stirring well, reduce heat to low and simmer for 30 minutes. Transfer to a blender and puree until smooth.
3. Run the soup through a strainer and return the liquid to the saucepan over medium low heat. Stir in the heavy cream and the ground black pepper and allow to heat through, about 5 to 10 minutes.



## Sisters Hill Farm

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### The Apprentice Perspective

This past Monday, Breezy and I spent the afternoon touring Brookfield Farm in Amherst, MA as part of the CRAFT program. CRAFT stands for Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training and is an important part of the apprenticeship here at Sisters Hill Farm. Through CRAFT we get to see many different types of farm businesses and join a community of apprentices with similar farming goals. The meetings generally include a farm tour and a discussion on the farmer's topic of choice.

Upon leaving these meetings I always feel inspired. Seeing all of these unique, successful farms gives me an opportunity to think specifically about my future farm. What ideas can I steal? What trials did they attempt and what were the results? Is this business model really sustainable long term? It is hard to see all of the work that has been put into a farm over the years because a good farmer is eventually able to make the results of his work seem effortless. Really analyzing decisions a farmer has made with that farmer helps you see the inner workings of what makes a farm last.

Sometimes even seeing the flaws of an operation can be incredibly inspiring. At Sisters Hill, Dave has created a near perfect farm business. His organization and perfectionism are unmatched. He is able to see the whole farm and make the right decisions based on present conditions, while considering how those decisions will affect the farm this week, next week, and next year. He is an incredible teacher. He takes the time to show us his process in making decisions and trains us to be ready to start our own farm by the end of the season. I am so fortunate and grateful to have the opportunity to learn from him, but what makes this farm amazing can also be a little daunting at times. It can be hard to remember day-to-day that Dave has been constantly improving on this farm for close to twenty years. He developed systems that improve upon themselves and allow for efficient work that creates more time for improvement elsewhere.

While creating a place like this is achievable (and the gold standard for many), it is nice to see other farms through CRAFT that are successful, but look less perfect. When I see farms with weeds, or farms with longer working hours, or even farms with lower quality produce and

sometimes questionable practices, it gives me the sense that you don't have to be perfect all the time to succeed. Seeing farmers' mistakes is oddly comforting. I know my farm won't be perfect. The goal is to always make the right decisions and to constantly improve, but sometimes that just won't happen. Seeing farms that have lower standards than I do, but are still successful, is inspiring. It makes me feel that even if my execution is flawed, I can still accomplish many of the goals I've set for myself thanks to the guidance and teaching Dave has provided and will continue to provide even when I leave Sisters Hill. ———*Sam Allison*

\*\*\*\*\**From AllRecipes.com*\*\*\*\*\*

### **Roasted Beet, Arugula, and Walnut Salad**

#### **Ingredients**

- 3 large beets, cut into cubes
- 2 teaspoons olive oil, divided
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse salt, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
- 3 cups arugula, torn
- 1/3 cup walnuts
- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar

#### **Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C).
2. Mix beets, 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon black pepper together on a baking sheet.
3. Roast in the preheated oven until beets are tender, about 40 minutes.
4. Mix roasted beets, arugula, walnuts, balsamic vinegar, 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1/4 teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon pepper together in a bowl until well combined.

\*\*\*\*\**From SimplyRecipes.com*\*\*\*\*\*

### **Potato Leek Soup**

#### **Ingredients**

- 3 large leeks
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 4 cups chicken broth (or vegetable broth)
- 2 pounds potatoes
- Pinch of dried marjoram
- 1 or 2 springs of fresh thyme, or 1/2 teaspoon of dried thyme
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- White or black pepper, to taste

#### **Directions**

1. Cut the leeks lengthwise, fan them open under running water to dislodge

any dirt or mud hiding inside. Cut off the tough dark green tops and discard (either compost or freeze for making stock). Slice the white and light green parts of the leeks crosswise into 1/4-inch thick slices.

2. Melt butter on medium heat in a 3 to 4 quart thick-bottomed pot. Add the chopped leeks, stir to coat with the butter. Cover the pot and lower the heat to low, cook for 10 minutes until the leeks are softened. Check to make sure the leeks are not browning.
3. Add the broth, diced potatoes, bay leaf, marjoram, thyme, and a teaspoon of salt to the pot. Increase the heat to high to bring to a simmer, then lower the heat to maintain a low simmer, and cook for 20 minutes, until the potatoes are cooked through.
4. Remove and discard the bay leaf and thyme sprig. Use an immersion blender or standing blender to blend about half of the soup if you want a chunky soup, or all of it if you would like your soup to be more smooth.
5. Add the parsley, and cook a few minutes more. Add a few dashes of Tabasco to taste. Add freshly ground pepper and more salt to taste. (Potatoes soak up salt, so you may need to add more salt than you expect.)

\*\*\*\*\**From EatingWell.com*\*\*\*\*\*

### **Asian Tofu Salad**

#### **Ingredients**

- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 teaspoons reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 14-ounce package extra-firm, water-packed tofu, rinsed, patted dry and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 8 cups mixed salad greens (Asian green, Arugula)
- 2 medium carrots, peeled, halved lengthwise and sliced
- 1 large cucumber, chopped

#### **Directions**

1. Whisk canola oil, vinegar, honey, soy sauce, sesame oil, ginger and salt in a bowl.
2. Place tofu and 2 tablespoons of the dressing in a large nonstick skillet. Cook over medium-high heat, turning every 2 to 3 minutes, until golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes total. Remove from the heat, add 1 tablespoon of the dressing to the pan and stir to coat.
3. Toss greens, carrots and cucumber with the remaining dressing. Serve immediately, topped with the warm tofu.