

- 1 teaspoon finely grated fresh lemon zest
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Directions

1. Cook beans in a 6-quart pot of boiling salted water, uncovered, until tender, 4 to 6 minutes. Drain in a colander.
2. Heat oil in a 12-inch heavy skillet over moderately high heat until hot but not smoking, then sauté garlic, stirring, until golden, about 1 minute. Add beans, arugula, zest, salt, and pepper and cook, tossing, until arugula is wilted, about 2 minutes.

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

Grilled Bread with Ricotta & Tomatoes - 8 servings

Ingredients

- 1 garlic clove
- Kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- 6 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 3/4 pound assorted small tomatoes (such as cherry, Sun Gold, or green), halved, quartered if large
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 8 3/4"-thick slices country-style bread
- 1 cup (loosely packed) coarsely chopped mixed tender herbs (such as basil, parsley, small dill sprigs, and/or chives)
- 10 ounces whole-milk ricotta

Directions

1. Finely chop garlic, sprinkle with a pinch of salt, then mash with the side of knife to a fine paste. Transfer to a medium bowl and whisk in vinegar and 2 tablespoons oil. Add tomatoes; season with salt and pepper and toss to coat. Let sit, tossing occasionally, at least 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, prepare grill for mediumhigh heat. Brush both sides of bread with remaining 4 tablespoons oil and grill until lightly charred, about 2 minutes per side.
3. Just before serving, toss herbs with tomato mixture. Spread ricotta on toast and top with tomato mixture; cut toast in half.
4. Do ahead: Tomato mixture (without herbs) can be made 12 hours ahead. Cover and chill.

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

Tomato Butter

Ingredients

- Cherry tomatoes
- Salt
- Softened butter

Directions

1. Broil cherry tomatoes until the skins blister and juices are released; let cool. Blitz with salt in a food processor until coarsely puréed, then stir into softened butter. Dollop onto grilled fish, cooked rice, or crostini.



Sisters Hill Farm

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**Join us Today at 5PM for our final picnic of the season!
We'll be grilling up local and organic burgers and dogs!
We'll have lots of fun games and a sprinkler! Please bring a
side dish, a desert, or drinks to share, as well as a place set-
ting and a chair. See you here!**

Field notes from our apprentice D. Rooney

I am about to get nerdy and dirty with my newsletter this week! Simply, our food comes from the soil. So, you think about it, soil is a womb for the seeds that we intentionally place there with the hope that in some time a plant will emerge that we can harvest some delicious food from. Incredible, right? But what is it about soil that it relentlessly and almost continuously produces and supports life for us farmers and gardeners?

To start, the soil beneath our feet is a precious entity. Precious, firstly, because most of the food we consume, if not all for some people, comes from the soil. If soil is the home in which so many living plants are supported from, then in some way soil is living too, yes? Yes! According to the Oregon State extension service, "In a single teaspoon (1 gram) of rich garden soil can hold up to one billion bacteria, several yards of fungal filaments, several thousand protozoa, and scores of nematodes". 1 billion in a single teaspoon! Think of all of the billions of grams of soil that Sisters Hill Farm contains. And think of all of the trillion, gazillion organisms that are working so hard to contribute to the healthy and delicious food that we produce here. That is likely equating to an entire solar system (if not more) of living organisms right here on this farm.

For me, the distinction of being an organic farmer is communing with the land, the soil and its ecosystem so that it not only thrives and produces well for this season, but that it will be able to do so for decades to come. So why is that important? Well, because of all different bacteria, fungi, nematodes, protozoa and many more critters and animals that exist in the soil, if at any time it is mistreated the entire ecosystem will be disrupted and the natural order of how it can function will be diminished. For instance, certain beneficial strands of soil bacteria will help contribute to taking nitrogen that exists naturally in the atmosphere and converting it so that it is accessible to plants. Nitrogen is one of several key elements necessary for plants to grow successfully, and one that farmers can sometimes be challenged with to provide continuously throughout a season.

Another of my favorite aspects of the soil is a fungi called Mycorrhizae. Mycorrhizal fungi form a symbiotic relationship with the tips of plant root systems to help aid with the uptake of nutrients and water available in the soil. Sci-

entists have found that in times of scarcity of water or nutrients, this fungi, like an insurance policy, will distribute the water and nutrients that it naturally hoards to the plant so that stress during the scarcity can be alleviated. In a natural return on investment, the carbohydrates (sugars) that the plant produces in its leaves, which will make their way down to the root system anyway, ultimately ends up supporting the fungi with the carbohydrates it so desperately needs but cannot produce on its own. It has also been found that the Mycorrhizal relationship exceeds the boundaries of just one plant's root system. That these fungi will usually branch out and connect to other Mycorrhizae on other plants to form a super-support network of plants and fungi. I love this stuff!

I could go on about the nerdy science stuff but what I would love to tie together for you is that soil is not just the dusty particle stuff that gets on the bottom of our shoes and tracks into our homes and clothes as an inconvenience. I equate soil to us humans. Soil, like us, is a complex existence that has so many invisible working parts that we think we know a lot about, but we have likely scratched the surface of understanding its fragile and delicate systems. As farmers, the choices we make everyday always have to consider the long-term health of the soil. What to plant, when to plant, where to plant, when to use the tractor, how much are we compacting by walking and tools we use. Using compost, avoiding harmful pesticides, the list goes on, but all of these important factors contribute to the decisions that benefit not just this season or the crop right now, but also the next and so many more seasons to follow. I like the idea of not just being a farmer of who grows crops but one who grows soil and stewards its health into a viable existence for the future.

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

Spanish-Style Grilled Vegetables with Breadcrumb Picada

Ingredients

On the grill

- 3 large red bell peppers (about 1 1/2 pounds), stemmed, seeded, quartered
- 4 large Japanese eggplants (about 1 1/4 pounds), trimmed, cut lengthwise into 3 slices
- 4 medium green or yellow zucchini (preferably 2 of each; about 1 pound), trimmed, cut lengthwise into 1/3-inch-thick slices
- Extra-virgin olive oil (for grilling)

For the dish

- 6 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 1/2 cup panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)*
- 2 tablespoons Sherry wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano

*Available in the Asian foods section of some supermarkets

Preparation

1. Prepare barbecue (medium heat). Arrange vegetables on baking sheets. Brush with oil; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill peppers, skin side down and without turning, until blackened and blistered, moving occasionally for even cooking, about 10 minutes. Enclose in plastic bag. Let stand until skins loosen, about 30 minutes. Grill eggplants and zucchini until charred and tender, turning and rearranging for even browning, 5 to 6 minutes. Place on foil lined baking sheet. Peel peppers. Transfer to sheet with eggplants and zucchini.
2. Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil in medium skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and crushed red pepper; stir until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add breadcrumbs; stir until golden, about 3 minutes. Season breadcrumb picada to taste with salt; scrape into small bowl.
3. Place vinegar in another small bowl; whisk in 3 tablespoons oil. Mix in parsley and oregano. Season to taste with salt.
4. Arrange vegetables on platter. Spoon herb dressing over; sprinkle with breadcrumbs.

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

Cavatappi with Tomatoes, Arugula, and Ricotta—serves 6

Ingredients

- 2 large tomatoes, cored, roughly chopped (about 4 cups)
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more to taste
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus more to taste
- 1 pound cavatappi (or other short pasta)
- 6 cups arugula, coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 ounces ricotta

Directions

1. Combine tomatoes, garlic, red pepper flakes, 1/4 cup oil, and 1 tsp. salt in a large bowl.
2. Cook cavatappi in a large pot of boiling salted water, stirring occasionally, until al dente. Drain pasta, reserving 1 cup pasta cooking liquid, and add to tomato mixture. Stir vigorously and add pasta cooking liquid and oil as needed to fully coat. Stir in arugula and black pepper and season with salt.
3. Transfer pasta to a serving bowl or platter and dollop with ricotta. Serve immediately.

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

Green Beans and Arugula- Yield=6 side dish servings

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 lb green beans, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced lengthwise
- 1/2 lb arugula, tough stems discarded and leaves chopped (6 cups)