

- 2 tablespoons finely grated lemon zest
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/4 cup (lightly packed) fresh mint leaves, plus more
- 2 tablespoons torn fresh dill, plus more
- 1/2 cup labneh (Lebanese strained yogurt) or plain Greek yogurt
- Flaky sea salt (such as Maldon)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Divide beets between 2 large sheets of foil.
2. Drizzle beets on each sheet with 1/2 tablespoon oil; season with kosher salt and pepper and wrap up foil around beets. Roast on a rimmed baking sheet until tender, 40-50 minutes. Let cool slightly, then, using a paper towel, rub skins from beets (they should slip off easily). Crush beets with the bottom of a small bowl (it's alright if they fall apart).
3. Meanwhile, whisk lemon zest, lemon juice, and 2 tablespoons oil in a large bowl; set vinaigrette aside.
4. Heat 3 tablespoons oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add beets, season with kosher salt and pepper, and cook until browned, about 4 minutes per side. Transfer to bowl with vinaigrette, add 1/4 cup mint and 2 tablespoons dill, and toss to coat. Serve beets and dollops of labneh drizzled with more oil, topped with more herbs, and seasoned with pepper and sea salt.

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

Broccoli Rabe, White Bean & Fontina Pasta - 4 servings

Ingredients

- 8 ounces whole-wheat shells, fusilli or chiocciolo
- 1 large bunch broccoli rabe, trimmed and cut into 1-inch pieces, or 8 cups baby spinach
- 1 1/2 cups vegetable broth, or reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 19-ounce can cannellini beans, rinsed
- 2 tablespoons red-wine vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/2 cup shredded fontina cheese
- 2/3 cup Toasted Breadcrumbs, optional

Directions

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add pasta and cook, stirring occasionally, according to package directions. Stir in broccoli rabe (or spinach) during the last 2 to 3 minutes. Drain. Dry the pot.
2. Whisk broth and flour in a small bowl until smooth. Heat oil in the pot over medium-high heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the broth mixture and bring to a simmer, whisking constantly, until it thickens, 3 to 4 minutes. Add beans, vinegar, salt and pepper and the pasta and broccoli rabe (or spinach). Cook, stirring, until the mixture is heated through, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat; add cheese, stirring until it melts. Serve immediately, topped with toasted Breadcrumbs, if using.



Sisters Hill Farm

127 Sisters Hill Road, PO Box 22, Stanfordville, NY

October 1, 2016

October 4, 2016

<https://sistershillfarm.org>

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Comments from Apprentice Breezy

This September marked Sister Mary Ann's 60th year with the Sisters of Charity. As many of you know, Sister Mary Ann has been deeply involved in the farm from the very beginning. I wanted to hear more of her story, so we sat together by the flower patch one beautiful September afternoon and talked.

"I was a teacher for 40 years," she started. "High school biology, college for a few years. What I loved to teach the most was AP Bio." Her favorite age group to teach was high school, yet when she first joined the convent she did not have much of a choice in her teaching placement. So Mother Superior put her where she was needed: in a first grade classroom with fifty-nine children. "Well, anyway, I got through it," she reflected with a chuckle. Her passion for education and the students she taught was evident as she told me stories from her teaching career. Yet teaching science was not always what she planned to do as a young woman. In fact, neither was becoming a nun. "I went to college and I worked for three years before I entered the sisters," she explained. "I wasn't raised in a particularly religious home, but I always felt something when I went to church. My parents had a business in Pennsylvania, in the Pocono Mountains... There was a hill I always used to go to, to just be quiet. I was always drawn to that." It was this tendency for the contemplative and the spiritual that lent itself well to the lifestyle of the sisters. "I went to public school - I never went to Catholic school until college... I still remember [going to Mount St. Vincent] - it was a very beautiful spring day. I was walking down the hill... there was a large, open expanse [to the river], and that river - I still see it - it was sparkling. That scene just kind of got to me... I decided to go there. That's where I met the Sisters of Charity. There are things that are a mystery, certainly to be called to something like the life that I'm living is a mystery, and it's not easy to explain and it's not easy to understand."

Joining the Sisters gave Sister Mary Ann the opportunity to have a positive impact on so many people. From a long, successful career in secondary education, to mentoring other young teachers in a graduate program, her influence on others is undeniable. When asked about the most rewarding aspects of sisterhood, she said, "you can spread your love to anybody. It's the thing of availability. You make yourself available." Sister Mary Ann still keeps in contact with some of her students. "I still feel close to them," she said fondly. Yet sisterhood does not come without its challenges. "I loved teaching high school kids... It wasn't what I was thinking of doing at all, but for everybody it's different. For me probably the hardest thing in becoming a nun is the vow of celibacy. I knew I couldn't have children but I loved kids," she explained. "I always wanted boys... The last fifteen years of my [teaching] career I was teaching at a boys' prep school, so I got my boys."

The next step in Sister Mary Ann's career would bring her on a different and exciting journey. She became the Director for Ecological Concerns for the Sisters of Charity. Greatly influenced by what is called the "new cosmology," they focused on raising consciousness to "the whole interdependence of nature, and how we are all connected, how all of the elements that were created are in you and me. They have been cycled and recycled." Thomas Berry, a self-titled cosmologist and geologist, and a mentor to Sister Mary Ann, "helped to promulgate this new story of creation... We are all in this together, we are all part of nature, we are interdependent."

When asked who else she admired or respected in addition to Thomas Berry, she listed Wendell Berry, writer and environmental activist; Brian Swimme, evolutionary cosmologist, mathematician, professor, and author; and Sister Miriam Mac-Gillis, Director at Genesis Farm, NJ. "At Genesis Farm they have a CSA, and I had never heard of a CSA... It just hit me that we had this land here given to us in 1917." The land she referred to was, of course, what is now Sisters Hill Farm. She showed me a diary that was kept early on by one of the sisters. It included old pictures and drawings of the property. Farmed until WWII when labor became difficult to find, the land was left uncultivated for many decades. Now, Sister Mary Ann saw a shining opportunity before her. What if the land was used to put their values of care for the Earth and care for the poor into action? "We had a committee at that time that was starting to look at the Earth as one of the things that we should be looking at," she recalled. "In 1995 we came up with a statement for how we wanted to move into the new millennium... I was on this committee which was helping to en flesh this document. And so this farm would fit in perfectly with care of the Earth and care of the poor." She explained how these two concerns are connected, how the poor are most vulnerable to issues of pollution and food insecurity. She explained how caring for the Earth "is part of our legacy as human beings. Anybody - it doesn't have to be a sister, it doesn't have to be a religious person - if you're human you are connected to everything in the earth. You can't breathe without trees."

And so the farm was born. "At that point I was the Director of Ecological Concerns, and then I assumed the position of [farm] director. That was 18 years ago... I have so many favorite farm memories, but I think my favorite - the one that touched me the most deeply - was when we first plowed the land here and added compost. That, to me, was the symbol of, 'yes, we care about the earth and we are caring for the earth and this is an important part of our mission.'" And it has remained an important part of the mission of the Sisters of Charity, as well as Sister Mary Ann's personal mission in life. "I'm very proud of the apprentice program because it is continuing our mission of education."

As our conversation by the flower patch came to a close, I had one final question for Sister Mary Ann: What is your favorite piece of produce from the farm? "I love them all," she said enthusiastically. "I go through withdrawal when I have to go buy vegetables in the winter."

*****From *Epicurious.com******

Delicata Squash with Rosemary, Sage, and Cider Glaze - Makes 6 servings
You may use any of the winter squash for this recipe. Winter squash are great keepers so you can save them up to use later or adjust the measurements to use less squash

Ingredients

- 2 medium delicata squash (about 2 pounds) or other firm winter squash
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup very coarsely chopped fresh sage
- 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped fresh rosemary

- 1 1/2 cups fresh unfiltered apple cider or juice
- 1 cup water
- 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

Directions

1. **Squash.** If using delicata squash, peel it with a vegetable peeler, cut it lengthwise in half, and scrape out the seeds with a spoon. Cut each piece lengthwise in half again, then crosswise into 1/2-inch -thick slices. Other types of squash should be peeled with a chef's knife, seeded, cut into 1-inch wedges, then sliced 1/2-inch thick.
2. **Herb Butter.** Melt the butter in a large (12-inch) 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. Cooking the herbs in butter mellows their flavor and improves their texture.
3. **Cooking the squash.** Add the squash to the skillet, then the apple cider, water, vinegar, and salt. Cook, stirring occasionally, over medium heat at an even boil 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.

*****From *Tecscape.elogspot.com******

WHAT ARE PURPLE BEANS??

Purple beans are essentially green beans disguised in a violet hued skin. Underneath the purple shell is the same green flesh and pale lime peas. The flavor matches that of a French Green Bean with the grassy notes and sweet finish. Once cooked, the violet hues fade to green, leaving the purple bean to appear as common as a green bean. Cook them as you would cook green beans.

French Bean Omelet/Long Bean Omelet

This recipe is for one serving. Adjust for your need.

Ingredients

- Long bean/French bean, diced to small bits
- 2-3 eggs whisked with some added dark soy sauce and white pepper

Directions

1. Heat pan with cooking oil and fry the bean bits with some salt and pepper
2. When beans bits have softened, add the egg covering the pan surface. Allow the egg to cook on one side a few minutes till lightly browned (Note:I like some crispy bits on top of the omelet. If you prefer it moist, then don't "overcook" it)
3. Then flip over the other side to finish cooking
4. Enjoy with porridge or rice

*****From *Epicurious.com******

Crushed Beets with Lemon Vinaigrette

Ingredients

- 2 pounds mixed small or medium beets (such as Chioggia, red, and/or golden), scrubbed
- 6 tablespoons olive oil, divided, plus more
- Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper