

need to grow up, but the big leaves were destroyed. Almost everything else will come back. This week we're being stifled by the rain. SO much rain. We have inches of accumulation in the valley here, and our beautiful soil turns to sticky mud with just an average storm. We are limited this week to what we can harvest easily. There are some places where we can't even walk without sinking. The crops should be fine but we can't get there and harvest without damaging everything. So, our apologies. We have plenty of food, but we can't do much about variety until it dries up for a few days. We did try an Italian variety of savoy cabbage, "San Michelle" which is pretty and tasty. The "Festival" winter squash is basically a flavorful acorn squash and is best baked.

Luckily we have our mountains of chips, from the tree trimmers who deliver all summer. We can heap up the driveways and pig paddocks, and try to keep critters and our boots out of the mud somewhat. But we will have to be patient until the fields drain.

WHITE BEAN SOUP WITH WINTER GREENS

1 pound dried Cannellini or other White Beans
 1/4 cup Olive Oil
 1 large Onion, chopped
 2 Carrots, in 1/3-inch dice
 4 cloves Garlic, minced
 3 tbsp. minced Parsley, preferably Italian
 2 Bay Leaves
 4 cups chicken or Vegetable Stock, preferably homemade
 Salt and Ground Pepper
 3/4 pound Winter Greens (kale, chard, dandelion, collard, or turnip greens)
 Grated Parmesan Cheese

1. Soak beans 8 hours or overnight in water to cover by 1 inch. Drain.
2. Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in a large pot over moderate heat. Add onion, carrots, garlic, parsley and bay leaves. Sauté until vegetables are slightly softened, about 10 minutes.
3. Add drained beans, broth, and 2 cups water. Season with salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer, cover and adjust heat to barely simmering. Cook, stirring occasionally, until beans are tender, 45 minutes to 1 hour, depending on age of beans. Remove the bay leaves. In a food processor or blender, purée 4 cups of the beans and vegetables with some of their liquid. Return the purée to the pot and stir well. If needed, thin soup with water.
4. Wash greens well, removing any bruised leaves, thick ribs and stems. You should have about 1/2 pound trimmed leaves. Stack leaves a few at a time, roll into a log and slice crosswise into 1/4-inch wide ribbons. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add greens and boil until tender—just a few minutes! Drain, reserving about 2 cups of cooking liquid. Stir greens into soup. Cover and simmer an additional 5 minutes. Thin soup if needed with reserved cooking liquid. Taste and adjust seasoning.
5. Top each portion with a drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkle of yummy cheese.



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I REALLY WANTED TO START

the new season with a newsletter. But we had a cow emergency that uprooted our lives for two days. Something got into our little herd and they went over a woven wire fence on our first winter harvest day last week. Beauty, our little milker skinned one of her teats and bruised her udder. In a commercial dairy, she would have been finished. Hamburger. A dairy doesn't have time for that kind of injury. But she's a sweet cow, and she's ours, so something had to be done. Phone call after phone call to large animal veterinarians—none would come here to help. We settled for basic first-aid and TLC. Hot compresses, soaking the injured teat in warm water and keeping it clean. But then, what about milking? You can't leave all the milk in there—it has to come out or she will be in a lot of pain and discomfort, and she may get mastitis. A trip to the dairy vet supply in Enumclaw sent me home with a small metal tube to insert into that raw teat at every milking to drain the milk out. Horrors! After two days we had the routine down, and Beauty is beginning to heal. But it will be weeks until the skin grows back and I can milk like normal.

So what do cows have to do with our farm anyway? Well, it started out when I just wanted a little cow to provide milk for our family (It's been my lifelong dream, after all). After a few days we began to realize the gold mine that we had acquired in terms of fertilizer—cows poop a lot. Cow manure is the PERFECT fertilizer for vegetables, and when used properly (when aged/composted for 6 months before harvest) there is absolutely no danger of contaminating the food crops. Believe me, we are very careful with our crop planning—remember, our family is eating the same vegetables that we give you each week! It also turns out that the cows love all the torn, bruised leaves that we discard in harvest and they graze the cover crop plantings. A win/win situation.

Last week we were worrying about damage from freezing weather—the chard was hit pretty hard. All the small leaves are fine and

THIS WEEK'S MENU:

"San Michelle"
 Cabbage
 Spinach
 Collard Greens
 Winter Squash
 "Festival"
 Potatoes
 Baby Leeks
 Baby Beets
 with Greens

Mint or Italian Parsley
 Recipes on the back!

COMING SOON:

Broccoli
 Lettuce
 Carrots